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A full-page photograph of Raquel Pomplun, the Playmate of the Year, posing on a bed. She is nude, wearing only white underwear, and has her hair styled in rollers. She is holding a black rotary telephone receiver to her ear and the base of the phone is on the bed next to her. The background is a stone wall.

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The Final Days of  
Macho Camacho

Bernardo  
Bertolucci

20 Questions  
with Kevin Smith  
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The Interview:  
Chinese Dissident  
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# PLAYBILL

June is a special month for PLAYBOY readers. Each year we offer a summer kickoff issue brimming with coolness, including our Playmate of the Year pictorial. To start with, we're pleased to publish some scintillating fiction by **Liesl Schillinger**: *Getting My Baby Tanked*. A pair of romantics embark on a gambling boat out of Florida. He's just out of rehab. She's one foot out of a marriage. What happens next will surprise everyone. Héctor "Macho" Camacho's life is stranger than fiction. The champion boxer faced the greatest fighters of his era, but in the end his biggest foe was himself. Camacho loved cocaine, and he couldn't keep out of trouble with the law—or from getting murdered, **Bob Drury** reports in *Macho vs. Camacho*. It's been nearly 20 years since **Kevin Smith** and **Jason Mewes** first cracked us up as Jay and Silent Bob in *Clerks*. The pair have since worked on 11 films together, including the upcoming *Clerks III*. What's the root of their success? Find out in *20Q*. As the old song lyric goes, **Eric Church** is a little bit country and a little bit rock and roll, a fact that confuses a few music fans. "Some people hate me," Church says. "We've been polarizing, and that's okay." In *The Badass*, Rob Tannenbaum gets up close with one of the hottest (and most detested) acts to come out of Nashville in years. This issue also debuts new columnist **Deborah Schoeneman**—novelist (*4% Famous*), TV writer, former executive story editor of *Girls* and brilliant raconteur. Her first *Women* column, "Is She Hot? Are You Rich?," tackles the idea of what is attractive. Guys who go for women just for their beauty are like women who go for men because of their wallets, says Schoeneman. The great Italian filmmaker **Bernardo Bertolucci** has released his first film in nearly a decade, *Me and You*. In this month's *Francofile*, Contributing Editor James Franco gets the scoop from the director himself. From film we move to politics. Artist **Ai Weiwei** is the most influential dissident in China today. Ai has served prison time for speaking out against the Chinese regime; even under government surveillance he uses Twitter to raise his voice louder. Ai joins us for a *Playboy Interview* by David Sheff. China's neighbor to the north is Mongolia, which happens to be home to the hottest black market dealing in dinosaur fossils. In *The Bone Thieves*, **Brett Forrest** goes in search of prehistoric treasure. Which brings us to our climactic moment. Who is our 2013 Playmate of the Year? Drum-roll, please! Congratulations to **Raquel Pomplun**, who's pictured at right with photographer **Michael Bernard**. Well deserved. So there you have it: humor, adventure and plenty of pulchritude. It's June again, folks. Summer is here.



Liesl Schillinger



Bob Drury



Eric Church



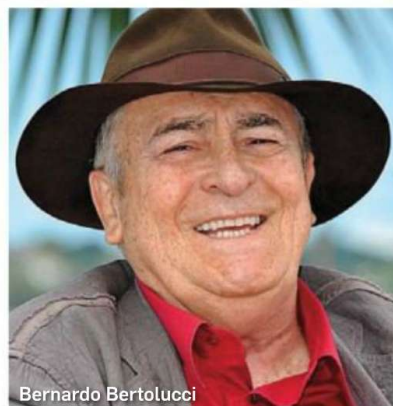
Deborah Schoeneman



Brett Forrest



Kevin Smith and Jason Mewes



Bernardo Bertolucci



Ai Weiwei



Raquel Pomplun with Michael Bernard





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# PLAYBOY

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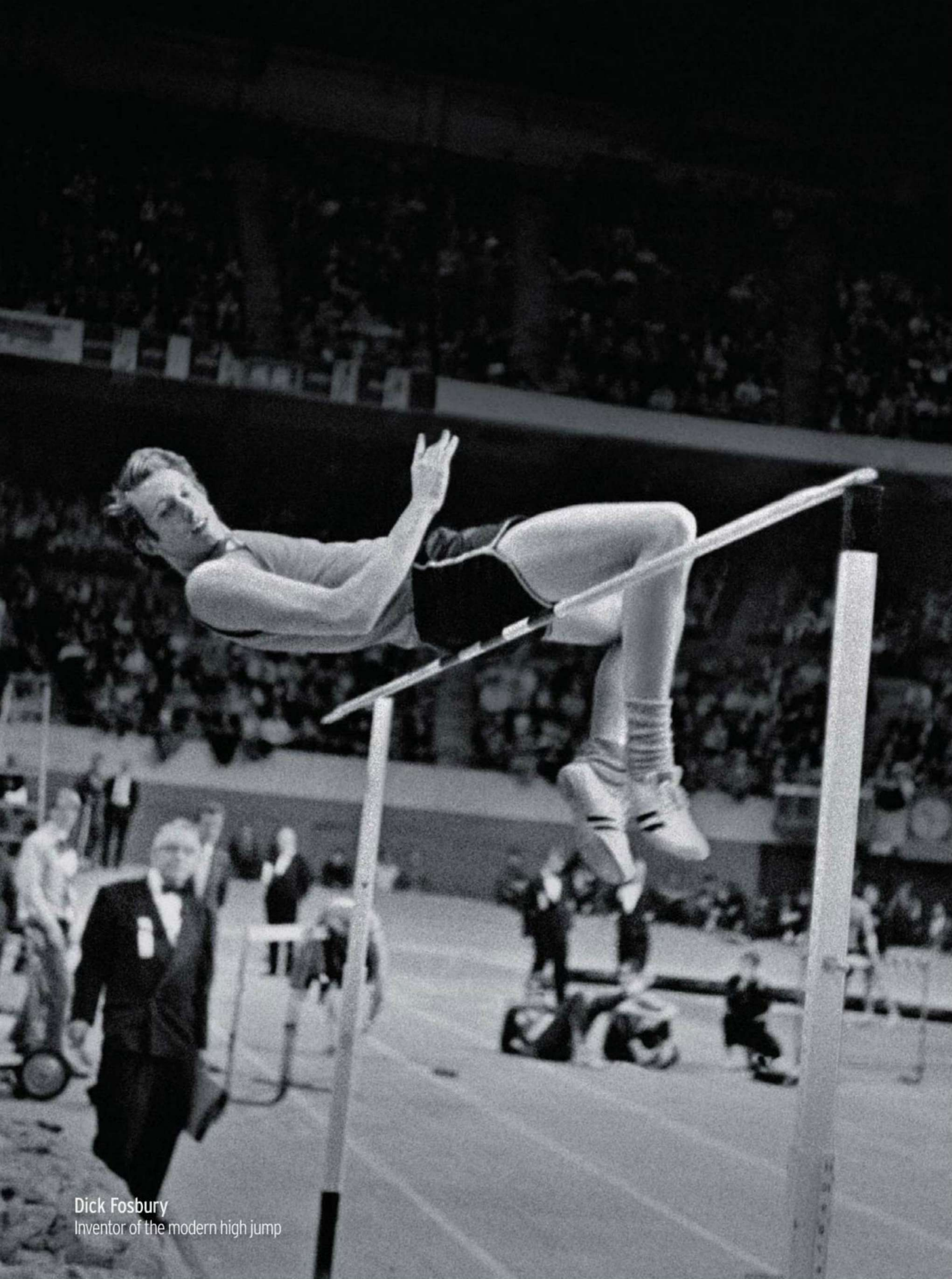


### COVER STORY

Raquel Pomplun receives her life-changing call from Hef. Of course our Rabbit peeks in, if only to see the smile on Raquel’s face.

**116**  
**PLAYMATE**  
**OF THE**  
**YEAR**





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Inventor of the modern high jump



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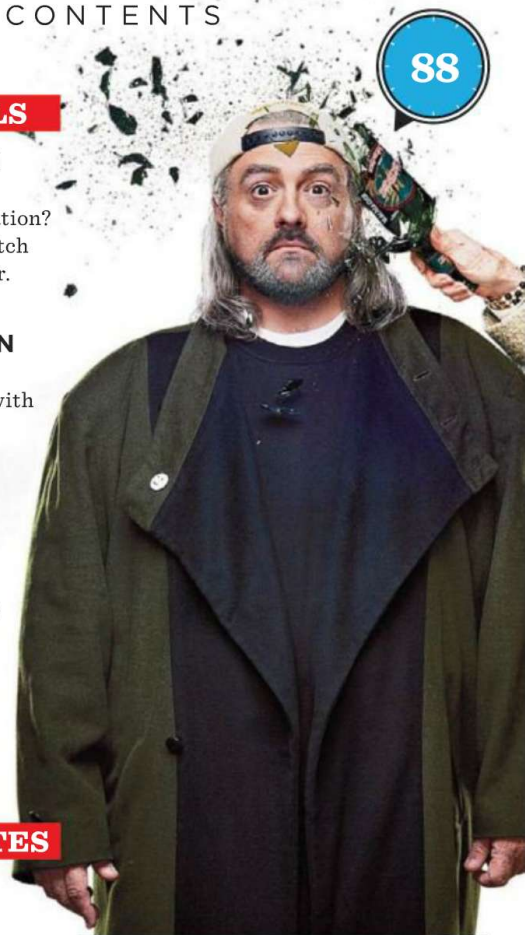
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# THE WORLD OF PLAYBOY

HEF SIGHTINGS,  
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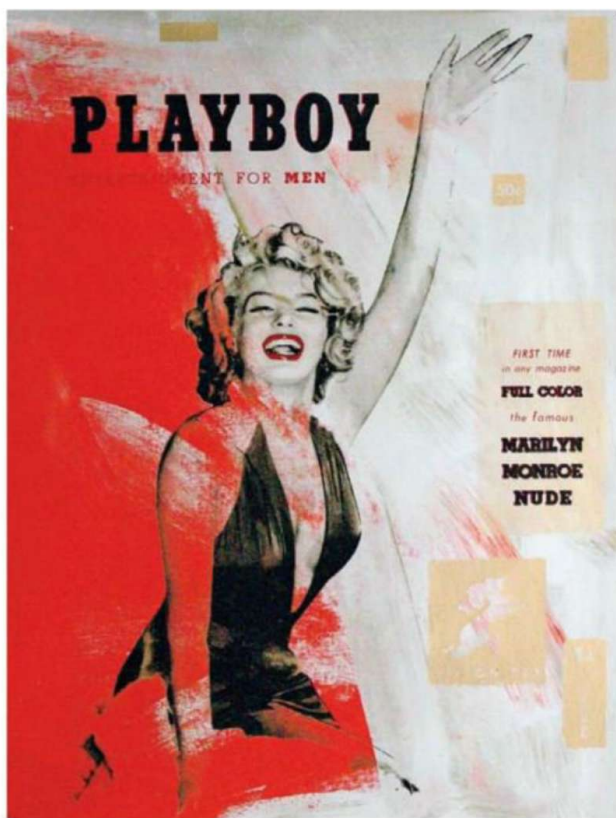
## FUND-RAISER

If current health statistics were applied to the photo at right, at least one of the women pictured would have breast cancer in her lifetime. Our Playmates have been doing their part through their organization Bunnies4theCure. Recently, the 38 team members participated in a Susan G. Komen race, where they were one of the top fund-raising teams. Thanks to their efforts, Bunnies4theCure brought in more than \$16,000.



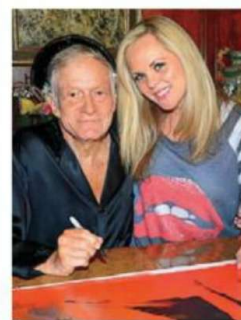
## WOOFSTOCK

Crystal and Charlie Hefner took in Beverly Hills' Woofstock to support the Pet Care Foundation. The event, held at Roxbury Park's "Wiggly Field," featured a parade, face painting and rescue adoptions. The adoptions are dear to Crystal's heart. "It was a huge success," she says.



## PAINTED LADY

Artist (and Miss January 1996) Victoria Fuller created 11 silk-screens of her take on PLAYBOY's first cover with Marilyn Monroe. Hef signed one that then went up on Charity Buzz's auction block to benefit the Pet Care Foundation.





# HANGIN' WITH HEF

## MANSION MASQUERADE

Mystery, intrigue and fantasy abounded at the Kandyland Masquerade at the Mansion. Hugh and Cooper Hefner navigated the party behind masks. Among the women enjoying the bacchanal were (somewhat) incognito Playmates Raquel Pomplun, Jaclyn Swedberg, Summer Altice and Hiromi Oshima. Crystal Hefner—in a skin-tight red bodysuit and bedazzled headphones—spun a DJ set and was joined in the booth by Caya Ukkas Hefner.



## EASTER BUNNIES

Easter is always a special time at the Playboy Mansion as those in the Playboy family bring their children to enjoy an Easter egg hunt and a traveling zoo. This year's highlights included Playmates Pennelope Jimenez and Charis Boyle flirting with the Easter Bunny, Crystal holding a joey and Amelia Talon hanging out with another chick.







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## DIRECT DIAL

*Death and Madness at Diamond Mountain* (March) is an enlightening read. I never cease to be amazed by the eagerness with which supposedly rational and intelligent people, long on time and money but short on happiness, will subjugate themselves to religious teachers only to find the leaders are more screwed up than the followers. In spirituality, as in business, it's best to eliminate the middleman.

Dave Cherry  
Reno, Nevada

## SINGING A DIFFERENT TUNE

I appreciate many of the choices Rob Tannenbaum makes for *The 38 Best Songs About Sex* (April), but the best song about a blow-up sex doll has to be "Ms. Pinky" by Frank Zappa. The second-best song in this category is "Polly Urethane" by Unknown Hinson.

Frank Burris  
Canton, Ohio

Zappa's "Ms. Pinky," or possibly "Artificial Rhonda," gets my vote

Kurt Reimer  
Abington, Pennsylvania

Your list struck a chord, but you forgot the ultimate and most insistent come-on, "Could It Be Magic" by Barry Manilow.

Karen Robelen  
Scarsdale, New York

*If that's what it takes....*

I take issue with your claim that the Beatles' "I Saw Her Standing There" is about pedophilia. It's clearly about young love and dancing. Regardless, the age of consent in the U.K. is 16, so she wouldn't have been jailbait.

John Rycraft  
Phoenix, Arizona

"Band of Gold" is about impotence? Huh? It's about an inexperienced young woman whose new husband is introducing her to kink. After thinking it over, she decides she wants him to return.

Larry Padilla  
Tucson, Arizona

Where is G.O.A.T. and Your M.O.M.'s "Quack Like a Duck"?

Anthony Pennza  
Cleveland, Ohio

I know it's easy to miss Paul Simon's "Kodachrome," which on close listening is about looking at porn: "If you took all the girls I knew when I was single and brought them all together for one night/I know they'd never match my sweet imagination/ Everything looks worse in black and white."

Emil Novitsky  
Tolleson, Arizona

Sadly, you omit the best sex-song band of all time: Lords of Acid. Their latest album includes "Little Mighty Rabbit"

# DEAR PLAYBOY

## Girls! Girls! Girls!

In *20Q* (April), you don't ask Lena Dunham of *Girls* what I'm sure many of us want to know—why is she the only one of the four stars to get naked?

Mark Simendinger  
via e-mail

Your interview reminds me of the time Howard Stern criticized Dunham's body type. She called in and then charmed and disarmed him to the point that he began to furiously backpedal. Dunham is a powerful new creative force.

J. Bryan McGeever  
Brooklyn, New York



(sex toy), "Long Johns" (cross-dressing), "Sole Sucker" (foot fetish) and one Hef will love, "Censorship Blows."

William Fouts  
Las Vegas, Nevada

How about "L.A. Woman" by the Doors? Jim Morrison starts slow and builds, then slows again to the point where you can smell the cigarette he lit.

Ron Stokes  
Lutz, Florida

While you are correct to credit Lucille Bogan's homage to unlubricated coitus, "Shave 'Em Dry," as the source of the line

Tom Lehrer's "I Got It From Agnes" and Shel Silverstein's "Don't Give a Dose to the One You Love Most." For masturbation, who wants to hear guys sing about swan throttling when women have been so vocal on the topic? Listen to "I Touch Myself" by the Divinyls or "She Bop" by Cyndi Lauper, for starters.

Randall Crawford  
Grand Rapids, Michigan

## MISSING MOVIE

I'm surprised *The Birth of Redneck Cinema* (March) doesn't mention *Walking Tall* (1973), the obvious precursor to the unexpected box-office success of *Smokey and the Bandit*. Its success was spurred by a marketing campaign that likened it to the countercultural hit *Billy Jack*, yet most commentators assumed Southern working-class viewers would fail to appreciate *Walking Tall*'s antiestablishment politics. This might explain why studio bosses also failed to predict how *Smokey*'s rebellious, populist heroes would resonate.

Derek Nystrom  
Montreal, Quebec

*Nystrom, who teaches at McGill University, is author of Hard Hats, Rednecks and Macho Men: Class in 1970s American Cinema.*

The one line I remember from *Smokey* is Jerry Reed telling Sally Field, "Nice ass." Any man would agree.

Rod Cole  
Fort Worth, Texas



Isn't every song about sex?

"You make a dead man come," it also contains the legendary pre-rap boast "I got nipples on my titties, big as the end of my thumb." I might go with "Sexy MF" as the best Prince song, but "Darling Nikki" is an excellent historic choice because it led to those parental-warning stickers. For VD songs I would have gone with Frank Zappa's "Why Does It Hurt When I Pee?,"

## FREEDOM PANGS

Nicolas Pelham highlights a real crisis in the Middle East after the upheavals of the past two years (*The Cold Arab Spring*, March). Attacks against women in Egypt are on the rise. Restrictions on social freedoms are driving religious minorities and secularists to consider emigration. Tourism is shrinking. It's not a sustainable model.



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Societies in the Middle East will have to adjust to the demands of the modern world and the liberalism the Arab Spring has unleashed or face brain drain, economic decline and further upheaval. The genie of democracy can't be put back in the bottle.

Charles Dunne  
Washington, D.C.

*Dunne, a former diplomat, is director of Middle East and North Africa programs at Freedom House (freedomhouse.org).*

The presence and role of women in the public sphere, as well as their expected conduct in the private sphere, are two important and deeply related pieces of this identity puzzle. Aspirations to build more equal, free and just societies will not be fulfilled unless all citizens are included in the process. Any move to restrict women's visibility and influence should be regarded as a threat to the revolution.

Benedetta Berti  
Tel Aviv, Israel

*Berti, a research fellow at the Institute for National Security Studies, is co-author of Hezbollah and Hamas: A Comparative Study.*

## MUSIC MAN

I admire Clive Davis, but he's behind the times. In his *Playboy Interview* (April), he never mentions what record companies need to do to secure money for artists online, such as when their songs are placed with ads on YouTube. Instead he simply dismisses piracy as a crime. Magazines suffer from the same problem, but at least Hef and others have the creativity to push forward. Davis should be listening to their advice instead of the current Top 40, which is terrible.

Javier Moreno  
Oakland, California

## MANLY MEN

Nothing is more of a turnoff than some manly man like Joel Stein who thinks he can impress women by eating bacon everything, fermented shark, salted tuna sperm and other cruelly produced foods ("You Are What You Eat," *Men*, April): I'll take someone like Joaquin Phoenix, Mac Danzig or Woody Harrelson any day. They're all vegetarians.

Paula Moore  
Portsmouth, Virginia

So it's settled: Joel Stein is gay. Not that there's anything wrong with that.

Paul Thiel  
Crescent Springs, Kentucky

Lisa Lampanelli has inspired me to be more manly ("Man Up!," *Women*, April). After reading her column, I may or may not have done several push-ups, eaten raw meat and chopped wood.

Rob McComb  
Stevens Point, Wisconsin

Thank you, Lisa. I've been married for eight years to a manly man, so there are

no manicures, skinny jeans or hair and face products. I love seeing him covered in grease and dirt after fixing the car or sweaty from working in the yard.

Megan Vanderpoel  
Melvin, Michigan

## THE PART DOWN THE MIDDLE

Your list of the best barbershops ("Shorn Again," *Fade In*, March) ignores the entire middle of the country. I nominate Haney's Barber Shop in downtown Ogallala, Nebraska. Everybody leaves happy, and my dad's cuts are 10 bucks.

Shawn Haney  
Sacramento, California

## CLASSIC BEAUTY

Playmate Jaslyn Ome (*Special of the Day*, April) is more like Jaslyn OMG.

Thomas Howard  
Harstine Island, Washington

Irene Schaur's photos of Gabriela Milagre (*Obrigado Brazil*, April) would



Gabriela Milagre is a work of art.

not look out of place in a museum.

David Burroughs  
Port Townsend, Washington

David Bellemere's photos of Karolina Szymczak (*The Muse*, March) are outstanding. It's nice to see a model without all the distracting background details.

Dan Gwizdak  
East Brunswick, New Jersey

## FAN LETTERS

After years of telling friends I read PLAYBOY for the articles, I can now tell them honestly that I read it for the recipes. Your food page in *After Hours* is great.

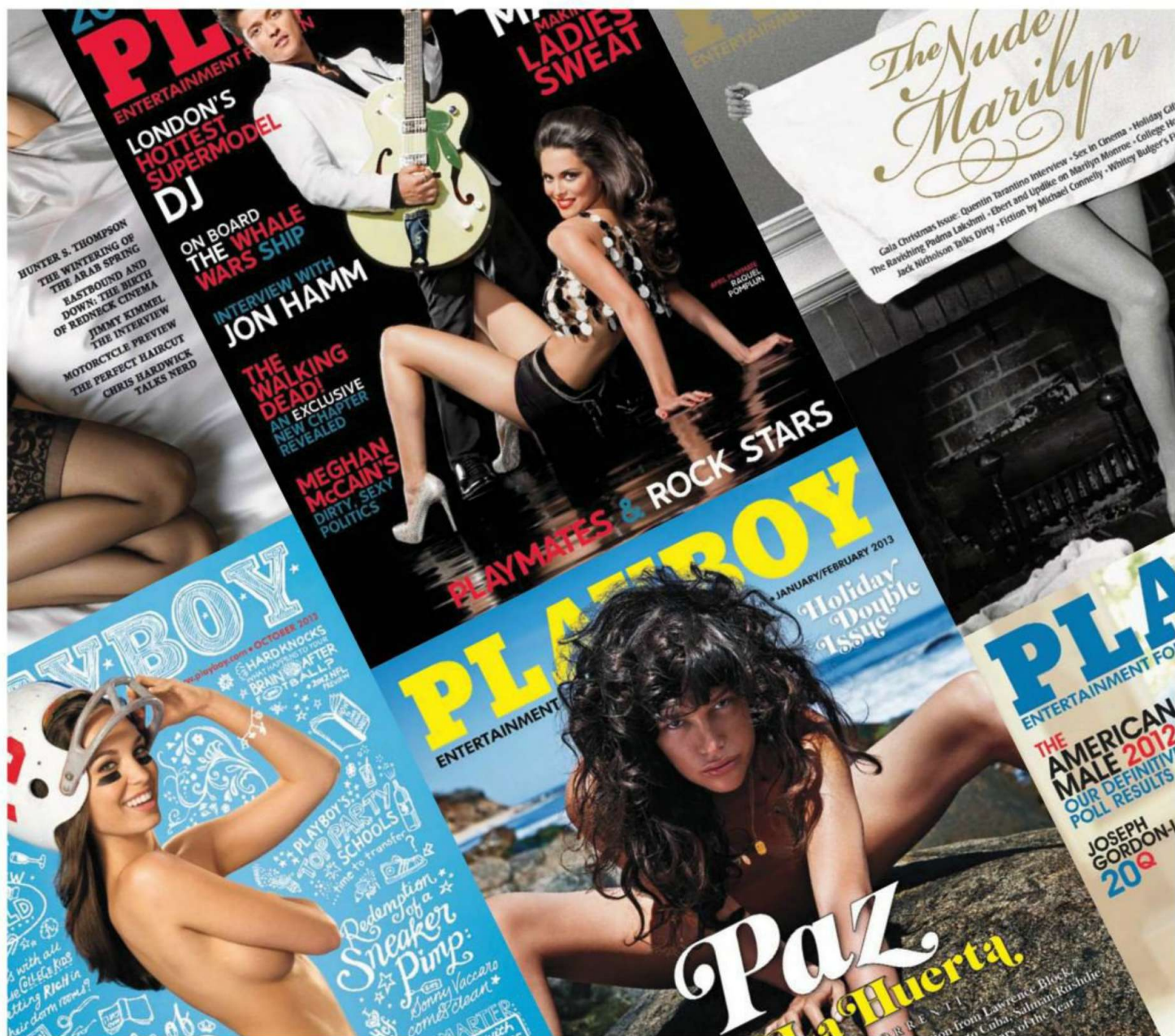
Ed D'Alessandro  
North Olmsted, Ohio

Bravo for your recent covers, especially October and March, and for the *After Hours* redesign. Keep innovating.

Christian Welsch  
Luxembourg







Playmate Kylie Johnson, Miss February 2011

# GET THE ONES THAT GOT AWAY

*back issues now for sale on*  
**PLAYBOYSTORE.COM**

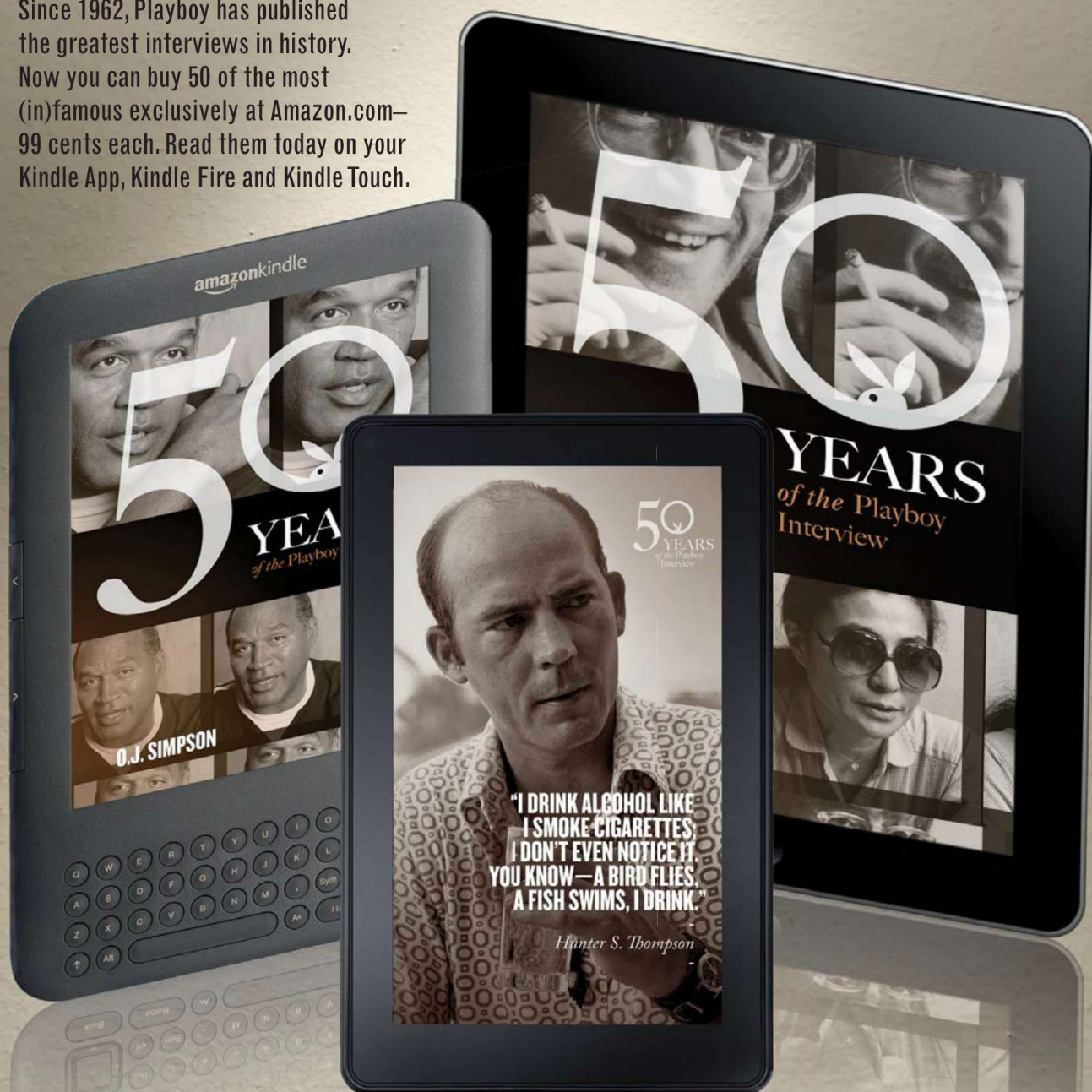




# PLAYBOY INTERVIEWS

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PLAYBOY

# Afterhours

- JUNE -  
2013

## BECOMING ATTRACTION

JESSICA CLARK

• *GOOD AND EVIL* battle it out in the body of British actress Jessica Clark, who plays virulent vampire deity Lilith on *True Blood*. "She's the essence of power, and it's insanely fun to play someone who behaves so badly," Jessica says. "But everything is gray. She might be misunderstood." Jessica can relate. "People think I'm a good girl, even though I'm naked and covered in blood on TV," she says. "Maybe it's my accent?"





## FAST-FORWARD NATION

**NETFLIX, ARRESTED DEVELOPMENT AND THE SUPERSIZING OF OUR TV HABITS**

• Historians will call it the Great Bluth Binge, that moment when potentially half of America's workforce—the half with Netflix subscriptions, anyway—ditches work to devour a marathon of *Arrested Development*. The fourth season of the beloved show launches on Netflix on May 26 with all 15 episodes available immediately, a move designed to encourage fans to

binge on the Bluth family. Welcome to TV's fast-food future.

*Arrested Development* is the third high-profile series to debut on the service. Eli Roth's *Hemlock Grove* and Kevin Spacey's *House of Cards* launched this year amid headlines declaring the end of traditional TV. The death knell may have been ringing, but it wasn't because movie stars were making shows exclusively for

the internet, as some believed. Instead, it was because Netflix made every episode available at once and let viewers consume the series in one sitting, like a Big Gulp of pop culture.

Binge viewing has been around since the multi-episode marathon hit TV. What makes Netflix's model different is that it's the first time shows are being *made* to binge on. Netflix chief content officer Ted Sarandos told the *Los Angeles Times* that *House of Cards* is "the first show for the on-demand generation." That claim is open to debate, but it is

a move toward actively pursuing what could be called the spoiler generation, for whom finding out what's next is more important than what's happening. Our pop culture appetites have accelerated from living in the now to living in the future. We talk about trailers more than the movies themselves and discuss spoilers more than plot points. We seek out information online about future episodes of our favorite shows instead of waiting to watch for ourselves. When you live on demand, anticipation is an annoyance.

In this environment, Netflix's offering becomes even more attractive. You can watch as much television as you want and never run out. There's an entire internet full of the stuff, so go ahead and fast-forward through the bits you don't like. What does a cliffhanger really mean if you can immediately watch the next episode for the resolution? Who needs talky exposition when you can jump to the next joke, the next shoot-out or the next sex scene? It's TV with a Burger King attitude. Go on. Have it your way.  
—Graeme McMillan



# COVER VERSIONS

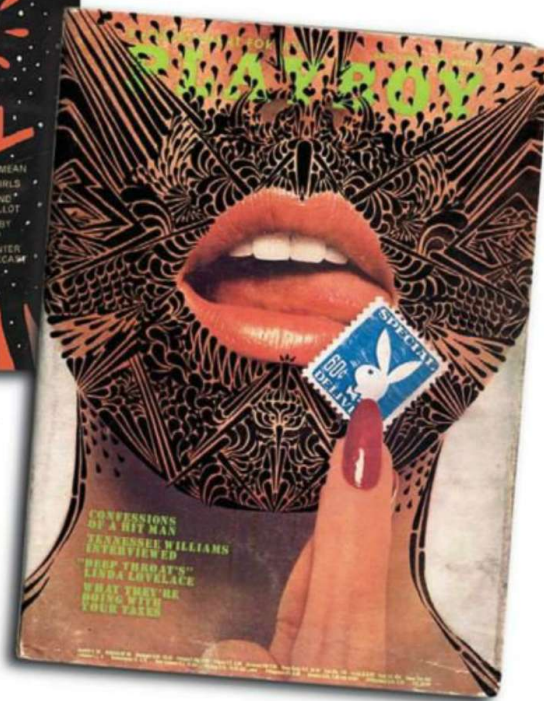
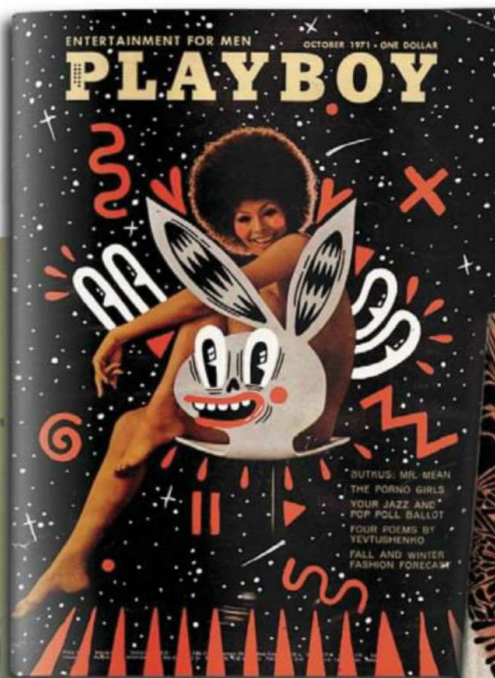
• A wave of talented artists stretching from London to Bogotá has transformed vintage PLAYBOY covers into original artworks. Although we consider every PLAYBOY cover a true work of art, we certainly appreciate these inspired remixes.

## HATTIE STEWART

London

→ "I had never really read PLAYBOY before," says British artist Hattie Stewart, who became a fan after purchasing vintage issues on eBay and in London shops. "The artwork, the articles, the cartoons—it was brilliant." Stewart, who recently launched a clothing line with Urban Outfitters, chooses

her covers carefully. "All the covers stand alone as remarkable pieces, but the best ones to draw over are the ones where my characters can really interact with the cover star." She hopes to offer the series in limited edition prints. "The response has been truly remarkable," she says. "I'm thrilled by it all." ([hattiestewart.com](http://hattiestewart.com))



## DEREK HESS

Cleveland

→ A fine artist with rock roots, Derek Hess got his start creating posters for bands such as Pearl Jam and Pink Floyd. Now his work is in the Louvre. Of his PLAYBOY series he

says, "My passion for drawing the human figure and my love of the classic covers just made sense to combine." Hess now has piles of vintage issues—sans covers. "I

can't bring myself to recycle them. They're just too cool." Hess plans to release *He Ain't No Vargas*, a limited edition book of his PLAYBOY designs. ([derekhess.com](http://derekhess.com))

## STINKFISH

Bogotá

→ Colombian street artist Stinkfish is known for creating sprawling, colorful street murals, often featuring portraits of locals. In between globe-trotting graffiti runs to Spain and

the Netherlands, he began drawing on record and magazine covers. "It's a style that comes from my graffiti work but in another space and scale," he says. "One day I found a

PLAYBOY from 1974, drew on it and liked the result." But don't plan on buying one: The series, exhibited at the Carmichael Gallery in Los Angeles, quickly sold out. ([stink.tk](http://stink.tk))



## CLASSIC UNMASKED

AN INSIDE LOOK AT THE GREATEST GRAPHIC NOVEL OF ALL TIME

• In the 27 years since writer Alan Moore and artist Dave Gibbons launched the universally hailed *Watchmen* series, it has generated a superhero-size amount of bickering. Moore protested the 2009 blockbuster movie based on the book, describing the idea as "regurgitated worms," and cursed DC Comics for last year's *Before Watchmen*, a prequel series that offers origin stories for each of the *Watchmen* heroes, provided by top comic talent—but not Moore and Gibbons. Moore's venom has not diluted the genius of the original work, collected this month in a deluxe hardback complete with outtake sketches and a new introduction by Gibbons. (\$40, [dccomics.com](http://dccomics.com))



Tel Aviv,  
Israel

## VIVA TEL AVIV

**SUMMER SIZZLES IN THE MIDDLE EAST'S  
BEST NIGHTLIFE DESTINATION**

• Ask a local about Tel Aviv's nightlife and he'll tell you to write your address inside your underwear so the cabdriver knows where to drop you off in the morning. After 48 hours in the White City, we'd like to post an addendum: Bring a Sharpie. Says Tel Aviv mayor Ron Huldai, "We have 748 clubs and bars in this city—one for every 220 residents. Go out after two A.M. and you'll find out what kind of nightlife we have." Um, we're not

sure that math adds up, but any recommendations? "Nanutchka!" the mayor says with a laugh. "Women dance on the bar." Who are we to argue?

Nanutchka, an old-school classic, is on a nondescript street next to a construction site, which makes it hard to find but worth the effort. Antismoking laws aren't enforced in Tel Aviv, so push through the cloud and step into the bar's main room, which looks like a bordello you'd find on

1. Hit Yaya on Ben Yehuda for strong drinks and a sexy scene. 2. Sleek high-rises and pristine beaches line the coast.

*True Blood.* Happily, the vodka flows like wine. True to the mayor's word, women were dancing on the tables—belly dancing, actually.

Tel Aviv is a walking city, so get moving. Don't be fooled by the café tables out in front of Rothschild 12. Those locals sipping cocktails are like nightlife decoys, disguising the raucous party inside, where absurdly attractive Israelis (is there any other kind?) down drinks at communal tables and DJs spin loud 1990s flannel-rock mash-ups. If your ears get tired, the party spills into the courtyard out back—the perfect place to light up. Though it's not in any guidebook, we found the only thing Israelis care about less than nicotine is weed.

If you'd rather pray

to the gods of the dance floor, we like Radio E.P.G.B. in Neve Tzedek—Tel Aviv's answer to SoHo. Radio E.P.G.B. is the kind of hybrid dance bar we can get behind: It's comfortably on this side of *untz-untz*, and they make a very good cocktail.

The party in Tel Aviv doesn't really get going until two A.M., so down a Red Bull if you're fading. For after hours, we like the Orient Hotel, a subterranean bar owned by noted DJ Skazi (real name Asher Swissa). You'll find military chicks, good Israeli beer and enough Rihanna remixes to satisfy even Chris Brown. Safe travels. *Yalla bye.*

PS: That's Arabic for "See you later." Like the Sharpie, this too will come in handy. Trust us.—*Mickey Rapkin*



## BEACH BUM

**WHERE THE  
WOMEN ARE**

→ Grab a *café kar*—the closest thing to an American iced coffee in Israel—and hit Spiegel Park, which has enviable views of both the Mediterranean and the fine Israeli women hanging out at the park's well-populated beach-side dog run. Pet a Pomeranian. Take in the sea air. Mock the kite surfers. Repeat.

### NEVER SLEEP

## TEL AVIV'S BEST LATE- NIGHT EATS

9:00 PM

### ABRAXAS NORTH

> Chef Eyal Shani (judge on Israel's *MasterChef*) cooks seriously tasty dishes such as lamb shawarma and purple cabbage with braised lamb shank.

1:00 AM

### FLEISHMAN'S DELI

> A corned beef sandwich that's anything but traditional: Try yours with chipotle mustard and a side of warm, house-made potato chips.

6:00 AM

### BENEDICT

> Order the Florentine Benedict at this 24-hour breakfast spot. Mop up the hollandaise with that fresh-baked brioche that just appeared on the table.



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# THE PERFECT BURGER

**THE SECRETS BEHIND THE BEST HAMBURGER REVEALED**

• There's an ongoing burger battle raging in the restaurants of America, with Shake Shack, Umami Burger and In-N-Out Burger trying to outdo one another. Every man can grill a decent burger, but why leave well enough alone when restaurant R&D is producing so many new methods to improve the summer staple? Here are eight tricks appropriated from the country's top burger joints that add up to the best burger we've ever tasted.



**1**  
**ROLL OUT**  
→ Shake Shack uses Martin's potato rolls. Yep, the same stuff you can get in a supermarket.

**3**  
**UP THE UMAMI**  
→ Umami Burger tops its name-sake with caramelized onions and shiitakes.

**5**  
**MAKE BACON**  
→ Nueske's thick-cut bacon contributes richness and a kiss of smoke.

**7**  
**BLEND IT RIGHT**  
→ Shake Shack's closely guarded beef blend is rumored to be 50% sirloin, 25% chuck and 25% brisket.

**2**  
**HEIRLOOM LARGE**  
→ Thick slices of local heirloom tomatoes add sweetness.

**4**  
**LETTUCE GO**  
→ Iceberg remains the best. It stays crisp like no other.

**6**  
**GET FUNKY**  
→ L.A.'s Father's Office uses grated Gruyère and crumbled blue cheese.

**8**  
**SPREAD 'EM**  
→ In-N-Out's spread is approximately 3 tablespoons mayo, 1 tablespoon ketchup, 1 tablespoon pickle relish and a splash of vinegar.



FOOD STYLING BY CHRIS LANIER



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# ANATOMY

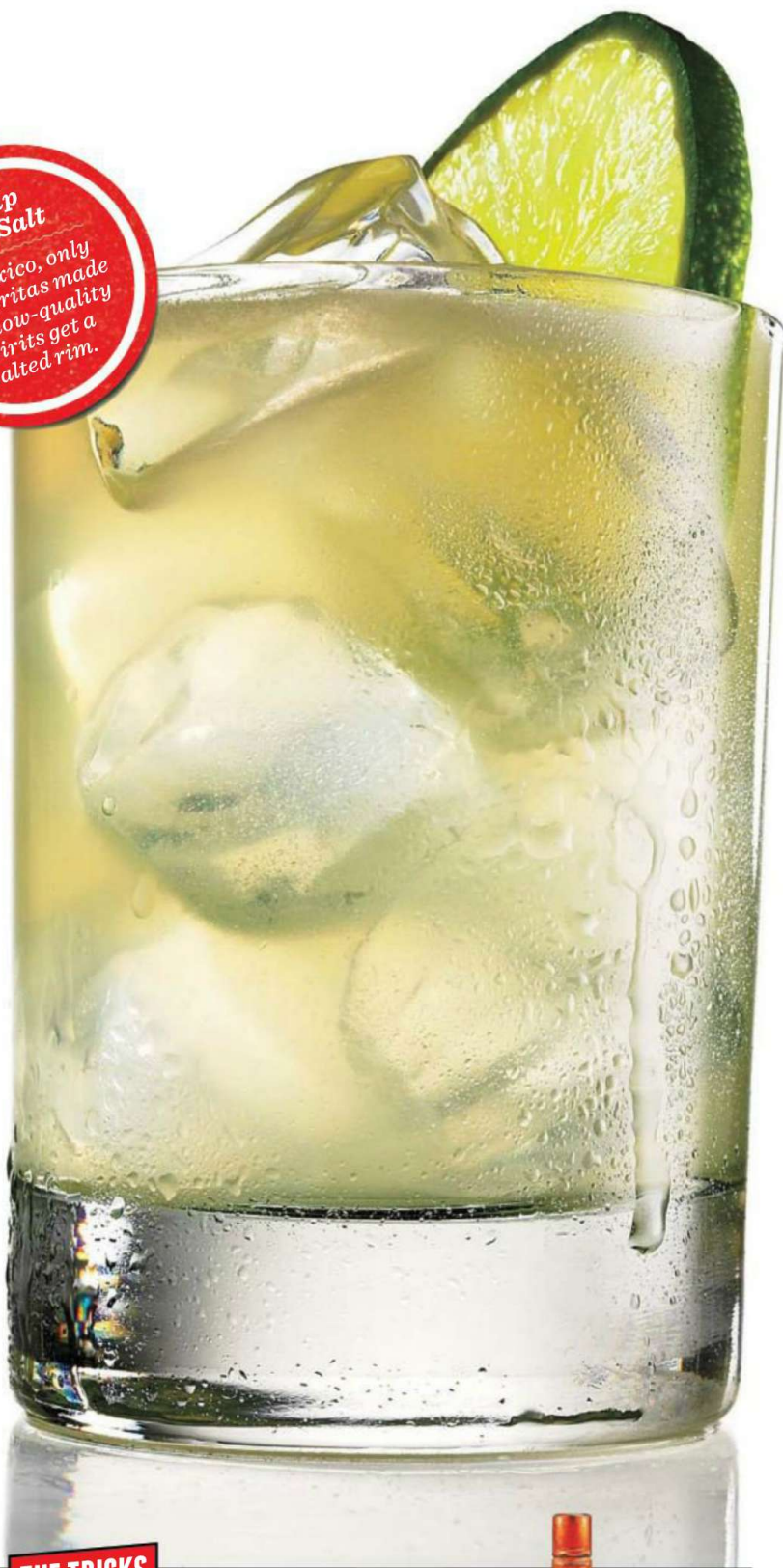
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## MARGARITA

**HIDE THE BLENDER, DITCH THE MIX.  
HERE'S HOW TO MAKE IT RIGHT**

• If you've sworn off margaritas because of a traumatic headache-inducing experience, don't blame the drink, blame the drink maker. Chances are whoever made it used tequila that wasn't 100 percent agave spirit, added corn-syrup-based prebottled margarita mix, then blitzed it in a blender to jump-start the pain with some brain freeze. To offer you a kinder, gentler reintroduction to the pleasures of summer's greatest cocktail, we consulted New York's Employees Only co-owner Dushan Zaric, who has sampled dozens of excellent margaritas in Mexico in the name of research. "This version is quite classic," says Zaric. "We added agave nectar for body and mouthfeel. It belongs in the daisy family of cocktails, which use a spirit, lime juice and triple sec. In Spanish, *margarita* means 'daisy.' " *Muy auténtico, muy delicioso.*

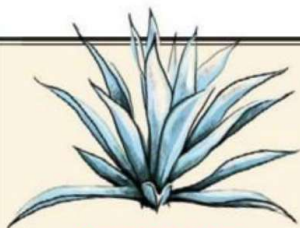
Welcome back to summer.



### THE ULTIMATE RECIPE

- 2 oz. 100 percent agave tequila
  - ¾ oz. Cointreau
  - ½ oz. agave nectar
  - 1 oz. fresh lime juice
- Shake hard in cocktail shaker for five seconds. Strain over fresh ice into a rocks glass. Garnish with a lime wheel.

### THE TRICKS



#### Agave nectar

→ Agave nectar (a.k.a. agave syrup) adds more body and a richer sweetness than sugar-based simple syrup.



#### Hand squeezer

→ Always squeeze the lime juice to order for each drink. Old lime juice oxidizes and tastes off.



#### Key limes

→ Key, or Mexican, limes are juicier, tarter and more aromatic than standard or Persian limes.



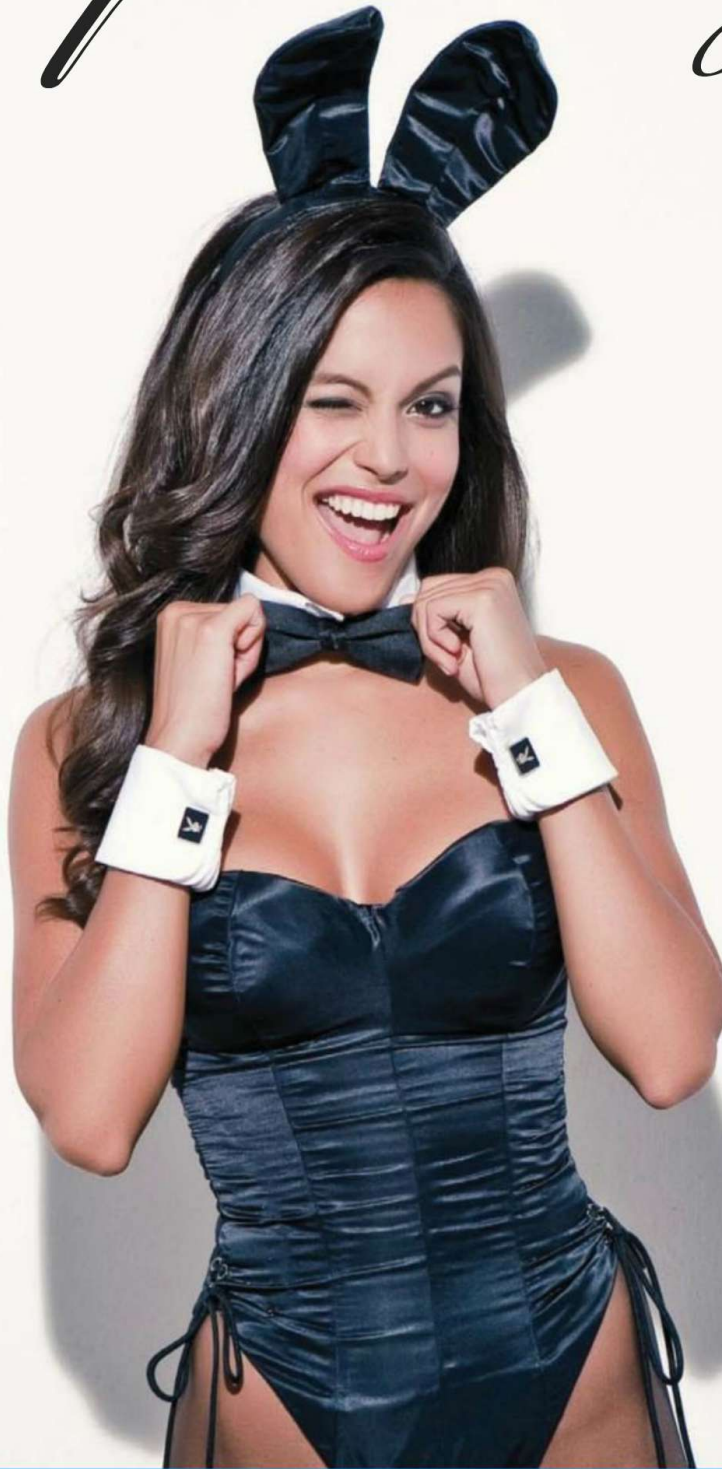
#### Cointreau

→ The deep, sweet orange flavors of Cointreau add more complexity than run-of-the-mill triple sec.



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# *Playmate* OF THE *Year*



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## TRUNK SHOW

### THE SCALED-DOWN BOARDSHORT MAKES A COMEBACK

• Before Speedos shocked the American male into hiding in overly long and baggy swim trunks, there was a happy middle ground: the classic boardshort—that token of endless summers, Mediterranean vacations and California dreaming. Now old-school boardshorts are back and in fine form. Not too short, not too long and always in style.



## SUIT UP

1

### That '70s Short

→ Checked, 17-inch polyester boardshorts with Velcro closure, \$129, by heritage brand Sundek.

2

### British Britches

→ The Bulldog, a tailored, mid-length, quick-dry short, \$250, by Orlebar Brown.

3

### Back to Cali

→ Style 301 Originals, \$61, by Birdwell Beach Britches, through southwillard.com.

4

### Sucker It Up

→ Seersucker Volley swim shorts with UPF 50 sun protection, \$44, by Lands' End.

5

### Island Time

→ The Makaha Drowner button-fly, dual-stripe trunk, \$170, by Hawaiian surf shop M.Nii.



# FACIAL DEFENSE SYSTEM

## THE ULTIMATE SUMMER SURVIVAL KIT FOR YOUR SKIN

• Blame what you will—climate change, your fair complexion—but there's no denying your face is going to take a beating this summer. And while a single bottle of bodywash might be enough to get you through the winter, you'll need a more sophisticated bag of tricks to fight back the season's blazing sun, aggressive bugs and ocean winds. Before that first long weekend at the beach arrives, assemble a toiletry kit that will keep your skin safe, smooth and sunburn free.

### CAMO KIT

→ Stash your gear in this Cordura dopp kit emblazoned with a woodland camouflage pattern. *Jack Spade Swedish M90 travel kit* (\$165)

### BUG OFF

→ Spiked with natural bug repellents such as citronella, rosemary and cedar, this balm is the organic way to protect against pests. *Badger Anti-Bug Balm* (\$10)

### BURN OUT

→ Because we know you're going to push that savage tan a little too hard at some point, you'd better load up on a restorative, rehydrating aloe vera-infused moisturizing spray. *Sun Bum Cool Down spray* (\$12)

### DAILY DOSE

→ Avoid lifeguard zinc face with this lotion that goes on sheer and provides SPF 30 protection. *Peter Thomas Roth Moisture Defense lotion* (\$42)

### LIP SERVICE

→ You'll want to keep your lips smooth and your Suzy Chapstick happy with this SPF 12 lip balm. Available at [themotley.com](http://themotley.com). *Buckler's Chapped Lip Remedy* (\$8)

### THE SHIELD

→ This performance-oriented sunscreen is formulated to provide long-lasting protection, keep your hands from getting slippery and not drip into your eyes. *Sun Bum Pro SPF 50 sunscreen* (\$13)

### SCRUB OFF

→ Dead skin is gross skin. Strip it off with this oatmeal body scrub. *Kiehl's Ultimate Man body scrub soap* (\$15)







## MOVIE OF THE MONTH

## MAN OF STEEL

By Stephen Rebello

• Twenty-six years after Christopher Reeve's fourth and final Superman movie and seven years after director Bryan Singer's abortive *Superman Returns*, director Zack Snyder attempts liftoff with *Man of Steel*. The brooding, Christopher Nolan-produced 3-D epic stars Henry Cavill as Clark Kent-Superman, Amy Adams as Lois Lane, Russell Crowe as Jor-El, Laurence Fishburne as Perry White and Michael Shannon as General Zod. "We pretended the Superman mythology and comic book existed but that none of the movies did," says Snyder. "We've respected the Superman canon but made a modern movie in which Superman is still an alien, an outsider, but he's like the best and worst of all of us—on steroids.

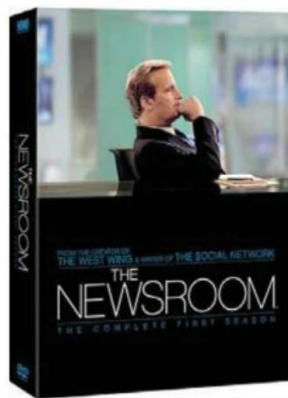
As Frank Miller did with Batman in *The Dark Knight Returns*, we also shined a hard light on the Superman mythology to learn why people love it and what was broken about Superman. I ended up ready to write a love letter to Superman, and I knew why I have respect for the character." Do those feelings extend to Cavill, on whose acting, charm and broad shoulders the flick could crash or soar? "We screen-tested Henry in the old Christopher Reeve costume. When he walked out in front of a tough crew of 50 people, they not only didn't laugh, they looked at him and it was, 'That's Superman.' It was powerful and awesome. It's immensely satisfying to see Superman live again in the way we've made him."

## DVD OF THE MONTH

THE NEWSROOM:  
THE COMPLETE  
FIRST SEASON

By Stacie Houglund

• Aaron Sorkin mixes drama and romance in this socio-political HBO series about the Atlantis Cable News network's *News Night* program, whose journalists strive for honesty over ratings in their coverage of real-life events such as the BP oil spill. Sorkin's trademark snappy dialogue, team of skilled directors and exceptional cast sell it, including Jeff Daniels as vaguely Republican tell-it-like-it-is anchor Will McAvoy, Emily Mortimer as his ex and *News Night* executive producer, and scene stealer Olivia Munn as a socially awkward economist with a show on the network. No matter how you feel about the show's left-leaning politics, it's ultimately about loving your country while acknowledging its faults. (BD) **Best extra:** Sorkin's commentary reveals some intriguing details about season two, which premieres in June. **\*\*\***



## 6

MOVIES YOU  
SHOULD SEE  
THIS SUMMER

**FORGET THE BEACH,  
BEER AND VACATIONS.  
THE REAL FUN IS IN  
THE THEATERS**



## THIS IS THE END

→ Twenty-six years after Christopher Reeve's fourth and final Superman movie and seven years after director Bryan Singer's abortive *Superman Returns*, director Zack Snyder attempts liftoff with *Man of Steel*. The brooding, Christopher Nolan-produced 3-D epic stars Henry Cavill as Clark Kent-Superman, Amy Adams as Lois Lane, Russell Crowe as Jor-El, Laurence Fishburne as Perry White and Michael Shannon as General Zod. "We pretended the Superman mythology and comic book existed but that none of the movies did," says Snyder. "We've respected the Superman canon but made a modern movie in which Superman is still an alien, an outsider, but he's like the best and worst of all of us—on steroids.



## AFTER EARTH

→ Real-life father and son Will and Jaden Smith face off against a vicious alien beast and flocks of sci-fi mutants that roam the postapocalyptic terrain of *After Earth*, writer-director M. Night Shyamalan's latest attempt to get his cinematic groove back.



## THE HANGOVER PART III

→ It's all about Zach Galifianakis bringing the crazy in this trilogy-ending *Hangover*, in which his fellow Wolfpackers Bradley Cooper and Ed Helms trek back to Vegas for a do-over showdown with Ken Jeong and newly added villain John Goodman.



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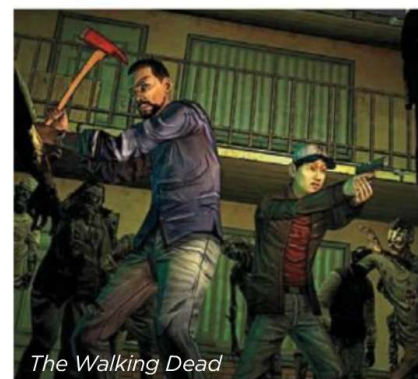




# THE LAST OF US

By Jason Buhrmester

• There are other ways to wipe out humanity than the living dead. A pandemic, not zombies, causes the destruction of civilization in *The Last of Us* (PS3), a stellar new game from the creators of the *Uncharted* series. Twenty years after a virus turns the bulk of humanity into deformed and violent creatures, roughneck Joel is hired to smuggle Ellie, a teenage girl, out of a quarantine zone and across the ruins of the country. Quiet moments scampering through rubble explode into action when the pair is swarmed by the infected, including the semi-human Runners and the Clickers, mutated humans blinded by fungus who use clicking sounds to locate prey. Weapons and ammunition are hard to come by, so use listen mode, which turns the world black-and-white while highlighting nearby enemies, then decide whether to engage or navigate around them. One tip: The infected are savage, but the other survivors aren't exactly friendly either. **★★★★**



GAMES

## BYTE-SIZE GAMING

THE FUTURE OF VIDEO GAMES IS ARRIVING ONE EPISODE AT A TIME

• Every year Hollywood endures pilot season. New TV shows are released, evaluated and, if warranted, killed. Will video games soon experience the same? There are signs that game makers are interested in testing a new formula by which games will be released one episode at a time. Developers have attempted episodic gaming before, but only recently have they been successful. Last year Telltale Games released five monthly episodes of its award-winning *Walking Dead* series, and the launch of *Halo 4* included *Spartan Ops*, a multiplayer expansion released in installments. Developers like episodic gaming because it allows them to tweak story lines and adjust gameplay bugs based on player feedback. And if a new game bombs, it can be killed off, saving developers millions of dollars and countless work hours and gamers the aggravation of having bought it.

## TEASE FRAME

Leslie Mann



**Leslie Mann** tries to spice up her marriage to Paul Rudd with some impromptu day play in *This Is 40* (pictured), writer-director Judd Apatow's more-or-less sequel to *Knocked Up*. See Mann next in Sofia Coppola's celebrity-robbery opus *The Bling Ring*, based on a group of real-life fame-obsessed teens who use the internet to track Lindsay Lohan, Paris Hilton and others in order to burglarize their homes.



### THE INTERNSHIP

→ Those good old wedding crashers Owen Wilson and Vince Vaughn regroup to play hot-shot salesmen tossed out of their jobs and into last-ditch gigs as Google's oldest interns. Age-related hilarity ensues in this Shawn Levy-directed comedy.



### WORLD WAR Z

→ This movie version of Max Brooks's horror novel about the zombie apocalypse stars Brad Pitt as a UN worker and family guy who rings the globe searching for a cure for the attacks that have brought mass destruction and chaos.



### FAST & FURIOUS 6

→ Our favorite aging fugitive street racer, Vin Diesel, and his buds go big in a 007-size action movie with colliding planes, tank battles and a mega-heist as they attempt to rescue team member Michelle Rodriguez from a life of crime.





**What happens in the corners, stays in the corners.**

**The new mid-engine Cayman S**





The Cayman and its driver keep certain things between them. What's possible in an apex, for example. And the thrillingly instant response of a sports car born to turn. It's a feeling that can't be described. Which is just as well. [CaymanCode.com](http://CaymanCode.com). Porsche. There is no substitute.



**PORSCHE**





MUST-WATCH TV

# BEHIND THE CANDELABRA

By Josef Adalian

• Before Lady Gaga and Elton John, there was Liberace. “He was way ahead of his time and did many of the things they do now,” says Jerry Weintraub, the producer behind HBO’s moving film about the iconic pianist. Directed by Steven Soderbergh (in what might be his last movie) and starring Michael Douglas as the man born Wladziu Valentino Liberace, *Behind the Candelabra* is not a strict biography. It’s more a

love story, chronicling the ultimately tragic romance between the closeted Liberace and the much younger Scott Thorson (Matt Damon). Douglas disappears into the role, capturing Liberace’s flamboyance without making him a caricature. Damon is also great, while Rob Lowe, Dan Aykroyd and Debbie Reynolds all pop up in showy smaller parts. Expect to hear all their names at this fall’s Emmy Awards. ★★★



## GRACELAND

→ USA’s latest cop show focuses on a Cali beach house where a melting pot of feds chill between undercover missions. Dig *Burn Notice*? Set your DVR.



## KING AND MAXWELL

→ Novelist David Baldacci’s bickering private eyes graduate to the small screen via Jon Tenney and Rebecca Romijn. It probably won’t be *Moonlighting*.



## ALBUM OF THE MONTH

# SAVAGES

By Rob Tannenbaum

• What would it sound like if witches started a band? Something akin to *Silence Yourself*, the first full-length record from Savages, a quartet of black-clad women from London. Their acidic, disorienting blare seems to be brewed from a tincture of feedback and S&M: “I took a beating today, and that was the best I ever had,” Jehnny Beth cackles excitedly over Gemma Thompson’s grinding guitar in “Hit Me”; the singer has also declared enthusiasm for songs about “violent things.” Their music is as Gothic as a Brontë convention at Westminster Abbey, and it’s likely to leave you with purple bruises on your torso. Savages recall the circa-1978 glory of Bauhaus, Magazine, the Gun Club and other postpunk illuminati. But the 11-song, 38-minute *Silence Yourself* is no rehash; as much as the music sometimes sounds like Siouxsie and the Banshees, it also evokes the gorgeous anguish of Francis Bacon’s *Head* paintings. One last reason we love them: Their producer is named Johnny Hostile. ★★★

## Q&A WITH TYLER, THE CREATOR

The 22-year-old rapper, video director and leader of Odd Future discusses his new album, *Wolf*, his reputation and the size of his balls

**Q:** Which part of *Wolf* is going to piss people off the most?

**A:** People who barely know anything about me, or people who know me only from my song “Yonkers,” are probably going to be like, “What the fuck?” They think all I do is rap about raping chicks and crazy 666 shit, which, truthfully, I fucking don’t do that much. Maybe I do it on a couple of songs.

**Q:** In the YouTube comments on your new video for “Domo

23,” someone asks, “What the fuck is in that nigga’s pants?”

**A:** [Laughs] That’s my fucking dick, bitch! No, actually that was mostly my fucking balls.

**Q:** When was the last time you heard a song that really amazed you?

**A:** Two days ago on YouTube I heard Haruomi Hosono doing fusion jazz. It was a beautiful fucking moment. I don’t do drugs or drink—that’s my high.





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**12**  
**hours**

Length of Norwegian television program *National Firewood Night*, including eight hours of a live fireplace.

Number of viewers:  
**20%**  
of the population, or roughly 1 million people.

**One for the Road**



According to researchers at London Metropolitan University, the safest song to drive to is Norah Jones's "Come Away With Me." Hip-hop and heavy metal were found to be the most dangerous.

## Help Wanted

Positive drug tests by job applicants increased

**15** percent

last year, according to Quest Diagnostics.



It takes almost an hour of work to afford a beer in India.



In the United States it takes less than 10 minutes.

**40** %

of survey respondents would avoid in real life anyone who unfriended them on Facebook.

## Top Three Female Porn Star First Names

① **NIKKI** | ② **JESSICA** | ③ **LISA**

## Top Three Female Porn Star Last Names

① **LEE** | ② **LOVE** | ③ **STAR/STARR**

**3,423**

**pounds**



Weight of Thor's hammer according to Marvel, based on the legend that the hammer is forged from a mythical metal called uru.

## Dead Man Walking

The *Walking Dead* is the deadliest show on television, with an average of 38 dead bodies per episode, according to Funeralwise.com.



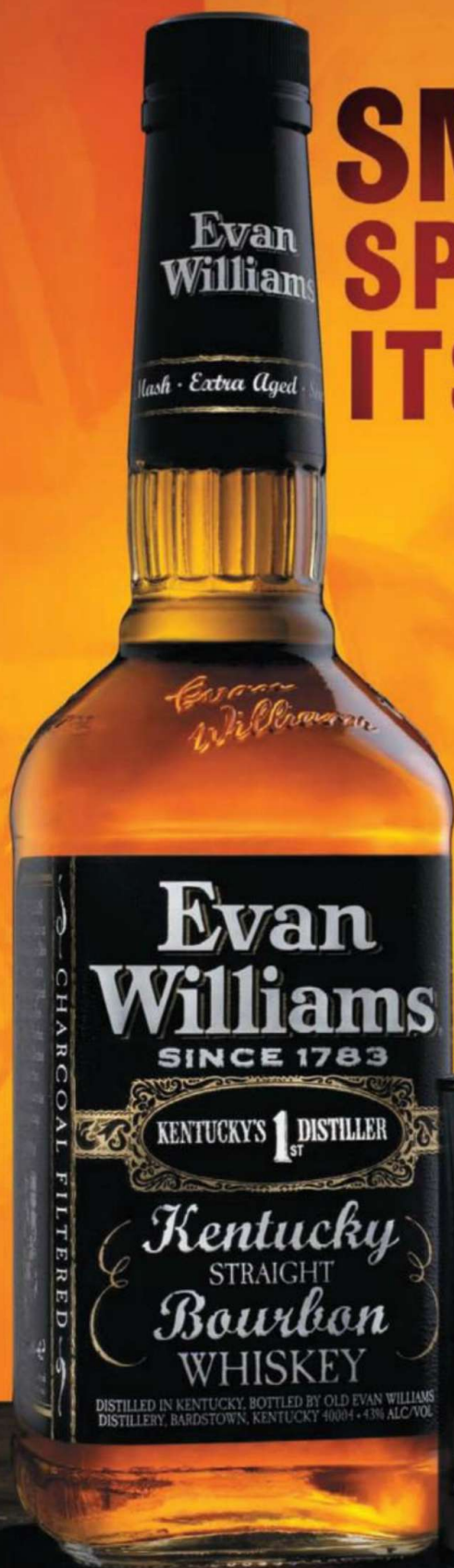
of those are zombies.

**60 to 1**

Ratio of FarmVille players to actual farmers four months after the game launched.



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## OVER THE TOP

**LAMBORGHINI'S BELOVED COUPE LOSES ITS ROOF, JUST IN TIME FOR SUMMER**

• Lamborghini celebrates 50 years in 2013. Ever since Ferruccio Lamborghini, an Italian tractor maker by trade, debuted his first car, the company has been about exclusivity and power. It's doubtful if even Ferruccio could have imagined the new Aventador Roadster, a topless iteration of Lambo's flagship. The numbers astound: a 6.5-liter V12, seven-speed paddle shifter, 700 horsepower, top speed of 217 mph. The styling is a shock of exclamation points joined at

sharp angles, and the company engineered color tones that change according to how the sun hits the car. But it's the handling that amazes most, with cornering that must be experienced to be believed. Efficiency isn't the V12's strong point (about 18 mpg highway), but the car has a cylinder-deactivation system (it can run on half its engine when you're trotting through town). Fewer than 150 of these will reach America in 2013, with a \$445,300 tag. Perchance to dream.

### STATS

- 6.5-liter V12
- 700 horsepower
- Torque: 507 ft.-lbs.
- Zero to 60: 2.9 secs.
- \$445,300

## ON THE ROADSTER

**\$23,720**



### MAZDA MIATA MX-5

→ Its 167 horsepower may not sound like much, but this lightweight beauty flies. It's the most fun you can have for under \$25,000.

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### PORSCHE BOXSTER

→ Relaunched for 2013, the Boxster has won more awards than Robert De Niro. A killer in the corners. Top speed: 164 mph.

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### CHEVROLET CORVETTE CONVERTIBLE

→ All new: The fastest, most hard-charging base Vette ever. Too bad the drop-top won't arrive until early fall.

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### JAGUAR F-TYPE

→ Jag's first two-seat sports car in more than 50 years. With 340 horsepower standard (up to 495 for the V8 S model), this little cat roars.

**\$212,240**



### MERCEDES-BENZ SL65 AMG

→ The six-liter bi-turbo V12 cranks 621 horsepower, nearly as much as the Lambo above. Pricy! Drive it and you'll know why.



# THINK TANK

PUMP THESE FUEL FACTS INTO YOUR CAR. THE BILL'S ON US

## 1 THE MIX

• Ninety percent of a gallon of gas is actual gas; the rest is plant-based ethanol plus a trace amount of additives specific to each brand, explains the American Petroleum Institute's Bob Greco. "That's how you distinguish one brand from another." Which brand is best? It's up to you.

## 4 FLEX FUEL

• Some gas stations, particularly in farming areas, offer E85—15 percent gas, 85 percent ethanol, usually made from corn. Only flexible-fuel vehicles, about five percent of all cars in the U.S., can run on E85. Advocates argue the fuel creates fewer emissions and comes from a renewable source.

## 2 PRICE CHECK

• Crude oil accounts for 68 percent of the cost of a gallon of regular. (Every barrel has 42 gallons, so if a barrel's going for \$100, divide that by 42, for \$2.38.) On average, you're paying another 42 cents in taxes per gallon, plus the oil company's costs to transport the fuel and its profit margin, which vary.

## 5 HOW TO SAVE

• Improving fuel economy is easier than most people think. Start by keeping your tires properly inflated (remember that tire pressure decreases when it's cold and increases when it's hot). Drive moderately with no sudden acceleration, and keep the junk out of your trunk.

## 3 HIGH OCTANE

• An octane rating measures a fuel's ability to resist igniting too soon (engine knock, which wastes power). Normal engines run fine on regular. High-compression (i.e., high-performance) engines will cause fuel to pre-ignite, so they need high-octane fuel to prevent knock. Check your manual.

## 6 THE FUTURE

• What will gas stations look like in 10 years? "A lot like they do now," says Greco. "Most projections say that gas will continue to be the predominant source of energy in the transportation sector. We may see more E85, some natural gas. But it takes decades to transition from one fuel to another."

### Got Gas?

→The next time you're standing there, bored, fueling up, consider this: Only 90 percent of what you're pumping into your tank is gas. Guess what else is in there?



AUDI'S ENZO ROTHFUSS

## SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

RIDE ALONG WITH AUDI'S CHIEF COCKPIT DESIGNER

Audi is setting the benchmark for automotive interior design. Here's a quick-and-dirty on the process with the company's interiors chief, Enzo Rothfuss. On timing: "We begin four to five years before a car goes into production. What we create: ideas, far in the future." On simplicity: "At Audi, you should be able to describe a design in three lines. When you think about buildings—the Sydney Opera House, the Eiffel Tower—they're easy to draw in three lines. It has to be understandable to everyone." On detail: "We never give up on details. Everything has to be perfect. This is a tough fight sometimes because of money issues. But we never give up the fight." On materials: "When you get in an Audi, the wood is real wood. We have very fine aluminum, as thin as possible. We work with a leading Italian furniture manufacturer with top-quality leather." On the car of tomorrow: "In the future more things will work automatically. You won't even have a light switch. This will lead to a cleaner interior."





## LORD OF THE FLIES

**FLY-FISHING LURES GREAT MEN TO THE GREAT OUTDOORS. NOW IT'S YOUR TURN**

• Any landlubber can hook a worm. Fly-fishing is an art form reserved for gentlemen. It's Hemingway and Thoreau, and if nothing else, it's a quiet day by the river with a flask full of bourbon. Like golf, fly-fishing is simple by design, making it easy to start but difficult to master. Luckily Ned Parker, owner of Breckenridge Outfitters in Breckenridge, Colorado, has forgotten more about fly-fishing than most of us will ever know. "The fish don't care if your equipment looks good or not," he says, guiding beginners to the proper rod and flies (such as the woolly bugger tied above). For the best luck, Parker says, "think like a fish and drink like a fish." Sage advice.—*John Marrin*



### **Elk Wing Caddis**

→ This fly imitates one of the most common insects in trout waters and can catch trout coast to coast. Try "skating" it across the top of the water to lure them in.



### **Royal Wulff**

→ Fly-fishing legend Lee Wulff, an artist and Stanford dropout, helped create this pattern. It doesn't resemble an insect but has caught countless fish.



### **Bead-Head Zug Bug**

→ Fish from trout to carp love the bead-head zug bug. The fly's iridescent design reflects light, giving it the appearance of a tasty nymph.



### **Bead-Head Prince Nymph**

→ The glistening peacock feathers hypnotize fish, and the metal bead glimmers in water and quickly sinks the fly. Trout can't resist it.

1

### **HOT RODS**

→ "The rod is the most important part," Parker says. "Make sure the one you buy has a warranty, because rods break." The Orvis Clearwater five-weight nine-foot fly rod pictured here (\$295, [orvis.com](http://orvis.com)) comes fully rigged with a fly line, Clearwater LA II reel, carrying case and—best of all—a 25-year guarantee.

2

### **THE LINEUP**

→ The line you use should match your rod: a six-weight line for a six-weight rod. First-timers should choose a floating line, since it is the most versatile. As for learning knots and casting, Parker suggests a simple solution: YouTube videos. Hiring a guide also helps. "It will cut your learning curve by days, weeks and even years."

3

### **REEL SCIENCE**

→ A sweet reel can make learning to fly-fish a pleasure instead of a pain. A basic reel is fine because your hands do most of the work in fly-fishing. But if you're after big fish like salmon, you'll need a beefy reel with a powerful drag system mated to a stout rod. For most trout fishing, a five- or six-weight outfit is ideal.

4

### **WADE IN**

→ Don't worry about your wardrobe. The days of rubber waders and a pocket-covered vest are long gone. "Those are old-school; you don't need them," Parker says. Instead, wear good wading shoes with no-slip soles. You'll stay cool while everyone else sweats. A small hip or chest pack will easily fit all your gear.





# The First The Last The ONLY!



Actual size  
is 30.6 mm

## 50 Years later the 1964 Silver Proof Set still shines bright

On November 25, 1963, just three days after the tragedy in Dallas, the U.S. Mint began work on the 90% Silver Kennedy Half Dollar. It would prove to be one of the most popular half dollar designs in our nation's history. Not surprisingly, when Americans discovered that the brand new Kennedy Half Dollar was the centerpiece of the 1964 U.S. Silver Proof Set, demand immediately soared through the roof!

By January 11th, 1964, the Mint was forced to halt orders for the 1964 Silver Proof Set, and eventually had to reduce the original maximum order of 100 Proof Sets down to just 2 sets per buyer in the face of such staggering demand. Finally, on March 12, even the limit of 2 sets was halted because the Mint received orders for 200,000 Proof Sets in just two days!

Fifty years later, the 1964 Silver Proof Set is still in great demand. Why? Because this set is chock full of "Firsts," "Lasts" and "Onlys":

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- ✓ The **LAST** year the Roosevelt Dime, Washington Quarter and Kennedy Half Dollar were struck in 90% silver for regular production
- ✓ The **ONLY** 90% Silver Kennedy Half Dollar Proof ever minted for regular production
- ✓ The **ONLY** Kennedy Half Dollar Proof struck at the Philadelphia Mint

As we approach the 50th Anniversary of JFK's 1963 assassination this year, the 1964 U.S. Silver Proof Set is back into the spotlight again. Each set contains the 1964 Lincoln Cent and Jefferson

Nickel, along with three 90% Silver coins: the Silver Roosevelt Dime, Silver Washington Quarter, and the 1964 Silver Kennedy Half Dollar—the only 90% Kennedy Half Dollar ever struck for regular production.

### Saved from destruction—but how many sets survived?

Collectors know that the key is to find those sets still preserved in the original U.S. Mint "flat pack" just as issued. And over the past 50 years, that has become more and more difficult! Since this set was issued, silver prices have risen from \$1.29 per ounce to over \$48 per ounce at the silver market's high mark. During that climb, it is impossible to determine how many of these 1964 Proof Sets have been melted for their precious silver content. The packaging on thousands of other sets has been cut apart to remove the silver coins—so there is no way to know for certain how many 1964 U.S. Proof Sets have survived to this day.

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## POWER SURGE

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• An old computer monitor is moldering in your garage and a laptop gathers dust on your desk. Welcome to the age of the smartphone. These days we rely on our phones to handle everything from finding a decent restaurant to saving us from getting lost on the way there. They snap photos, capture HD video, crank music and play games. Occasionally we even use them to make calls. Lucky for us, the latest are powerful enough to handle it all and smarter than ever, thanks to Google's Android operating system. Here are three of our favorite devices.



### SAMSUNG GALAXY S4

→ The Galaxy S4 is so advanced, you barely have to touch it. Thanks to motion detection, videos pause when you look away. Tilting it allows e-mails to scroll automatically as you read. With a wave of your hand the Galaxy can skip a song, answer a phone call and more. The built-in language translator and 13-megapixel camera (with 12 shooting modes) make perfect travel companions.



### HTC ONE

→ The lightweight aluminum unibody of the HTC One packs in everything from a 4.7-inch HD display to thumping sound courtesy of Beats Audio. But where the One really distinguishes itself is the redesigned home screen, which displays a mosaic of personal updates pulled from your social media accounts, along with content from 1,400 sources ranging from ESPN to Reuters.



### LG OPTIMUS G PRO

→ Its giant 5.5-inch screen lands the Optimus G Pro in the category of "phablet," a cringe-inducing term for devices bigger than an average phone but not big enough to be considered tablets. All that size means extra muscle, including a 1.7 GHz processor, two gigabytes of RAM and 32 gigabytes of memory. It's not pocket-size, but the G Pro could replace every device on your desk.



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**(AND REMOVING)**

**BUTTONS**

**SINCE 1953**



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# Talking With Bernardo Bertolucci

by James Franco

More than half a century ago Bernardo Bertolucci began making his name as an Italian film director. With such classics as *The Conformist*, *The Last Emperor* and *Last Tango in Paris* under his belt, he was awarded an honorary Palme d'Or at the 2011 Cannes Film Festival for his life's work. Bertolucci's latest film, *Me and You*, is his first in nearly a decade. PLAYBOY Contributing Editor James Franco spoke with the director about the controversial *Last Tango*, his start in filmmaking and how he creates his striking work.

**FRANCO:** How did you become a director?

**BERTOLUCCI:** Pier Paolo Pasolini was close with my father and knew I loved movies. He asked me to be his assistant director on *Accattone*. "But Pier Paolo," I said, "I've never been an assistant director." He told me, "Bello, I've never directed." This was 1960, when the first New Wave films were emerging, and I skipped the Louvre and went to Cinémathèque Française every day with my parents' money. Working with Pasolini was like seeing a genius in action, seeing him invent his own kind of cinema. He didn't have a culture of film like I did, always going to the movies. It was fantastic, this director being born in front of me, and it wasn't just anyone, it was Pasolini.

**FRANCO:** *Accattone* used nonactors, no?

**BERTOLUCCI:** All nonactors. He knew exactly what he wanted. Pasolini didn't know cinema, but he had his own knowledge and art. His inspiration was the Carl Dreyer film *The Passion of Joan of Arc*—its

epicness, in a way. *Accattone* used movement in cinematography. It was very successful. He then had a script called *The Grim Reaper* but wanted to work on *Mamma Roma*, so the producer asked, "If you can't do *The Grim Reaper*, who can?" He chose Sergio Citti, his former assistant, and myself. We wrote the script in a month. They asked me to direct, and three months later I did my first film. I wrote it like Pasolini, but the style was completely mine. I wanted it to be different. That's why my films have a lot of movement but not like Pasolini's.

**FRANCO:** Were you nervous?

**BERTOLUCCI:** Very. I was 21—the youngest on set—and I'd skipped school. I said, "School is shit. Learn the reality of directing. Be a director."

**FRANCO:** You told Marlon Brando on *Last Tango in Paris* that you would get something very personal out of him.

**BERTOLUCCI:** Yes. He was skeptical, then a bit sad after he realized he'd given me his most intimate thoughts. As in all my movies, it was mostly improvisation, arguing and discussing dialogue changes. The dialogue was written a few hours before shooting. It's improvisation in that actors cannot prepare three months beforehand.

**FRANCO:** With that film, was it especially difficult getting actors to feel safe with the heavy subject matter?

**BERTOLUCCI:** You know, it's my job. Every actor is different. Maria Schneider, for example, hadn't done anything like it before. Marlon and I decided over breakfast one morning to use butter in their sodomy scene, which wasn't in the script. I decided not to tell her—it was asking for too much discussion. You can see how humiliated she is in that scene. It was somewhat...strong. She was very upset with both of us afterward. But if she didn't know about it beforehand, she'd react as she felt: mortified.

**FRANCO:** Do you feel bad about that?

**BERTOLUCCI:** I did. She died two years

ago and I wanted to apologize. It was a great performance, and I know you need to use any method possible to get a good shot, but maybe it was bad manners. Actors naturally feel deeply about their characters, because they're bringing life to something that's black-and-white, and I believe actors are writers in their films, in a way. But that film shocked Maria her entire life.

**FRANCO:** *Luna*, *The Dreamers* and *Me and You*, your latest film, all deal with youth. Is that coincidental?

**BERTOLUCCI:** It's because I'm 14 at heart. My brain didn't develop correctly. I like seeing young people change before my eyes. The lead in *Me and You* was 14 when we began, and I watched him grow up as we filmed. Now he's taller, with big shoulders and a new hairstyle. You can't recognize him.

**FRANCO:** How did the movie come about?

**BERTOLUCCI:** It's based on a famous Italian novel, and I wanted to work in Italian after 25 years of filming in English. Italian dialogue is tricky. The weakest part of Italian filmmaking is the dialogue; it's too literary. English can be dry; it's fantastic. So I wanted to approach this difficult language again.

**FRANCO:** It's a small space for a film, but there's a lot of movement with the camera. How did you figure that out?

**BERTOLUCCI:** It's an evolution. My wife says I could make a cup of tea sensual. I don't diagram my shots or plan anything. I have to invent in the moment, or at least pretend to, so every shot you see happens around the movement of the actors.

**FRANCO:** What would you say to young filmmakers about subjects they should use?

**BERTOLUCCI:** There are no rules to this game. Every film is unique; you have to be faithful to yourself. When I see films, I'm with a huge family of directors I love. I'm made of them. You see the connection between your work and a scene you loved 20 years ago. I skipped school, but the best school is the feeling you have on set. ■



# How to Outsmart a Millionaire

Only the "Robin Hood of Watchmakers" can steal the spotlight from a luxury legend for under \$200!

I wasn't looking for trouble. I sat in a café, sipping my espresso and enjoying the quiet. Then it got noisy. Mr. Bigshot rolled up in a roaring high-performance Italian sports car, dropping attitude like his \$14,000 watch made it okay for him to be rude. That's when I decided to roll up my sleeves and teach him a lesson.

"Nice watch," I said, pointing to his and holding up mine. He nodded like we belonged to the same club. We did, but he literally paid 100 times more for his membership. Bigshot bragged about his five-figure purchase, a luxury heavyweight from the titan of high-priced timepieces. I told him that mine was the **Stauer Corso**, a 27-jewel automatic classic now available for **only \$179**. And just like that, the man was at a loss for words.

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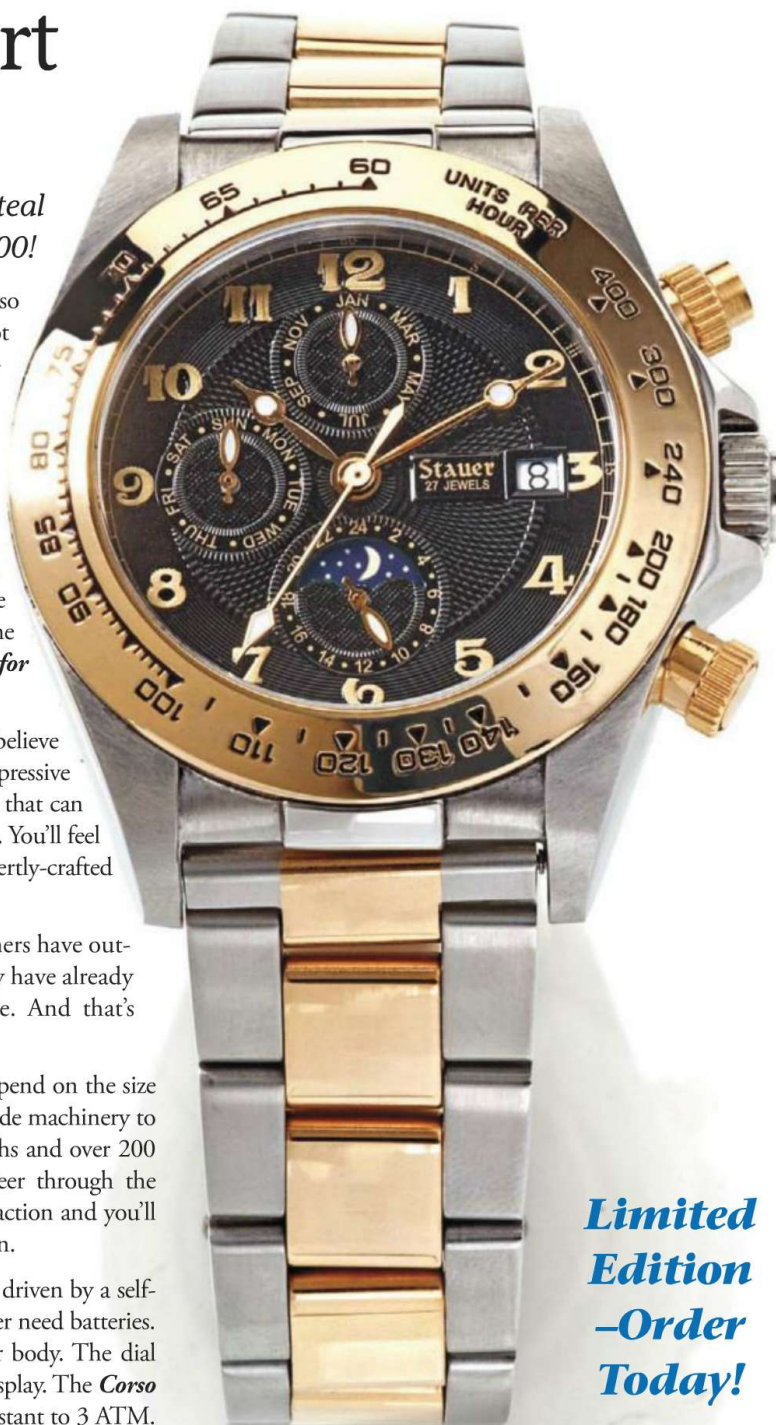


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# STRIPPERS VERSUS PORN STARS

It's the great male debate.  
Our writer has his preference...  
and it doesn't involve glitter

I don't like strip clubs. Sure, I like some things about strip clubs, such as naked women acting as though they desperately want to have sex, which is my favorite way for naked women to act, compared with what famous painters like to have them do, which seems to be mostly reclining or eating fruit.

But there's a lot I don't like. Strip clubs blast music I would suffer through only if I were out trying to pick up women. But the women at strip clubs are already naked, so there's no reason to endure 50 Cent's "Candy Shop." Also, I find it hard to get turned on by even the hottest chick grinding on my lap when a creepy old guy is staring at me from 10 feet away. This may be because I was never an altar boy.

And unless you really plan in advance, you have to ask for a bunch of singles in change when you walk in. Which means you're getting reused strip club dollar bills. Ever since my first strip club experience I've pictured our first president as a moist old man reeking of vanilla and soured with baby oil and glitter. And once you get those singles, you're committed to handing all of them out at the club because you cannot enter them into the non-strip-club economy. "Thanks, housekeeper, for cleaning my room. Here's some syphilis!"

The problem, in short, is that I'm a porn guy. There are strip club guys and there are porn guys. Sure, there are men who don't like either, to whom I'll refer, for the purposes of this article, as "low-testosterone half-men who need to keep this fact to themselves because they're making the rest of us look bad." And yes, there are men who like both, whom I'll call "not getting any." But even men in those two extremes have a slight preference for one or the other.

We porn guys are too self-conscious to buy into the fantasy that strip clubs demand. I'd have to take a year of classes at Second City before I could

act as though I believed a woman was into sliding down my leg, since no one has ever wanted to slide down my leg. Paying to talk to a hot woman with a fake name who is telling me that another fake name is her real name does more damage to my ego than those horrifying moments when I notice there's a mirror over the hotel-room desk where I'm enjoying porn.

Far worse than the lap dance is the pre-lap-dance chat. None of my fanta-

**By Joel Stein**

sies involve conversing with a 20-year-old. My fantasies involve a slutty-looking woman in a thong telling me about new experimental fiction. Instead, Mercedes tells me how cool it is that I'm from L.A. and how she'd love to move to L.A. since she's really into spiritual stuff.

Porn establishes a safe distance between me and women who are pretending to be turned on. Seeing a gang bang in person would be horrifying, but I can actually watch one on a small screen as I drink tea. I'm not responsible for porn stars' lives, any more than I have to worry about the childhoods of Sandra Bullock or Sally Field. But you have to interact with strippers, which means unsexy things like empathy and caring can occur.

Besides, strip clubs come with all the depressing compromises of actual dating. You settle for the lap dance from the girl who walks up to you because she's pushy or because she's closer to

being your type than anyone else in the room. You don't have to make such compromises when looking at porn. Moreover, porn informs you about fetishes you didn't even know you had. And when you accidentally run across a clip of an unknown fetish that grosses you out, it's even better. Men who are turned on by women in high heels stepping on rodents? Freaks! The foot fetishists, diaper wearers, clown fuckers—they make me feel delightfully superior. You never leave a strip club feeling you have a healthy attitude about sexuality.

Porn stars are so sex crazed they will do anything a man wants. Lap dancers, on the other hand, are so in control they will dance only for the length of a pop song and will not allow the man to move. The only part of lap dancing that seems like a perfect fantasy is the idea that a woman would ask a guy to dance and then allow him to sit still. I wish lap dancing were popular at weddings.

Maybe it's because I was never in a fraternity, but I think it's weird to want to get turned on in front of a group of your friends. If a woman is rubbing her breasts in my face and staring at me, I don't think, This would be much, much better if Mike were here.

I know we porn guys are the creepy raincoaters who have our most honest sexual experiences with a computer. And I know we're responsible for getting women to do things that are much more extreme and degrading than dancing naked. But at least we differentiate between romantic relationships and financial ones. And at least you can trust our dollar bills. ■







# Is She Hot? Are You Rich?

**Sure, it's shallow to lust after only beautiful women. But what about when the shoe is on the other foot?**

**I** live in Los Angeles, which means most of my single guy friends think they should be dating a model or an actress, or someone who looks like a model or an actress. Who can blame them? The most gorgeous girls from all over the world arrive every day, hoping to make it in Hollywood. They might end up as waitresses, but they're still here.

When these guys ask me to set them up, I tell them I know women who are smart and successful but civilian attractive rather than professionally hot. This rarely interests the bachelors even though I've successfully set up three marriages, with a fourth on deck. Sure, these guys married pretty girls, but the women had a lot more to offer than good looks.

You can ask for smart and funny and get hot as a bonus. But if you ask for just hot, that's usually all you get. Plus, I don't really know women who are just hot. Why would I want them around?

A few years ago I tried to set up one of my eligible Hollywood friends with a fun, smart, skinny blonde. He insisted on seeing a picture of her before he'd agree to a date. I had only a mediocre iPhone photo to e-mail. (I have other things to do besides play matchmaker. Honest.)

He thought she wasn't hot enough, probably because he's used to getting professional head shots when he makes this request. A mutual friend clued the blonde in on what happened. When my Hollywood friend finally met her and realized she was definitely pretty, it was too late. She wasn't interested. He's still single.

If you go for a girl just because she's hot, you'll learn what it feels like when a girl goes for a guy just because he's rich. Yes, it's time for the classic role reversal. You're a good guy, a hard worker, your mom thinks you're handsome. But your wallet? It's just average size. And now that nice girl you've just met looks through you as if you're invisible. How does it feel?

When I was in my 20s I made that mistake. I dated a Wall Street titan's son who was very sweet, until I had a terrible reaction to corrective eye surgery. (I thought I was going blind.) He'd never had to take care of anyone before and it freaked him out. This freaked me out enough to cancel our upcoming trip to Aspen. Unfortunately, that was the first and last time I was offered a ride on a private jet, but there's no bigger turnoff than a man who runs away when you need him most.

Another winner from that decade was a real estate heir who lived on a very high floor of a Trump tower. He loved treat-

ing my broke friends to fancy dinners, which I thought they appreciated until they made me choose him or them. Oh, and if I took a cab to his place, he would make me change all my clothes before I could sit on the furniture.

Don't even get me started on the guy I ditched in St. Barts even though he bought me a Pucci bikini. (He brought his own lounge-chair covers.)

These guys had tons of money, so they didn't have to develop other qualities that women find appealing in men, like compassion and maturity. It's the same with hot girls. They can get away with murder. They're usually late. It takes them forever to get ready and they always wear the wrong shoes for walking any farther than the valet. Those beige stains on your white hand towels? That's their makeup. You may not have heard of the college they attended. They order expensively, barely eat and don't even pretend to reach for the bill. They're always cold, and they get headaches at all the wrong times. You will always have to check baggage when you fly with them.

Remember the hottest girl in high school? What's she doing now? Probably not much. Maybe she's married with kids and lives in your hometown, or at least near it. She definitely doesn't look as good on Facebook as you remember her.

Meanwhile, the nerdy funny girl you didn't think was pretty enough to take to prom may have a cool career and enough cash to buy a better-looking middle age. Tina Fey was no looker until her 30s, when she lost a ton of weight, got on TV and became wildly successful. Now she looks awesome, thanks to her stylist, trainer and hair and makeup people. Success makes women look better with age.

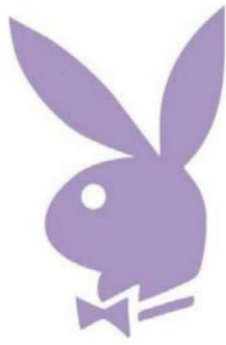
I'm not saying you need to make an ugly woman your wife. If you're shooting for a nine or a 10, knock it down to a seven or an eight. You'll get more value added in other departments.

The girl you think isn't hot enough to date could turn out to be your best friend and a fantastic mother of your children. Go on a few dates with her even if she's a size 10. Is your body so perfect? Hang out with her friends. Let her teach you a few things or at least turn you on to some cool new movies and music.

Having sex with the hottest girl in the world is a fun fantasy, but if you actually get her, it will eventually get old. She will snore, fart and complain about what you want to watch on television. And she'll probably dump you for a richer guy anyway. ■

**By Deborah Schoeneman**





# WHAT SORT OF MAN (or Woman) READS PLAYBOY?



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When my wife and I met at the age of 16, her mother said I wasn't good enough—and she still says that, even though we've been married 18 years. I have a good job, don't abuse drugs or alcohol and have always taken care of her daughter. I'm not sure what triggered it, but the day I turned 44 I told my wife I'd had enough and her parents weren't welcome in our house unless her mother could be civil to me. Everything was fine until yesterday, when a holiday card came from my mother-in-law addressed only to my wife and our sons. To me that is a disrespectful jab. My wife's response was that since I don't want anything to do with her mother, what's the difference? Am I being oversensitive?—C.G., Elizabeth, New Jersey

*This race to the bottom can't continue. You don't deserve your mother-in-law's scorn—it's actually directed at her daughter through you, and it's too bad your wife doesn't recognize this and have something to say about it. Our suggestion is that you and your mother-in-law go to couples counseling. We're not kidding. Someone has to negotiate a truce, and it can't be your wife. Alternatively, if you can stomach it, at least make a gesture. Forget the banishment. Ask your mother-in-law to let you buy her a drink, and attempt to negotiate a peace. She doesn't have to like you—you're pushing for benign neglect, if that's all she can muster. But she certainly loves her grandsons, and they are not judging either of you well for all this.*

In April you responded to a reader who said he preferred pussies that look like duck bills. As a person with labia, I believe the reader was referring not to the inner lips, as you assume in your response, but to the outer. The labia minora, at least the ones I've seen, look more like the rim of an oyster. Do you mean length or height when you say the labia minora ranges from one to four inches?

I was perusing a plastic surgery site and was shocked to see photos of labia minora that extend five or six inches. I had no idea! I also can't figure out how a vaginal opening could be five inches. I was happy to see the word *vulva* instead of *vagina*, which is internal. The use of *vajazzled* in another letter is cute, but *va-jay-jay* is immature, like calling a penis a *cocky wocky*.—D.T., Fredericksburg, Virginia

*We'll stop doing that. There are as many ways to measure a vulva as there are routes*

# PLAYBOY ADVISOR



One of my wife's friends has big, beautiful tits and nice lips. I am considering asking my wife to invite this friend to spend the night with us. She stayed over once, and my wife told me she slept in the nude. Does my wife want me to give her some? I've never had a threesome, but think I'd be good at it. I've been fantasizing and planning my moves. I have the tool and the stamina. I don't want to ruin our marriage, but I'm bored and there's not enough sex. Jacking isn't satisfying, so don't go there.—K.B., Grand Rapids, Michigan

*Every guy has the tool, so we don't think your wife will be impressed by that. You're way ahead of yourself, and your delivery needs a lot of work. If you're bored, so is your wife. That's where you start the conversation. A threesome with the nude girlfriend sleeping in the spare room may be a fun fantasy, but it needs to stay there, at least for now. If it ever happens, with this woman or another, your wife will have to initiate it, or think she did. That's a move even we haven't mastered.*

*to explore it. In this case, the minora measurement is height (the researchers didn't measure extension). Vaginal length refers to depth. To get a ruling on bills, we turned to Betty Dodson (dodsonandross.com), a pioneer in teaching women about their vulvas. "Duck bills?" she said. "That's a first. He must be talking about the inner lips. The opening to the vagina cannot be five inches high or wide, because it's not a hole. It's a cluster of folds that makes a different configuration in each woman and sits at the bot-*

*tom of the vestibule—the indented space inside the inner labia. The vagina is a collapsed space that must be opened with a finger, dildo or dick. But this is much ado about nothing. The vagina provides damn few orgasms. The hot spot is the clitoris. Get a grip, boys! Put an oil-soaked finger or wet tongue on her clit. Then, when you want to make a baby, check in with her first, and if she says 'yes, please' stimulate her clitoris while she's getting fucked." Gentlemen, you have your assignment.*

Some of my shirts have a horizontal button hole at the bottom but no button. What's it for?—B.L., Los Angeles, California

*No button? That's odd. We always thought the hole was designed to allow the button to take more stress from pulling and movement, as well as to "lock" horizontal patterns in place. (All button holes could be horizontal, but it's easier to slide a button into a vertical slit.) However, when presented with these hypotheses, custom clothier Alan Flusser, author of *Dressing the Man*, shrugged and said, "It's a style point." By that he means it has no purpose other than to indicate you are wearing a quality shirt. It does that by suggesting that whoever made the shirt had to turn the fabric to create the horizontal hole, an extra motion that says "hand-made." In addition, the hole is often sewed with colorful thread, a style point atop a style point.*

What sizes would you consider small, medium and big dicks?—M.K., Plantation, Florida

*How badly do you need to be big? Based on a study in which scientists measured 3,300 Italian conscripts by stretching their flaccid penises (which other studies show correlates to erection size), supersize is anything more than seven inches, which puts a guy in the 99th percentile (i.e., he's larger than 99 percent of men). Large could be anything over 5.9 inches, which marks the 90th percentile, or 5.5 inches, which is the 75th. If you are buoyed by the thought of being*

*larger than most men, 4.93 inches gets you a badge. As it turns out, a medium penis fits nicely into a large vagina.*

Come on, Advisor. A woman says her husband received a wedding invite addressed only to him, and your response is the bride and groom probably had too many guests (April)? Are you stoned? This guy clearly understands the easiest way in recorded history to score is at a wedding. Do this



woman a favor and wise her up!—P.A., West Hills, California

*We doubt any woman would take her partner's word for this unusual breach of etiquette without asking to see documentation. If he's going to the trouble of printing fake wedding invites, she has bigger problems—and we'll need a bigger blunt to respond.*

**O**ne of my fellow firefighters thinks his wife is fooling around. He's a good guy, and it's driving him nuts. Many of us read PLAYBOY and value your input. Here are the facts: Married 20 years. Two teens at home. Wife travels a lot for work, while he has a typical firehouse schedule: 24 hours on, three days off. He found lingerie in her closet that he's never seen before. She is always texting. And he noticed once when she got out of the shower that she had shaved her pubic hair into a strip. When she saw him she quickly grabbed a towel to cover up. He asked about the trim job, and she said she did it to get rid of the gray hair. Without more evidence, he's hesitant to ask if she's fooling around. What do you think?—J.D., Dallas, Texas

*He has to ask, because at this point, after the landing strip and lingerie tipped the scales, he's not going to get less suspicious. Unfortunately, the best he can hope for is a confession. A denial will still leave him with doubts. Even if his instincts (and yours and ours) are wrong, she's lost his trust, so the relationship has already been compromised.*

**I**n a response in March you imply the use of weed crimps sexual response in men. Several years ago Dr. Drew Pinsky asserted on *Loveline* that regular use of weed causes impotency. My husband and I have been cannabis users for decades, and about twice a week we provide hard evidence that proves you both wrong. When we toke up before sex, he lasts longer and I get all the orgasms I want. I believe the Advisor and Pinsky are passing on DEA-approved versions of the "big lie" about cannabis that started with President Nixon.—K.S., Iowa City, Iowa

*The big lie? We can't speak for Dr. Drew, but marijuana is a drug, and all drugs have side effects that vary in intensity among individuals. We're glad to hear you're having great sex, but the science is clear that heavy use (i.e., more than your twice a week) affects sperm production, which is what Pinsky was probably referring to. Nixon's legacy is a system in which the government doesn't allow researchers to use marijuana in experiments to study its effects, good or bad. That makes it more difficult to know the truth.*

**A**re women okay with manual stimulation instead of oral sex? I aim to please, but with HPV and herpes all over the place I am reluctant to put my tongue where it doesn't belong. Women seem to enjoy my nimble hands, but I don't know if it's necessary to use my tongue.—S.S., Chicago, Illinois

*A woman may be satisfied with your fingering, if fingers are all she's ever known, but we think you're both missing out. You're right to be cautious, as many STDs, including herpes and HPV, can be spread through oral sex. In a study published last year, researchers who tested 5,579 Americans found 10 percent of the men had oral HPV infections, which have been connected to throat cancer. That was nearly three times the number of infected women. It's not clear why this is the case. Abstinence is the only guaranteed method to avoid exposure, but a thin sheet of latex or polyurethane such as Sheer Glyde Dams works well. In a pinch you can use a condom cut lengthwise; also, plastic wrap is better than nothing (a 1989 study found that Glad wrap blocks the herpes virus). Any barrier will decrease sensitivity, but everything has a trade-off. You could trust your partner to inform you if she has HPV, but she may not know. The virus is so common that nearly every sexually active adult eventually becomes a carrier.*

**T**he Advisor is my favorite part of the magazine, followed by guessing the Playmate's measurements. I've never been more turned on by your responses than in April, especially the answer you gave the gentleman who couldn't understand why his wife was offended when he didn't introduce her to a co-worker. Just one question for you, Advisor: Will you marry me?—S.P., Spokane, Washington

*We're happy to turn you on whenever we can, but you lost us at "marry."*

**I**'m an attractive, sane 20-year-old woman who has been fooling around with one of my classmates. Last night, in the middle of what I thought was hot sex, he stopped and said he felt weird. I asked what was wrong, and he said it wasn't me but he didn't want to be fuck buddies anymore. I wasn't attached to the guy, and I'm pretty sure he isn't seeing anyone, but I have no clue why he did that. Any thoughts?—A.S., Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

*You know how emotional guys can be. He's become attached to someone, maybe you.*

**M**y widowed father, who is 88, likes to visit porn sites. I think it's healthy—he's not dead. I know about his surfing habits because his computer gets filled with malware and other crap, and he calls me to clean it up. Since he's in Florida and I'm in New York, it's difficult for me to help. Are there safe sites you can recommend for him (and me—I'm not dead either)?—A.C., Melville, New York

*Your father is making the same mistake guys of any age make, and that's trolling for free porn, which always comes with a price. If he sticks with established subscription video-on-demand sites—vivid.com, aeon.net and hotmovies.com, for example, or the sites such as x-art.com that we discussed in May—he won't get attacked. Create a free e-mail account for him to use when signing up so any porn-related mail flows there. Install*

*a firewall to block malware; AVG offers an effective free version at free.avg.com. Finally, install a program such as TeamViewer (free at teamviewer.com) on his computer and yours so you can access his desktop remotely to tweak settings or clean up. It's always touching to see a father and son with common interests.*

**I** have been fortunate enough to dine at upscale restaurants near home as well as abroad. Can you tell me the correct way to signal you are finished with your meal?—P.W., Helper, Utah

*Place your knife and fork (tines up) in the center of the plate, facing toward the center. This is useful, says Michael Procopio, an experienced waiter who writes Food for the Thoughtless (foodforthethoughtless.com), because it allows the server to pick up the plate while holding your utensils with his or her thumb. If you place them any other way, the server will likely stop to rearrange them, which may be disruptive. Further, "be aware of when you finish," Procopio says, noting a waiter typically will not clear a table until everyone is done. As a result, he says, "I occasionally have to let some of my guests sit with dirty plates for up to half an hour while their blithely unaware tortoise of a tablemate chews and chatters as everyone else squirms, wants coffee or is jonesing for a postprandial sugar rush."*

**M**y husband and I have a great sex life, except he wants more blow jobs. I wouldn't mind, but my mouth, lips and sometimes throat go numb after five minutes. I never had this problem with anyone else. Can you help?—L.C., Minot, North Dakota

*Have your lips and mouth gone numb in the same way while licking an ice cream cone? There's a lesson in that. You don't have to go fast and furious. In fact, a huge part of the turn-on for a guy, besides eye contact, is thinking—believing—that you're in no hurry. Keep him well lubed, with lots of slurping and moaning, and use your hands; the mouth-hand job is Advisor approved. At the same time, you could test a technique we learned from Nina Hartley: Give him a blow job every single time he asks, but commit to only five minutes. Go all out, but if he hasn't come in five, he's on his own. That may sound cruel, but it's not if you consider that he will never hear "no" again. Because really, who can't spare five minutes?*

*All reasonable questions—from fashion, food and drink, stereos and sports cars to dating dilemmas, taste and etiquette—will be personally answered if the writer includes a self-addressed, stamped envelope. The most interesting, pertinent questions will be presented in these pages. Write the Playboy Advisor, 9346 Civic Center Drive, Beverly Hills, California 90210, or send e-mail to advisor@playboy.com. For updates, follow @playboyadvisor on Twitter.*





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Fanaticism *Xenophobia* Murder



## A BORDER TALE

*J.T. Ready led a paramilitary group called U.S. Border Guard. His paranoia led him to tragedy*

BY JAKE WHITNEY

See that mountain range? That's Table Top. To the west is Sand Tank." Harry Hughes stands at the northern edge of the Vekol Valley, pointing to a stretch of dirt and cactus between Arizona and Mexico. It is an area he once patrolled with J.T. Ready and his citizen group U.S. Border Guard in search of "narco-terrorists." Hughes is also a regional director of the National Socialist Movement. He wears desert camouflage and black sunglasses and has an AR-15 slung across his chest. Over lunch two days earlier Hughes seemed mild mannered and nonthreatening. Today, prowling the desert, he is imposing. "That's where they wait for their ride," he says, motioning to a secluded area of drainage tunnels that lies directly below Interstate 8. As Hughes explains, this valley is the base of a smuggling corridor that leads up the

John Wayne Parkway toward Phoenix.

According to a report by the Anti-Defamation League, citizen border patrols have operated in Arizona since 1999. Among the first was Ranch Rescue, founded by Jack Foote, an ex-Army officer from Texas. While Foote and his early successors were blatantly xenophobic—Foote declared illegal immigration to be a Mexican plot to invade the United States—more recent groups including U.S. Border Guard have opted for veneers of legitimacy. J.T. Ready registered USBG as a search-and-rescue operation. According to Hughes, Ready deliberately chose a name that would be confused with the U.S. Border Patrol, a federal agency.

In launching Ranch Rescue, Foote tapped into the frustrations of ranchers faced with immigrants sprinting across their properties. Because few crimes were tied to these immigrants, border groups

**More recent  
border groups  
have opted  
for veneers of  
legitimacy.**

## READER RESPONSE

### LEGAL WEED

I have no argument with anyone who prefers medical marijuana over pharmaceutical-grade alternatives. However, it's safe to say people who consume weed for medicinal purposes amount to a small percentage of users, and if these sufferers were offered a free, nonaddictive, noneuphoric pill with no side effects, you'd have to wonder how many would switch. Let's cut the pious bullshit—weed is a recreational drug and the rest is a farcical sideshow. Filthy lies about marijuana led to unconstitutional legislation that snowballed into the monolithic war on drugs. Crushing the



anti-marijuana laws would set in motion a domino effect that leads to an American spring.

**Fred Bilello**  
Laughlin, Nevada

A high percentage of substance users and abusers have tried cannabis, yet their "gateway" drugs are overwhelmingly alcohol and tobacco. Consumption





## READER RESPONSE

of cannabis provides enormous health benefits—alcohol and cigarettes do not. Cannabinoids appear to kill cancer cells through autophagy and the inhibition of tumor angiogenesis. Hemp cannabis could feed, clothe and fuel the world. Flower cannabis could bring enlightenment and peace.

**Charles Waller**  
Henderson, Kentucky

More than half the population believes marijuana should be legalized. I'm one of them. Why not let Americans purchase permits to grow a certain number of plants in their homes?

**John McCallum**  
Lucerne Valley, California

### HOME ON THE RANGE

Although the First Amendment fully protects your editorial discretion, the drumbeat of condemnation for those of us who choose to exercise our rights under the Second Amendment is beginning to grate. I belong

remained small. But right-wing politicians and extremist organizations exploited the nativism sparked by the 9/11 attacks. Compounding anti-immigrant sentiment was the Mexican drug war and the 2008 credit crisis, which saw Latino immigrants scapegoated. By decade's end, Arizona was an epicenter of extremism. As one local journalist put it, "Arizona remains the most racist state in the nation."

Harry Hughes says the National Socialist Movement is a "white civil rights organization." But he claims USBG isn't racist. It includes members of various races and religions, he says, and its intent is to prevent drug and human smuggling. Members have even saved lives, he implies. "We found 11 of them out there once in the middle of July, and it was 115 degrees," he tells me. "We gave them 40 bottles of water, and they were still thirsty."

But border groups have a history of violence. Two Salvadorans successfully sued Ranch Rescue in 2005, claiming members of the group had beaten, robbed and set a rottweiler on them. In 2011 the leader of Minutemen American Defense was sentenced to death for robbery and the murder of two Mexican Americans, one just nine years old. And despite USBG's efforts to maintain a positive public image, government documents describe Ready and others holding immigrants at gunpoint and zip-tying them.

Mark Pitcavage, the Anti-Defamation League's top researcher, says border groups are motivated by nativism and a "paramilitary fantasy." The justification these vigilantes give for their existence—to prevent drug smuggling—is part of their fantasy, says Pitcavage, in which they "claim the cartels are engaging in an insurgency within the U.S. They portray themselves as the main combatants in an actual war to stop the cartels."

**J**ason Todd Ready was a conflicted man. He flirted with a string of vocations—the military, Mormonism, Nazism, politics, law enforcement—before launching USBG. At the time of his death last May, at the age of 39, he was a candidate for Pinal County sheriff. Before that he had been a GOP precinct committeeman, ran for Mesa City Council and developed an alliance with former Arizona state senator Russell Pearce, author of SB 1070, the most severe anti-immigration bill in the country. Through it all Ready remained a white supremacist.

Ready never knew his father. He was born in Lakeland, Florida in 1973 to Ladotha Ready, daughter of a Pentecostal minister from Alabama named Ernest Ready. According to Ladotha, or Dottie,



THE POLITICS OF HATRED: J.T. READY AT A NATIONAL SOCIALIST RALLY IN LAS VEGAS.

her son was the product of a short relationship she had while separated from her first husband. J.T.'s father had no involvement in his son's life. But Dottie wasn't always involved either. Court records show that J.T. was adopted by his maternal grandfather and his wife and lived with them in Alabama as a preteen. J.T., a strong-willed boy who missed his mother, clashed with the strict minister.

Dottie says Ernest would get so frustrated with J.T. that he'd periodically "dump him back on my doorstep," only to have him sent back again. At 13 J.T. was sent to live with Ernest's brother in Auburndale,

Florida. When he was 15, Dottie, who had remarried to Gary Lee Davis and was living with him and their two children in Lakeland, finally regained custody. According to Dottie, Davis abused J.T.

As a lance corporal at Camp Pendleton in the mid-1990s, Ready vanished for eight days. This

prompted a court-martial that got him locked up for three months. Soon afterward he was court-martialed again, this time for assault, among other charges. He was thrown out of the Marine Corps.

"If he was racist, I never knew about it," his mother says. Adam Lindgren, brother of Ready's ex-wife, Arline, whom he divorced in 2003, told the Associated Press that Ready was "very, very opinionated. He would just keep arguing with you." Ready became increasingly paranoid. In 2011 he sent an e-mail that said, "I sleep with a loaded shotgun under my bed and a nine millimeter on the nightstand. Mossad or...the Cartel...or some antifacist freak may make a move on me."

Brittany Mederos, the youngest daughter of Ready's girlfriend, Lisa Mederos, says Ready "got a sick pleasure out of hunting Mexicans." Cassandra Olivier, who shared an apartment with Lisa's eldest daughter, Amber, and Amber's baby, Lilly, expressed disgust that Ready once bullied Lilly's father, who is part Mexican, into going on a patrol. Ready would taunt the sensitive Amber by calling her baby "50 percent ugly."

*Ready  
was court-  
martialed and  
thrown out of  
the Marines.*



to two firing ranges, which are 97 percent male. When the topic of PLAYBOY comes up, the magazine is criticized for marching in step with the Democratic Party. As a union member who has campaigned for local Democrats, I find that when it comes to any issue except sex, Democrats support more control and regulation. They are libertarians only in the area of sexual conduct. You need to recognize that the modern man believes in the full rainbow of interpretations of the



Dottie admits her son changed when he got to Arizona. "It had to do with that white supremacist or nationalist organization," she asserts. She blames "someone out there" for "brainwashing" him and says he had become nearly delusional toward the end. When he visited her, she says, "his mind would dwell on that Hitler stuff, and then he would suddenly switch and act normal again."

**O**n May 2, 2012 Lisa Mederos called the police in Gilbert, Arizona. Sounding nervous but composed, she told the dispatcher she had had an argument with her boyfriend and he was "going ballistic." Mederos lived

with Ready and her daughter Brittany in a small house about 20 miles outside Phoenix. The dispatcher heard two cracks. "Oh my God!" Mederos yelled. The line went dead.

Two minutes later, 19-year-old Brittany Mederos dialed 911 from her bedroom. She had been sleeping when she heard arguing and what sounded like gunshots coming from the living room. When she emerged, she saw the bodies of her mother, her sister Amber and Amber's baby, Lilly. She ran back into her room and locked the door. "There were gunshots," she said. "I think they're dead!"

She was right. Just after one P.M. Ready took a nine-millimeter Beretta



## COMING HOME TO ROOST

### ***Racists, gang members and criminals get their training in the U.S. military***

**D**uring the long decade of the war on terror, the U.S. military turned into a free-for-all. Donald Rumsfeld's extreme vision of a scaled-down, privatized Pentagon meant that when the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan kicked off in earnest, the military had no way to stock the occupations with the required number of troops. In the absence of conscription, which would have been too unpopular, the U.S. military set about ripping up its regulations on recruitment and retention. Into the Army came neo-Nazis, who benefited from a "don't ask, don't tell" policy whereby recruiters ignored swastikas and SS bolts. In came Bloods and Crips and Gangster Disciples. In came rapists and murderers, who benefited from the "moral waiver" program, despite the military's code to disqualify recruits with "significant criminal records." And in stayed those afflicted with post-traumatic stress disorder, who were sent back to the war zone.

This had devastating consequences for the people of Iraq and Afghanistan, where large numbers of unhinged race warriors armed with M16 assault rifles stalked the streets. In the coming years, U.S. society will experience similar devastation as these same unsavories return home. A glimpse of what is in store was last year's mass killing at the Sikh temple in Wisconsin. It was carried out by a neo-Nazi veteran, Wade Michael Page, who had been completely open about being a white supremacist while serving at Fort Bragg

in the 1990s. During the war on terror, people like Page operated even more freely. Far-right leaders spoke openly of encouraging their members to enlist to get training for the coming racial holy war (called RaHoWa in neo-Nazi circles). They have never been more successful in that mission. One neo-Nazi veteran of Iraq, Kenneth Eastridge, is now serving time for his part in the murder of a fellow soldier in December 2007. His Myspace page showed him posing with his SS lightning bolt tattoo visible on his forearm. One of his accomplices alleged that Eastridge used a stolen AK-47 to fire randomly at Iraqi civilians. At least one was hit, he alleged. This should not be surprising: It was the explicit mission of many white nationalists to "kill a brown" in the Middle East, and the U.S. military rarely demurred. We often found out about their criminal activities only when they erred back home, where the rule of law could not be so easily discarded.

Mexican drug cartels from Ciudad Juárez and other cities along the border have solicited U.S. military personnel at Fort Bliss to help traffic weapons and drugs across the border. Last year the Drug Enforcement Administration caught a "kill team" composed of veterans and active-duty soldiers attempting to carry out an assassination for what they thought was the hyperviolent cartel Los Zetas. With more than 2 million veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan soon to be back in the U.S., the toxic mix of military-trained racists, gang members and criminals doesn't bode well for our future. —Matt Kennard

*Matt Kennard is author of Irregular Army: How the U.S. Military Recruited Neo-Nazis, Gang Members and Criminals to Fight the War on Terror.*



## READER RESPONSE

Second Amendment as strongly as Hef believes in the First.

**Eric Sanders**

*White Plains, New York*

*We have no problem with guns—we delight in the elegance and challenge of a Beretta .20-gauge. We don't, however, believe gun rights are absolute. The Supreme Court has placed reasonable restrictions on every other amendment, including the First. Why not the Second?*

When I was taking the required class to get a nonresident Utah Concealed Firearm Permit, the instructor told me permit holders are not allowed to possess pornography. That has left me wondering whether I should renew my PLAYBOY subscription. I have had many interesting conversations with religious right-wingers who have no idea where I get my information, and I would hate to lose that edge. How do you interpret the law?

**K. Smith**

*Columbia, South Carolina*

*Utah does not allow gun-permit holders to distribute sexually explicit material that, taken as a whole, is "patently offensive" and lacks "serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value." According to every state and federal court that has ever considered the question, PLAYBOY doesn't qualify.*

### UNHAPPY CAMPER

What happened to your magazine? On the first page of the March *Dear Playboy* you print a smear of Lee Atwater (admittedly, by an authority on the subject), a letter suggesting we brought the Cuban Missile Crisis on ourselves, two defenses of Richard Dawkins that slam organized religion and a flip-pant response to a soldier who wonders why you chose a Canadian to represent Uncle Sam. When I read your response ("She's North American—close enough"), I threw the issue in the trash. Liberal spin is fine, but at least make an attempt to represent a more encompassing political and social viewpoint.

**Greg Campbell**  
*Eugene, Oregon*





## READER RESPONSE

### WHAT GOES AROUND...

A reader complains in April about taxes going to “pay the medical bills of the physically irresponsible.” I have been a tobacco user since the age of five (in my day that was possible) but have also paid cigarette taxes ranging from a simple 10 percent in 1970 to 600 percent in 1995 to (in some places) 1,200 percent today. The way I see it, the government should pay for my medical care for life because it swore that would be the sole purpose of the taxes it collected. Instead it squandered the money on pet projects and war-mongering. Health care should be treated like a public utility. Stop blaming those of us who choose to live like Americans for the fact that politicians side with medical and insurance companies, which



in return pay for those politicians' ridiculously overpriced reelection campaigns. Your tax dollars help pay my medical bills just as my taxes pay for the education of American children even though I don't have any.

**Jay Runk**  
*West Middlesex, Pennsylvania*

### KEYNES WAS RIGHT

In the ongoing discussion in *Reader Response* about Keynesian economics, it is interesting how the far-right Tea Party group pushes the concept that government can do no good for the economy. Conservatives may not like the way FDR

and opened fire in Lisa Mederos's entranceway. First he shot Amber and 15-month-old Lilly. While Lisa was talking with police, Ready shot her twice in the head. Meanwhile, Jim Hiott, Amber's fiancé, was outside talking on his cell phone. Hearing gunfire, he went to the doorway, where he saw Ready holding his Beretta. He turned to flee, but Ready shot him three times. Then Ready shot himself. Everyone died quickly except Lilly, who died in the ambulance on the drive to Maricopa Medical Center.

The reasons behind the shooting aren't clear. Cassandra Olivier told police Amber and Hiott wanted to move into Lisa's house, and Lisa may have asked Ready to move out. Police say a domestic dispute sparked a murder-suicide. This is supported by Lisa's call and by the medical examiner's report.

As the sole living witness, Brittany heard not only the gunfire but parts of the argument that preceded it. The shooter “was

kept a metal swastika as a desk ornament. He marched in National Socialist Movement parades carrying pictures of Hitler and named his dog Blondi after the führer's German shepherd. Regarding border security, he recommended setting land mines between Mexico and Arizona. At the time of his death he was under FBI investigation for domestic terrorism.

**B**ill Straus sits behind his desk at the Arizona branch of the Anti-Defamation League. It is two days after the Supreme Court struck down much of Arizona's SB 1070, and Straus, the regional director, is in good spirits. He is discussing a meeting he attended in 2006 with State Representative Russell Pearce. At the time, Pearce was chairman of Arizona's House Appropriations Committee, and he was suffering politically for forwarding an anti-Semitic e-mail and for praising a 1950s deportation program



AT THE MEXICAN CONSULATE IN PHOENIX, 2006: J.T. READY PROTESTING AGAINST ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION.

my mom's boyfriend, J.T. Ready,” she told police. In an interview with *PLAYBOY* she said that when she saw her family on the ground, she initially thought they were hiding. “I couldn't grasp it. My whole body was in shock.” Police escorted her past her dead family to remove her from the house, affording her a second glimpse. Officers described her as hysterical when she reached the squad car.

When asked what attracted Lisa to Ready, Brittany says her mom described him as a romantic who would periodically take her to the mountains or a lake to gaze at the stars. As their relationship progressed, his “good, loving side” was replaced by a quarrelsome one that picked fights “almost daily.” But Brittany still asserts, “If you were wondering if any of us had a clue that he was mentally unstable and capable of murdering, no.”

Still, Ready's dedication to the cause of white supremacy was conspicuous. He

called Operation Wetback. The meeting had been arranged by Speaker of the House Jim Weiers. According to Straus, the two Republicans believed if they could get Straus to forgive Pearce publicly, it would take the heat off. Straus and Pearce spoke for an hour, and Straus made it clear what he wanted in return.

“I confronted Russell about the effect his rhetoric was having on white supremacists,” Straus says. “He was the new Elvis to them.” Straus asked Pearce to hold a press conference to repudiate his hostile language. He handed Pearce a file that contained information about the neo-Nazis embracing him, including Ready. But Pearce didn't hold a press conference and Straus offered no forgiveness. Pearce wouldn't denounce Ready for two years.

Pearce had become a star of the far right by articulating Arizona's rising nativism. In 2004 Proposition 200 required immigrants to provide “satisfactory evidence” of citizenship before voting or collecting public benefits. In 2006 the Bailable Offenses Act prevented illegal aliens from being released on bail if they were suspected



of serious crimes. Another law turned “self-smuggling” into a felony. And then came SB 1070, a tenet of which allows law enforcement to demand the papers of essentially anyone of Latin descent.

As Arizona’s nativism rose, Ready threw himself into politics. Initially he lived in Mesa and met Pearce while volunteering for Republican causes. In a phone interview Pearce downplayed their relationship, saying, “I thought J.T. was a decent kid when he was first introduced to the district. He was working for a Christian organization. I thought he had a sense of humor and he was good on the issues.” In a statement after the shootings, Pearce said, “At some point in time darkness took his life over.” When asked what he thought had caused that darkness, Pearce said, “How should I know? Don’t ask me.”

The two were closer than Pearce admits. Pearce attended Ready’s Mormon baptism and ordained him as an elder in 2004. In 2007 Ready made a speech in which he suggested putting the National Guard on the border and jerking judges around by their collars. In a video Pearce is seen applauding as Ready rants. In 2010 Ready told an interviewer he and Pearce shared a political strategy by which Ready would push extreme rhetoric as “a bellwether” to see how far Pearce could go. Ready called Pearce a political mentor who taught him how to bring the fringe into the mainstream.

However belatedly, Pearce and the Arizona Republicans finally expelled Ready. The last few years of Ready’s life saw his anger alienate him from almost every group he had been affiliated with. By May 2012 he was unemployed and in a deteriorating relationship. Dottie, aware of his difficulties, offered him a room in Florida, but he said he loved living in Arizona.

**M**ay 2 was to be a family day for the Mederos clan. Brittany and Amber had made plans for lunch at a local restaurant, and Lisa and Ready decided to join. But there was another, less auspicious significance to the date: Olivier was moving out of the apartment she shared with Amber, Hiott and Lilly. The rent was no longer affordable, so Amber had mentioned moving in with Lisa. Olivier knew that wouldn’t be easy: On another occasion, Amber “had to literally beg” Lisa to stay there for just one night because Ready opposed it.

On the evening of May 1 a neighbor of Ready’s helped him install screens over the windows. Ready was “high strung,”

Robert Kalas told police, and worried about “being invaded.” He also showed Kalas a new bulletproof vest he needed to “get used to.” Meanwhile, Brittany was up all night listening to music and didn’t go to bed until five A.M. When Amber and crew arrived later that morning, an exhausted Brittany asked if they could have dinner instead and went back to sleep. She was awakened by arguing.

“At first I assumed it was the same usual fights,” she says. “But then the yelling turned into screaming. I caught a few words.” What she heard was a shouting match between Ready and the usually nonconfrontational Amber. Ready yelled, “This isn’t your house. You don’t have the right to be here.” Amber hollered back, “This is my father’s house. I have more of a right to be here than you!”

Brittany describes what happened next: “Suddenly, there was screaming. Then I heard gunshots. I had never heard gunshots before, so it didn’t immediately register. I ran to the living room. I saw everyone on the ground. At first I had the ignorant assumption that they had fallen to the floor to avoid the gunshots. I nudged my sister with my foot. Once my foot connected with her limp body, I realized she was dead. They were all dead.”

**M**ass killers share characteristics. Among them is a sense of isolation; another is training in firearms (many of them served in the military). The most common characteristic, however, is an externalization of responsibility, a belief that others are causing their misery. Take a person who exhibits these characteristics, place him in a culture where intolerance is legitimized, and it’s a recipe for disaster.

J.T. Ready both contributed to and was a victim of a culture that exploits fear to cultivate an atmosphere of hate. Groups like the National Socialist Movement and USBG exploit fear of border crime to attract members. Politicians like Pearce stoke nativism for votes and donations. Even corporations—private prison systems, arms manufacturers and security companies—profit from a fearful atmosphere.

There are other victims. “Nobody truly understands the pain of your closest loved ones being taken from you until it happens,” Brittany says. “Most people will hear the story of my family and be sad for a moment and then forget it. But I don’t get that chance. I have to wake up every morning and know this is my life. My broken, messed-up life. I’ll never stop hurting.” ■

*As Arizona’s  
nativism rose,  
J.T. Ready  
threw himself  
into politics.*



## READER RESPONSE

expanded the social safety net, but it is hard to support the claim that his policies made the Depression worse. When he was elected in 1932 the unemployment rate was estimated to be 23.6 percent; four years later it was 17 percent, which is still bad but not worse. By 1941, before the U.S. entered the war, it had fallen to 9.9 percent. As for



the housing crisis, your correspondents again latch on to a myth. The policy of expanding home ownership did not lead to no-doc loans, nor did the government insist that banks make loans to unqualified borrowers. Did the feds insist mortgage providers not discriminate? Of course. The problem was in fact rooted in the quasi-governmental nature of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. Federal guarantees allowed managers at those agencies to create compensation schemes like investment banks’, and the connection to government meant the cost of failure ended up being paid by taxpayers. Finally, we don’t often get to observe real-world economic experiments. The rapid cutting of deficits in Greece and the U.K. is causing those economies to contract, increasing the rate of descent into poverty. It is playing out exactly as John Maynard Keynes suggested it would.

**Robert Perry**  
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# PLAYBOY INTERVIEW: AI WEIWEI

*A candid conversation with the Chinese dissident about being Beijing's top target, using Twitter against oppression and how Nancy Pelosi betrayed him*

The artist Ai Weiwei (pronounced “eye way way”—Ai is his surname) is the Chinese government’s worst nightmare: an internationally revered art star who uses his work and celebrity to advocate for democracy and free speech in a nation with neither. The government has employed a draconian campaign to silence him. Ai is under constant surveillance. He has been threatened, placed under house arrest and physically attacked by a police officer. Ai’s incendiary blog, read by thousands of Chinese citizens, disappeared one day. And so did he: In 2011, state police grabbed him at the airport, threw a black bag over his head and drove him to an undisclosed location, where he languished for 81 days in a tiny prison cell. Despite these attacks, Ai has continued his virulent criticism of the Chinese Communist leadership, which he deems repressive, immoral and illegitimate.

Ai’s dissidence is particularly discomfiting to the Chinese government as it attempts to retain its stranglehold on its citizens while also cementing its position as a global economic powerhouse. Ai’s domestic and international influence is growing. Using art, technology and civil disobedience in his antigovernment campaign, he continues to embarrass the regime—and threaten it. Most observers agree that if it weren’t for his international celebrity, Ai would still be imprisoned, like Nobel Peace

Prize winner Liu Xiaobo, who is serving an 11-year sentence, or he’d be exiled, like blind dissident Chen Guangcheng. The last time Ai was imprisoned there were worldwide protests; world leaders including Hillary Clinton called for his release.

Ai’s political activism and art are informed by his tumultuous childhood. His father, Ai Qing, one of China’s most revered poets, studied in Paris before returning to China in 1932, when he was arrested by Chiang Kai-shek’s Nationalist Party. With the Communist takeover, the elder Ai was for a time in favor of Chairman Mao Tse-tung’s regime. Then he wrote a poem that extolled the virtues of a culture that celebrated rather than repressed multiple voices. For this he was exiled to a “reeducation” camp, where he was humiliated, beaten and forced to clean toilets for nearly two decades. Ai Weiwei spent his early years in the camp.

After the Cultural Revolution, Ai attended the Beijing Film Academy. In 1981 he left for the United States, where he studied English, worked odd jobs and made art. He returned to China after 12 years and worked as an architect, artist and antiques dealer. He gained international attention for his collaboration with the architecture firm Herzog & de Meuron on the design of Beijing’s National Stadium, nicknamed the Bird’s Nest, built for the

2008 Olympics. His reputation in the fine-art world grew too. His controversial pieces include a series of photographs in which he uses the international hand gesture for “fuck you” to send a not very subtle message to the Chinese government. He smashed Neolithic pottery, created a giant sculpture out of Qing dynasty stools, built a breathtaking art installation in Munich out of 9,000 children’s backpacks to commemorate the thousands of students killed when their schools collapsed in the 2008 Sichuan earthquake (he blames the high death toll on the Chinese government for allowing the schools’ shoddy construction) and spread a sea of 100 million porcelain sunflower seeds across a gallery in the Tate Modern in London.

After being released from prison in June 2011 Ai was placed under house arrest. By 2012 he was no longer confined to his Beijing compound, but the government held his passport, preventing him from leaving the country. He was unable to attend the opening of a major survey of his work at the Hirshhorn Museum in Washington, D.C.

Since Ai couldn’t leave China, PLAYBOY sent Contributing Editor **David Sheff** to meet him there. Sheff, who has interviewed Representative Barney Frank, journalist Fareed Zakaria and Apple’s Steve Jobs for us, reports, “Over the course of the days we spent together,



“At the beginning I was just putting photos of my artwork on the blog. Then I realized I could talk about the social conditions. Yes, I want to argue. Because nobody else in China argues, my arguments become relevant.”



“They took me from the airport. A black hood was put over me and they took me to a security detention center. The first question I asked was ‘Can I have a lawyer?’ They said no. I said, ‘Can I call my family?’ They said no.”



PHOTOGRAPHY BY TONY LAW

“Twitter is better than a blog. It’s faster. It’s interesting because of the fast communication—the immediate person-to-person response. Also, everybody is watching. There is a sharing of ideas.”



*I accompanied Ai on his daily walks through a Beijing park. He said he walks so he'll be in better physical shape if he's arrested again. Following these walks, each afternoon he visits his young son, who was born in 2009 to a girlfriend; Ai has been married to artist Lu Qing for 17 years. Though he lives with the constant threat of arrest, each evening after his time with his son Ai takes his place in front of a computer and spends six or more hours writing illegal Twitter messages to 200,000 followers. Helped by a coterie of hackers, he manages to circumvent the government's 'Great Firewall' to send out missives about what he considers his government's latest sins."*

**PLAYBOY:** Other renowned Chinese dissidents have been either imprisoned or exiled. Why are you allowed to remain free?

**AI:** I don't know if I am free. There's a threat always that any minute I could be arrested. Why they don't arrest me now, I don't know. I don't know why they arrested me the last time. I don't know why they let me go after three months. They said I would be in for 10 years.

**PLAYBOY:** Do you know why they're holding your passport?

**AI:** There has been no explanation. I don't know why, because if they don't want me to leave the country, they could stop me at the airport. The government doesn't explain. They don't have to explain. The Communists who run China picture themselves as above the rest of society—as the best men, a superman society. They believe they are made of special materials. That is their own words. They're elite. They tell you only what they want to tell you. So of course you will never get any clear answer about any event that happened in the past 60 years. My father, when he was sent away, never knew who made the decision, how the decision was made or why. Three hundred thousand intellectuals were crushed by a single political moment with the Cultural Revolution. None of them got a clear answer about why. Now it's decades later, and what surprises me most is that after being in power all this time, this government should have built a better society, one that's more open. They should trust the people. They should explain and discuss and negotiate. All those things are completely lacking in this society.

**PLAYBOY:** Do you assume you were freed and for the moment remain free because of pressure from the international community?

**AI:** Maybe if the government could get away with it, without anyone knowing, you would not see me again.

**PLAYBOY:** Is it gratifying to know that Hillary Clinton and other world leaders called for your release from prison?

**AI:** It's very surprising. Yes, it was very good. But there are so many people arrested. And worse than arrested. Why does no one speak about them? Just yesterday the number reached 92 Tibetans who have burned themselves to death be-

cause of the Chinese oppression of Tibet. Most were Buddhist monks. I don't see much international outcry for them. It's a hopeless cry for them, and no one listens.

**PLAYBOY:** Then perhaps your celebrity saves you, the support from political leaders and other prominent people from the West. Last November Elton John shocked a Beijing audience by dedicating a concert to you. Did that surprise you?

**AI:** I was so happy but also shocked. Such a pure man. That's not done; people don't say my name out loud in public like that. The audience would never think somebody would have that kind of free, clear expression in a situation like that. It will always remain in my mind.

**PLAYBOY:** Do any prominent Chinese in China stand up for you and other dissidents?

**AI:** No. It's too dangerous. But there are some in the young generation of artists who do. Of course they have all been taken to the police station.

**PLAYBOY:** While you were in prison, were you aware of the protests and calls for your release?

**AI:** I had no idea. I was just a little piece

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*Without the internet, no person could say anything and be heard. It's not that everyone can know, because the government controls the internet. But some people can know.*

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dropped into a dark corner, into a hole.

**PLAYBOY:** You didn't know if anyone was worrying about you?

**AI:** No, but of course you know your family is.

**PLAYBOY:** Why is one man—an artist—such a threat to the government of a nation with 1.3 billion people and the second-largest economy in the world?

**AI:** Even to question the government can have a strong impact on its control. All my father asked for was to have a variety of expressions in literature and art. Rather than just one type of flower, he said there should be a whole garden. It's so pitiful, because every flower deserves its own identity and has its own beauty. That simple idea is seen as a threat to the Communist leadership, which is a military-police type of leadership. They want to take away any variety of expression.

**PLAYBOY:** How does free speech threaten them? They're firmly in control.

**AI:** If people question—if people don't accept what they tell us—maybe the leaders will have to go. It's like during the research we did after the earthquake to find out who was missing. We simply wanted to

know the names of the victims. We asked the government for their names, ages and which school they went to. We made 200 phone calls to government officials. They wouldn't release any information. I built up my anger and frustration. One by one we found the students' names, all the information related to them. We interviewed hundreds of parents. It was a very painful research study.

**PLAYBOY:** Why would that threaten the government? Why would officials not want the names released?

**AI:** Maybe they worried that if people knew, they'd question the bad construction of the structures, the schools and buildings that collapsed. That can have some political impact. Next the people ask, "Who's responsible?"

**PLAYBOY:** Your efforts to learn who died in the earthquake resulted in a list of the names of 5,000 students.

**AI:** Fifty-two hundred.

**PLAYBOY:** You then made an international statement about the earthquake by creating a facade on a Munich museum comprising 9,000 children's backpacks. What were you trying to communicate?

**AI:** The backpacks spelled out the words of a mother whose daughter was one of the students killed. The mother said, "She lived happily for seven years in this world." People should not forget this, and the government does not want it to be remembered.

**PLAYBOY:** Where were you when you heard about the earthquake?

**AI:** In Beijing, and even in Beijing we could feel it a little bit.

**PLAYBOY:** What was your reaction when you heard of the magnitude?

**AI:** I was stunned. Speechless. Back in 2005 some people had created a blog for me. I realized it was a great opportunity to try to write something. I have always admired people who write. My father was a writer. He wrote very clearly what was in his mind. I think writing is a beautiful skill. I needed to learn, because I never had a chance when I grew up in the Cultural Revolution, when the whole education system failed. So I felt frustrated, and here was this beautiful tool to write and communicate.

At the beginning I was just putting photos of my artwork on the blog and writing a little. Then I realized I could talk about the social conditions. Each morning I read the newspaper, and there would always be quite a few points to talk about. I'm a person who has many opinions on everything. People always tell me, "Oh, you just want to argue." Yes, I want to argue, because everything should be argued. Because nobody else in China argues, my arguments become relevant. Suddenly my blog became very popular, because nobody was so openly talking about those things. I wrote every day, day and night, but when the earthquake came I was speechless and couldn't write a word for seven days. It was such



a big tragedy. I could not write anything.

**PLAYBOY:** Why did you begin collecting the names of earthquake victims?

**AI:** Since they didn't release the names, I must. Every day I put our new findings of names that we collected on the blog. It could be one, it could be 20. So many people were reading it. They all had the same questions: Why is this artist doing this by himself? Why isn't the government doing this? What kind of government do we have? That really shook the foundation of this government, because they knew nobody would trust them.

**PLAYBOY:** Did the government ask you to stop posting the names?

**AI:** Day after day I did this until one day almost a year later, 2009, a very high-up official called and said, "Weiwei, can you stop?" I said, "Well, it's a little too late. I have to find the last person's name, and that is the only way I can stop." I said, "But there is one way for me to stop, and that is if you start to announce those names. Why can't you do it? I mean, once you do it, then I don't have to do it. It's not my job. It's not a particularly happy moment when I do that." But of course they would not do it.

**PLAYBOY:** The earthquake occurred the same year as the Beijing Olympics. Why did you object to the Olympics, one of China's proudest moments, especially after your prominent role as co-designer of the Bird's Nest stadium, the focal point of the Games?

**AI:** In 2007, one year before the opening, they began a so-called countdown to the Olympics. I saw this celebration on a friend's television. The whole show brought up memories of growing up under the Communists. They were trying to glamorize the Communist Party. Also, they were already tightening security in Beijing for the Olympics. It was becoming like a police state. They sent all the vagrants out of the city. They took away the visas from all the students who worked in the city. You could see so clearly that all they wanted was to throw a glamorous party for the benefit of the foreign media and for the world to see the power of the Communist Party. They were trying to tell the world, "We are the same as you." But actually they were saying, "We have more. We can do something you can never do. You could never do this grand Olympics." It made me disgusted. A journalist called and asked if I watched it. I said yes, and he asked, "How do you feel about it?" I said, "I'm disgusted," and he asked, "Will you be part of a celebration?" I said no. They published the next day that the Olympic stadium designer was boycotting the games.

**PLAYBOY:** Weren't you proud of the Bird's Nest, which received worldwide acclaim?

**AI:** I'm proud of the architecture. I love it, but I hated the way it was going to be used. I hate the way it was used.

**PLAYBOY:** When you openly criticized the Olympics, were you chastised or asked to get with the program?

**AI:** No. The government people will never tell you directly, never show their feelings. It's like a whole table of poker players. They hate you to death, but it's like, "We'll get you later," because they know they will get you later.

**PLAYBOY:** You once said that your generation has to do better than your father's generation in its efforts to change China, because his "didn't do a good job." What did you mean?

**AI:** They sacrificed so much but did not achieve anything.

**PLAYBOY:** What has changed between then and now that makes you think you can do better?

**AI:** It's a different time. China was very isolated. Now China is trying to be global, so there's an opening and a chance to use a higher standard. And there's the internet.

**PLAYBOY:** How significant is the internet?

**AI:** Without the internet, no person could say anything and be heard. Now everyone can know about the earthquake.

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*It's a different time. China  
was very isolated. Now  
China is trying to be global,  
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higher standard.*

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Everyone can know about a person they put in prison. No, it's not that everyone can know, actually, because the government controls the internet very well. But some people can know. It's a small group, because they must know how to get around the firewall.

**PLAYBOY:** How dangerous is it to defy the government's regulations and use the internet for political discourse or to organize political campaigns?

**AI:** Very dangerous. Most people on the internet use fake names. They don't reveal their identities. But of course if they want, the government can find out very easily who they are.

**PLAYBOY:** Your blog was shut down, but now you're on Twitter. How do you manage to use Twitter, which is blocked in China behind the Great Firewall?

**AI:** After they shut off my blog, a guy said, "I can set you up on Twitter." He said, "You have to use special equipment."

**PLAYBOY:** A proxy server?

**AI:** Yeah.

**PLAYBOY:** How does Twitter serve your purposes?

**AI:** Twitter is better than a blog. It's

faster. It's interesting because of the fast communication—the immediate person-to-person response. Also, everybody is watching. It becomes like a school, like Buddhist teaching or Zen teaching. There is a sharing of ideas. You know people. The people know me as well as anybody in my family.

**PLAYBOY:** Do you ever feel frustrated by the Twitter limit of 140 characters?

**AI:** In Chinese, 140 characters is not like 140 characters in English. In Chinese, you can write the whole history of one dynasty in 140 characters. It's so meaningful for us. It's very poetic, because one line can jump from one subject to another and sometimes it's five subjects mixed together. It is so effective. I have 200,000 followers. If everyone in China could get on Twitter, I would have a minimum of 2 million. Today those who follow me are all technical people or people who are dedicated to the political.

**PLAYBOY:** They took down your blog. Why haven't they stopped you from using Twitter? Even though you have techies helping you and you use a proxy server, it would seem the government, with a reported 50,000 internet police, could intercept your tweets.

**AI:** They always try to stop it. They cannot do it. It is very difficult. They can shut off one kind of connector, but we build another one.

**PLAYBOY:** Was there any warning before your blog disappeared?

**AI:** In 2009, before June 4, an official asked me, "Can you promise not to write anything?" The government always gets nervous on this date.

**PLAYBOY:** That's the anniversary of the 1989 crackdown in Tiananmen Square. Sources say 200 to 2,600 people were killed, while the Chinese government claims there were no student fatalities.

**AI:** Yes. This man was such a high official. I answered, "I never planned to write anything. It doesn't affect me so much. I have so many everyday happenings to deal with that normally I don't write about history." But then I said, "But if you ask me not to write about it, I cannot say yes. I may write something because you ask me not to." The next day my blog was shut off. Police also came to my mom's home. My mom called me. I was in the American Embassy because [Representative] Nancy Pelosi was in China. She had changed her tone, because she used to be a human-rights defender. Now she talks about how beautiful China is. I was quite disappointed with her, and I just left. I answered the phone and my mom said, "Weiwei, there are a few police here asking for your address." I said, "Just wait. I'm coming over."

I was full of energy and ready to have some kind of fight, because Pelosi had just said how beautiful this nation has become, and I was so mad. At my mom's house, this guy is very arrogant. He's undercover. He said, "I just want



to know where you live.” I said, “First, show me your badge. Who are you?” That got him, because he didn’t have a badge; he forgot to bring it. I said, “Then just leave. Get out of here. Bring your identification.” He said, “You have no right to ask me for my identification.” Nobody ever does that to them. Once they say, “Police,” everybody is so scared they do whatever the police say. He wouldn’t leave. I said, “Okay, wait.” I dialed 911. I said, “There’s somebody intruding into my home, and I think it’s a robbery or something.” Two police came. They walked in and saw this guy was their boss. It’s embarrassing for them. This new guy said, “Okay, we have to go to the station.” I said, “Show me your badge.” He said, “I don’t have it.” I asked, “How do I know you are police?” They said, “We have uniforms.” I said, “Anybody can have a uniform.” They said, “We have police cars parked outside.” I said, “Who knows if you stole this car?” They went away and came back with badges, and I went to the station. Later they told me in detention, “You’re watching too many Hollywood movies.” I did something ridiculous and stupid, but I had a good time.

**PLAYBOY:** Did they officially arrest you?

**AI:** They interrogated me. It took hours because they’re not very educated. They wrote everything down very slowly, but finally they let me go. They didn’t bring charges. I said, “The next time you come, you should bring handcuffs.” Those were my last words to them. Then they shut down my blog.

**PLAYBOY:** What was the public reaction when your blog disappeared?

**AI:** There was no way to talk about it. There’s no independent press, so you cannot make a story. No one knows.

**PLAYBOY:** Might that kind of suppression and repression soften under the leadership of the new president, Xi Jinping, who took over this year?

**AI:** He gave a speech at the beginning. The main idea was: If you are weak, you will be beaten. I think it’s a very uncivilized rule. It’s like jungle rule. Nothing will change.

**PLAYBOY:** As China has opened to the West, what’s the impact of a nondemocratic system in which the Communist Party selects its leaders from within?

**AI:** The way to survive in this party is to hide yourself or to become a person who obeys orders from above. These are not people with new ideas who are bold. One generation chooses the next, and one is worse than the former. It’s like inbreeding. After so many generations, it becomes weaker and weaker. You can see in the first generation—Chairman Mao’s generation, Castro’s generation—the first revolutionaries are strong characters, maybe crazy but a bit romantic. Idealistic. Now you see nothing. They cannot even remember what their ancestors said.

**PLAYBOY:** Along with your Twitter messages, is your art largely a result of frustration with the current political system?

**AI:** I’m a person who likes to make an argument rather than just give emotion or expression a form and shape in art. I became an artist only because I was oppressed by society. I was born into a very political society. When I was a child, my father told me, as a joke, “You can be a politician.” I was 10 years old. I didn’t understand it, because I already knew that politicians were the enemy, the ones who crushed him. I didn’t understand what he was talking about. But now I understand. I can be political. I can say something even though we grew up without true education, memorizing Chairman Mao’s slogans. I memorized hundreds of them. I can still sing his songs, recite his poetry. Every morning at school we stood in front of his image, memorizing one of his sentences telling what we should do today to make ourselves a better person.

**PLAYBOY:** What’s an example of a sentence you learned?

**AI:** “Today I want to be a servant of the

---

*The moment I saw New York City, I was so happy. Never in my life did I imagine it could be like that. When I grew up, there was no energy, no electricity.*

---

people, so I want to clean up my neighbor’s street front,” or “Really study hard to become a useful person to society to prepare myself to fight against capitalism,” or “Build yourself as a strong person for the bright Communist future.” Every day we repeated those sentences. In the evening we stood in front of Mao to confess what we did wrong. “Today at school I had slightly selfish thinking.” It’s called self-criticism. For meals, I went to the commune dorm, to the cafeteria. When you give the empty bowl to the cook, before they give you the food—normally just one spoonful of one food, boiled corn or something—you say one sentence of Chairman Mao. The cook will say another sentence, then give you food.

While you’re a child, you have to automatically follow this. You don’t know enough to question anything, because your knowledge is so limited. You don’t even know there’s another way. You have never read a single novel, poetry or other writing or heard a song that is different. It’s like North Korea today. So there’s no way you can question it. My father could question it because he had some experi-

ence in Paris. But of course he could not say anything about it. So when my father said I should be a politician, he was saying I should be something different. Because of my father’s experience, I experienced the complete story of what a nation or human society without justice or fairness can be. If I talk about my youth, that deeply affected me—the society lacking essential right or wrong or justice.

**PLAYBOY:** Did your father encourage you to question Chairman Mao’s teachings?

**AI:** No, if he said something to me, he’d be putting me in danger, because I may react differently and then be crushed. He would never say anything to us. But we talked about that life later. I hated society when I was 17, 18, 19. I wanted to escape. Only art created some way to express something different. I had a kind of corner. First I got into art because I wanted to escape the politics. It’s through certain kinds of acts that you can fully express your feelings.

**PLAYBOY:** When your father was incarcerated in the labor camp, what happened to your mother?

**AI:** Our whole family was sent there. It was a difficult time.

**PLAYBOY:** What do you remember?

**AI:** I remember a lot. My father tried to commit suicide every time they put him in more difficult situations. I remember in the hard-labor camp he called me after his work one day. Our home had no light. It got dark very early. After work, he just laid down on the bed. He had never really done physical work before he was 58. After a day of heavy work, he was exhausted, in pain. He thinks he’s going to die. He called me to the bed and said, “I’m going to die very soon.” He wrote down two names. He said, “After I die, you should go to see these two persons and they will raise you.” I was speechless. I didn’t know what to say. I was 10. But I showed no emotions because at that moment I had no emotion; I just accepted it.

**PLAYBOY:** Were you traumatized by experiences like this?

**AI:** It’s hard to measure that kind of thing.

**PLAYBOY:** Why wouldn’t your mother have raised you?

**AI:** My mother was with my younger brother and they went away. She could not take care of two children, I guess.

**PLAYBOY:** Is that why you were sent to New York in 1981? Were they worried and wanted to get you out of China?

**AI:** I went to New York because I had a girlfriend who went. Her relatives sent her outside to study, and she asked them if they would also help me. By then I was eager to go out.

**PLAYBOY:** What was your first impression of the U.S.?

**AI:** The first time, the plane landed at nine in the evening. Our airplane circled the city. The moment I saw New York City, I was so happy. All the propaganda from the Communists was about how bad and corrupt (continued on page 130)



ANY MORE



AUTHENTIC

= and it would be =

ILLEGAL



While your great granddaddy was firing up a pipe, Junior Johnson's was firing up a moonshine still. Few family recipes carry a jail sentence, but to the Johnson family it was a way of life. Midnight Moon moonshine is handcrafted in small batches, made from corn and authentically infused with real fruit.



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AUTHENTIC MOONSHINE



June  
2013



# MACHO

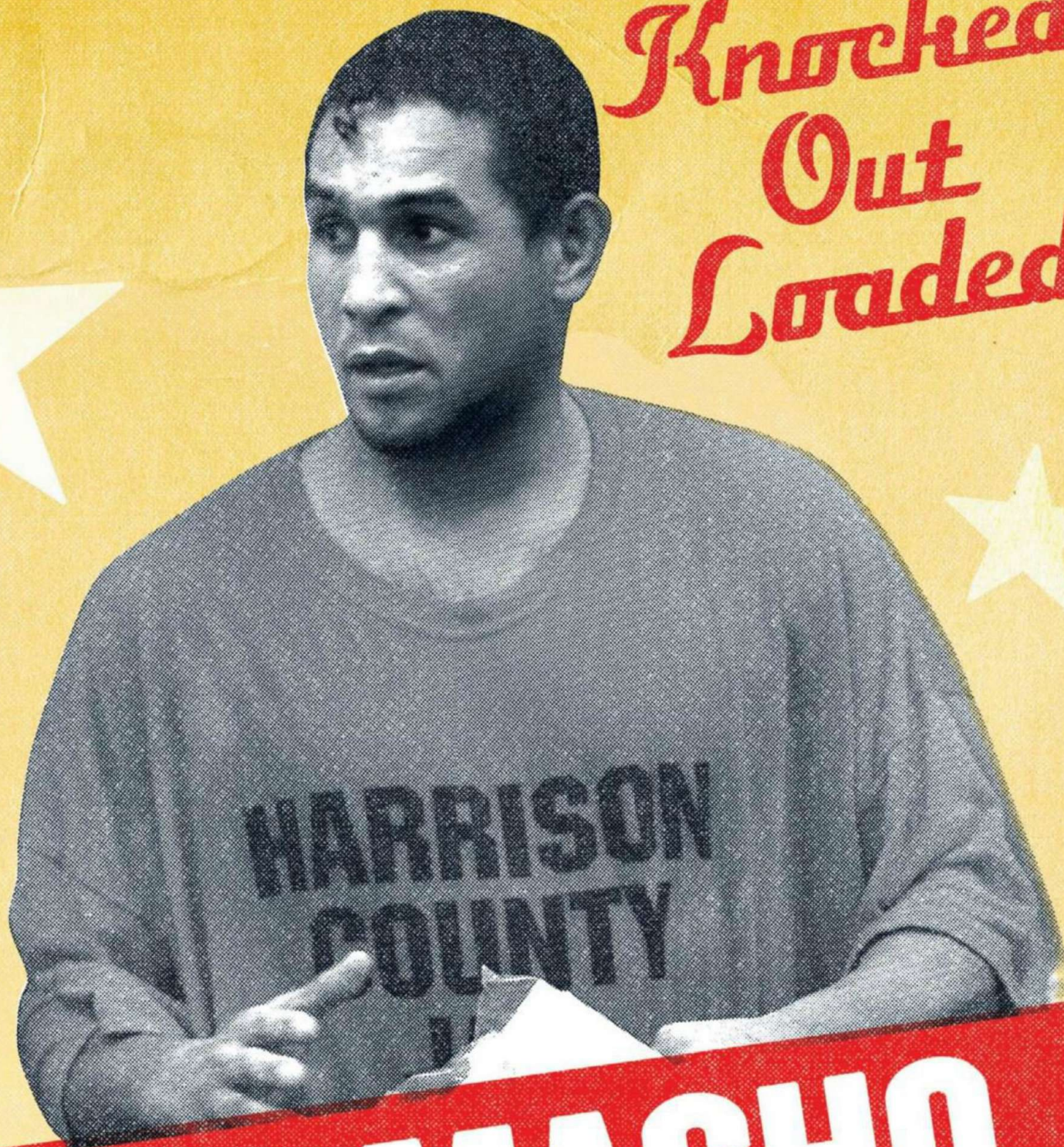
HÉCTOR "MACHO" CAMACHO SLUGGED HIS WAY TO FAME

V



presents ...

*Knocked  
Out  
Loaded*



**S CAMACHO**

BUT COULDN'T SHAKE THE LIFE THAT LED TO HIS MURDER

By  
**BOB  
DRURY**





"Always like this?"

"Dunno," I say. "He only died once."

I downshift from sixth, fishtailing at 60 into the turn off First Avenue onto the Willis Avenue Bridge. A black Ford SUV blaring salsa almost clips me as it screams past in the bus lane. Teenager, white Kangol pulled tight, leans out the back window and pumps his fists to the *bomba* beat. Screams, "It's Macho time."

She says, "I mean the...whatchacallit?"

"Cortege." I count at least 100 vehicles.

"Yeah. Funeral cortege." Jennifer is her name. Young, cute. Photographer for one of the tabloids. Asked for a lift from the church in Spanish Harlem to the graveyard in

## "Pops, let me ask you a question. How many days you been up?"

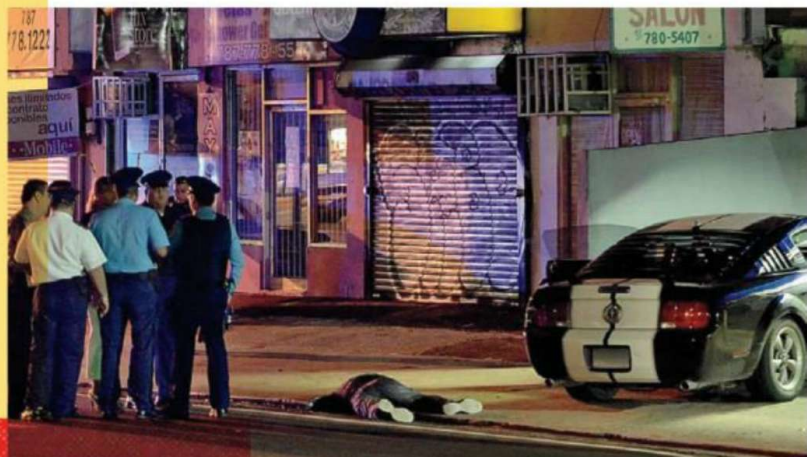
the Bronx, Héctor "Macho" Camacho's final resting place. The record of his life gilded in fable and sentiment. "What time is it?" he'd ask. "Macho time!" his Greek chorus would answer. Sure is now.

Jennifer lifts her Leica, dented lens, points at a rust-orange BMW doing 70 as it noses between me and the Ford. Puerto Rican flags fly from all four windows. Uniformed NYPD cops hold cross traffic at the light where the Bruckner Expressway runs up to the Throgs Neck. Shake their heads and laugh at the madness.

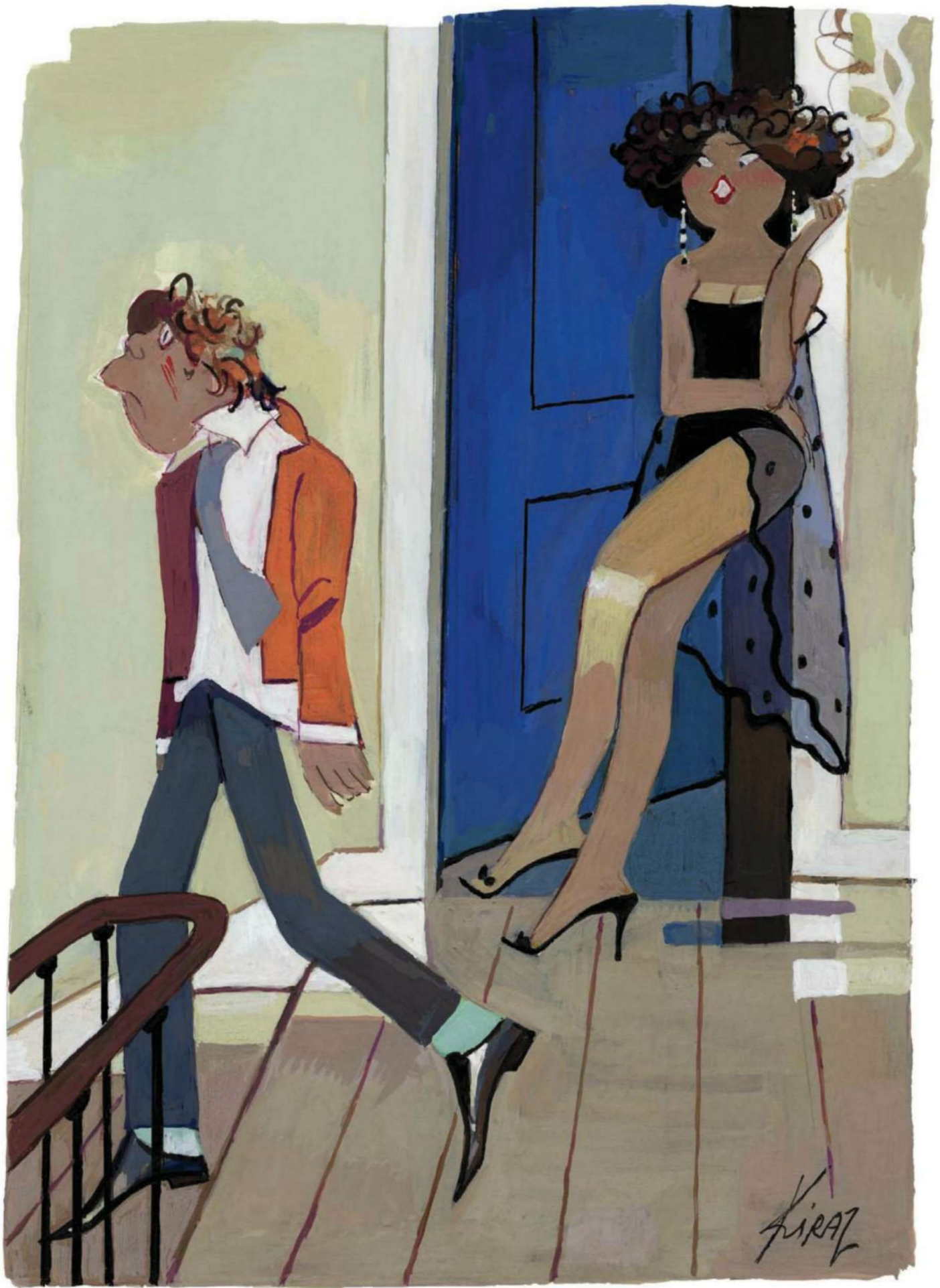
She snaps half a dozen shots of the Beemer, says, "No cortege like I've ever been in."

Last night she'd staked out St. Cecilia's for the public viewing. Bitter November wind whipping off the East River as Macho's body rolled down 106th Street in a glass carriage pulled by two white stallions. Showman to the

**From top:** A young Camacho with long-time promoter Don King. Three times Camacho fought on the same card as his son Héctor Jr.; they both won each time. Camacho the showman: Later in his career, on his walk to the ring he'd wear costumes including a superhero outfit, a diaper and a Native American headdress. Police in Bayamón found Camacho in a car with a bullet through his head. He died days later. The driver died at the scene, his pockets stuffed with envelopes of cocaine.



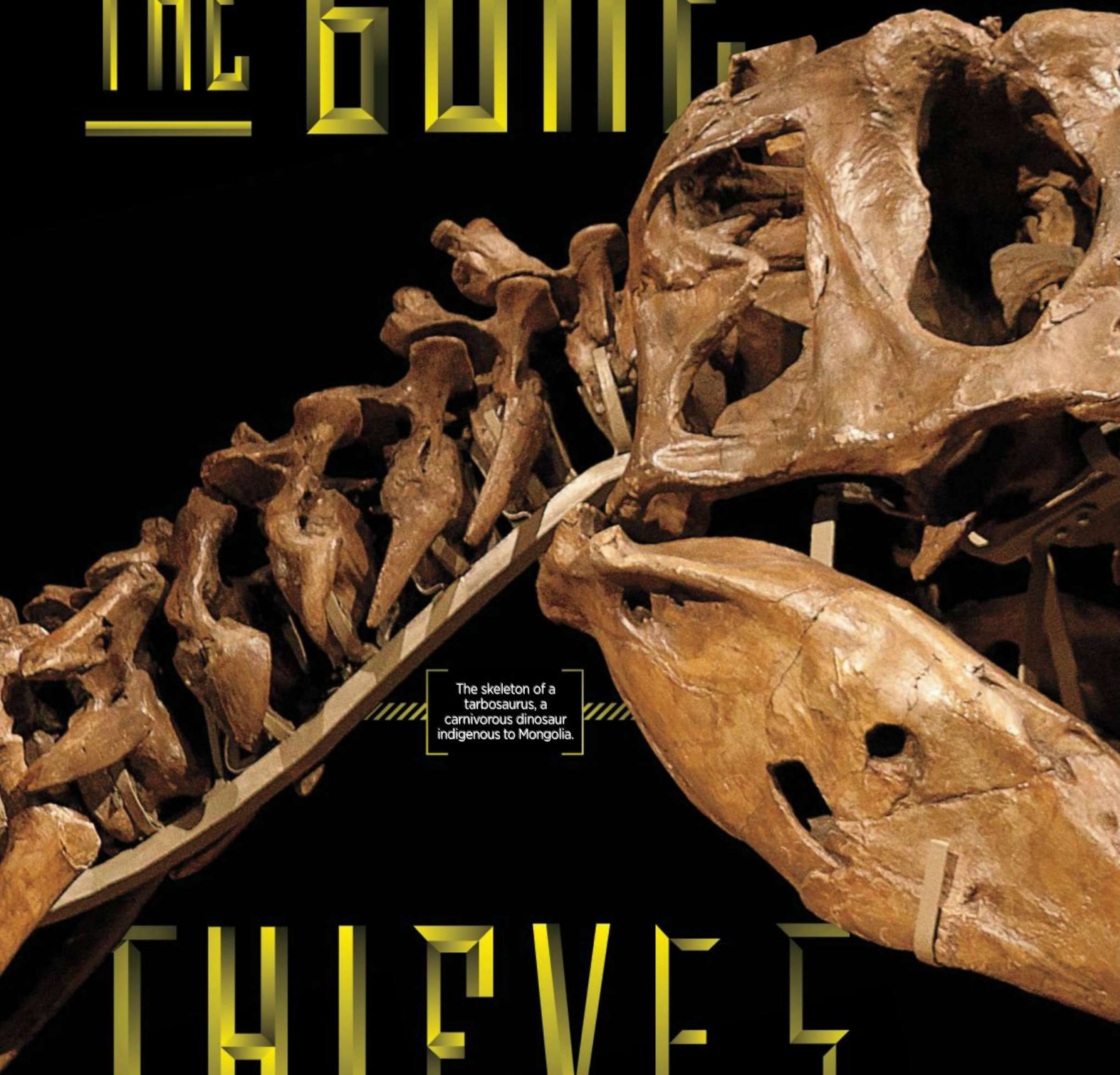




*"I slapped you...I scratched you...I bit you.... But I didn't say no."*



# THE BONE



The skeleton of a tarbosaurus, a carnivorous dinosaur indigenous to Mongolia.

# THIEVES



A HIGH-QUALITY FOSSIL FROM MONGOLIA'S GOBI DESERT CAN FETCH SIX, EVEN SEVEN FIGURES. THERE'S ONLY ONE PROBLEM: IT'S ILLEGAL TO TAKE IT OUT OF THE COUNTRY. **ADVENTURES IN THE PLANET'S HOTTEST PREHISTORIC BLACK MARKET**



BY BRETT FORREST

Chinzo filtered through the maze, and I followed. Mongolia in December was minus 32 degrees Fahrenheit, Ulaanbaatar the coldest capital in the world. My local fixer, Chinzo, a slender self-taught man of many languages, knew his way around the Narantuul Market. The place had the look of the illicit, a rambling frontier bazaar of Russian and Chinese attitudes and goods. We skated the





market's icy pathways, past vendors wrapped in furs and wearing felt boots. They sold bear claws, medicinal narcotics, ammo, magenta brassieres, the heads of vultures. My breath crystallized on the black fur of my collar, turning it gray. People barged around, shoving one another in that desperately Asian manner. This hinted at the rise of the illegal trade in dinosaur fossils, the frantic irresistibility of the treasure clasp in Mongolian soil.

I trailed Chinzo to a stall behind a rusted fuel truck, where the mass thinned out. He traded whispers with a man counting a stack of tugriks, the local currency. Pewter camel miniatures were marshaled on the stall's table, mixed with Soviet military medals and metal swastikas. A sharp wind picked up and sliced through the stalls. The vendor looked Chinzo in the eye, explaining that the criminal



It had as many as 64 teeth, some more than three inches long. It was the Gobi's prime predator.

case in New York had changed everything. A man was on trial and facing 17 years in prison for smuggling dinosaur bones from Mongolia. Now here we were, hunting for bones ourselves. But the fossil dealers were spooked. The black market had gone further underground.

If we were serious about buying dinosaur fossils, the man said, we should go to the Gobi Desert, along the Chinese border. That was where the action was.

The man gave Chinzo a phone number, saying we could give it a try in

the meantime. Chinzo dialed. "I have a skull," the man on the line told him. "I can't show you right now. Let's meet tomorrow. I'm in the middle of a poker game." There was something to buy.

I had come to Mongolia for the same reason most outsiders do: adventure. The world's largest virgin coal deposit and the biggest untapped copper and gold mines are found here, in the Gobi Desert. But I was no miner. What interested me was the Gobi's other natural resource—one of the richest dinosaur fossil beds in the world. It is illegal to export these bones, but some who have done so have sold them for six, even seven figures. I posed as a buyer, telling

people I planned to smuggle the fossils by rail over the northern border, where my Russian clients waited.

Since the fall of Genghis Khan's empire in the 14th century, Mongolia has assumed the role of cautious survivor. The country is fastened between two immovable powers—Russia and China—with no access to the sea. In the 20th century the Soviets acted as Mongolia's patron against Chinese intervention. When the Soviet Union disintegrated, the Russians fled Ulaanbaatar, fomenting chaos. Mongolia free-fell into poverty. Only now, as the country prepares for a boom in natural resources, is Mongolia ready to join the economies of the world.

For decades, however, the nomadic herders living (continued on page 142)

1. Paleontologists sweep layers of sand from Mongolia's Gobi Desert near the Flaming Cliffs, a vast cemetery of dinosaurs and home to coveted tarbosaurus bones. 2. Another paleontologist works a fossil out of the ground on a bluff at the Flaming Cliffs. 3. Eric Prokopi leaving a Manhattan courtroom in 2012. He pleaded guilty to smuggling a tarbosaurus skeleton from Mongolia. His specimen fetched \$1.05 million but was seized by U.S. Customs agents. 4. Dinosaur eggs and bones on display at the Flaming Cliffs. 5. Prokopi's tarbosaurus bones.





73



The  
**BADASS**



Mix Eric Church

WITH  
**JACK DANIEL'S,**

WEED AND METALLICA.

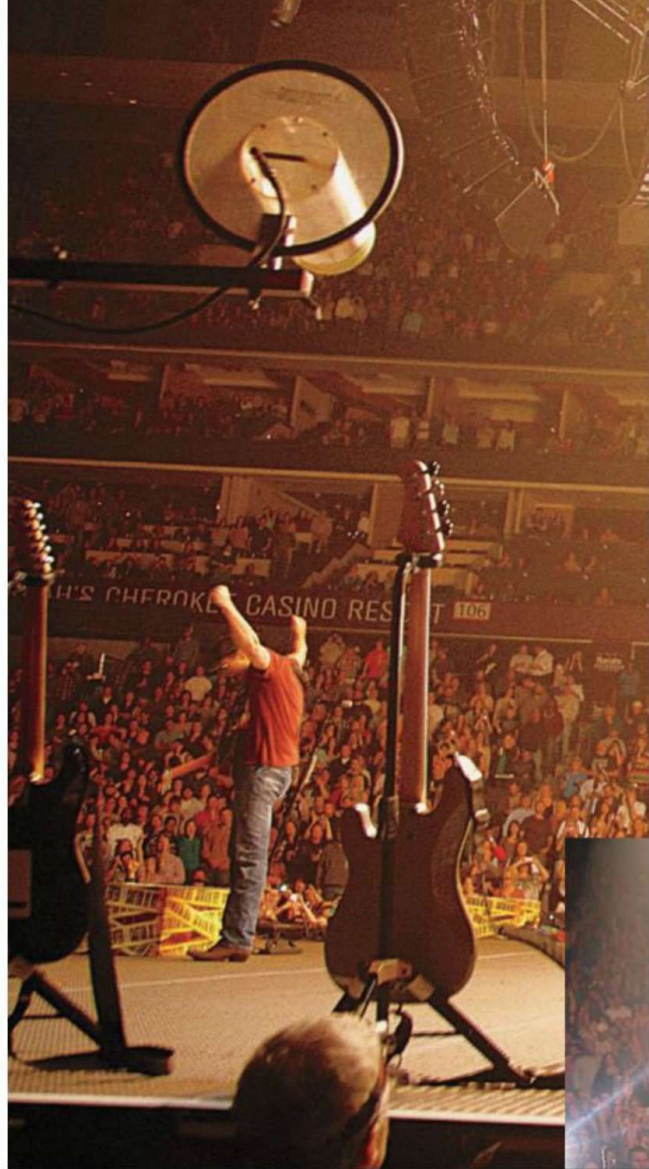
**THE RESULT:**  
THE NEW FACE OF COUNTRY MUSIC

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAN MARTENSEN

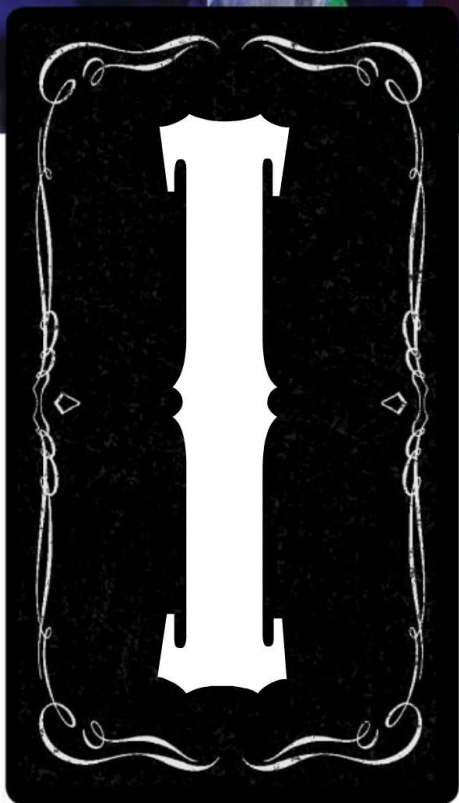








Eric Church's concerts are loud and heavy on pyro and go well with alcohol. Kip Moore, one of Church's opening acts, says, "I drank a whole lot more than usual during that tour. Watching Eric made me want to drink. An Eric Church show creates rowdiness." While he was watching Church's set, Moore saw a couple screwing in the audience. "That was a first for me."



*"I don't like to fight, but I ain't scared to bleed./Most don't mess with a guy like me."*

The one time Eric Church played Madison Square Garden, he was fired.

Church was a new artist promoting a debut album, and he landed a plum position as the opening act for Rascal Flatts, a trio who play a goopy, mild simulation of country music. Their shows were full of frenzied, fainting female fans—a kind of Beatlemania in boots—and that year Rascal Flatts sold more albums than any other country, pop or rock act.

The two were not well paired: It was like matching biker boots (Church) with a silver cape (Flatts). For years, Church had played smelly bars for a dozen people who ignored him while they watched TV. Now that he'd hit the big time, he was playing for nearly 11,000 people who ignored him.

Opening acts work in a kind of veal pen. Contractually they are allowed to use only part of the stage. They have to limit their volume to between 80 and 90 decibels so the star act will always be louder. And most important, they can't exceed their allotted time. If they go even 10 seconds over, they are reprimanded. Those are the rules.

After only three shows with Rascal Flatts, Church was unhappy. He'd gotten used to doing things his own way, and now he had to follow rules. So he celebrated the biggest show of his career by doing things he knew would get him fired. He played too loud and tossed in a bit of Ozzy Osbourne's "Crazy Train." He strutted in areas of the stage he wasn't allowed to use. He played an extended, eight-minute version of his best-known song, "How 'Bout You." By the time he exited the stage, he'd exceeded





**“We’re further into rock  
and roll than anyone else.  
That’s why traditionalists  
have a problem.”**

his 20-minute limit by 10 minutes. Because Madison Square Garden is unionized and has curfews, his antics cost Rascal Flatts about \$30,000 in penalties.

As soon as Church came offstage, Rascal Flatts’s manager fired him. (He was quickly replaced by a pretty 16-year-old named Taylor Swift, who was much more willing to play by the rules.)

Church shadowed the tour for a while, playing clubs in the same cities,

often for a dozen people, losing money while carrying expenses of about \$5,000 a day. The Rascal Flatts tour was called Me and My Gang; to tweak them Church called his tour Me and Myself.

A month later he was opening for rock legend Bob Seger, which was a better fit. But in the country world, Church had earned himself a reputation as a disrespectful jerk. It’s been a long time since being a rebel was a good business

strategy in Nashville, which—despite the frequent use of cowboy imagery—is a go-along-to-get-along industry. Church’s record label was angry. Other bands refused to tour with him. And radio programmers decided they didn’t want an asshole in their format.

“We ended up banished to the wilderness,” Church told a reporter a few years later. “Nobody would touch us. It’s like we were nuclear.”

Only a few months after his debut album, Church had already ruined his career by being prideful and obstinate. Or had he?

•

*“Give me a crowd that’s redneck and loud./ We’ll raise the roof.”*

Exactly six years after Church was fired from a great job he hated, he’s in the middle of another arena tour—this time as the headliner, with two opening acts of his own. “Your job tonight,” he tells the audience in a brawny North Carolina accent, “is to drink and sing and party your asses off.” The folks in the Friday-night crowd in Biloxi, Mississippi began drinking long before (continued on page 146)



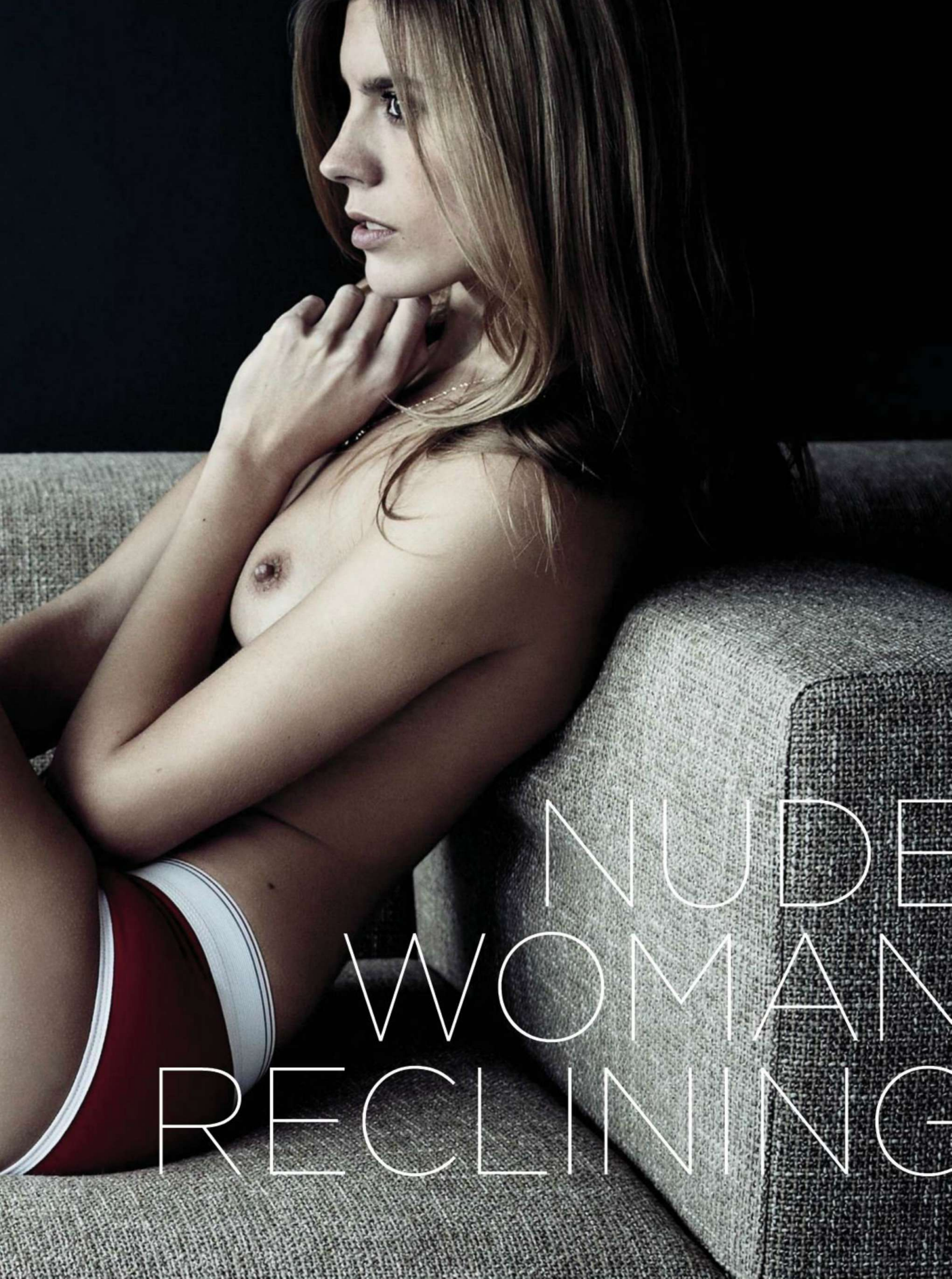
A TRIBUTE TO  
THE FEMALE  
FORM IN THE  
WORK OF  
THE DUTCH  
MASTERS,  
FROM  
REMBRANDT  
TO TODAY

T

The Dutch Masters were a lusty bunch, shaping a tradition of immortalizing naked women on canvas: Rembrandt's *Danaë* (1636) and *Bathsheba at Her Bath* (1654) and Jacob van Loo's *Ariadne* (1652). And of course, much later came Vincent van Gogh's *Nude Woman on a Bed* and *Nude Woman Reclining* (both 1887). In honor of this heady Dutch tradition, we had photographer Patrick van Dam do a study of the female form in an Amsterdam apartment, focusing not on narrative but on the perfect brushstrokes of the body, if you will. Our model: Sarah, a 24-year-old professional who is local to Amsterdam. Her motto: "Enjoy your life and do everything you want and can." Vincent himself would surely have agreed.







NUDE  
WOMAN  
RECLINING



















# THERE WILL BE MUD

ELECTRO-  
SHOCKS.  
ICE BATHS.  
WALLS OF  
FIRE. THE  
INSANE  
WORLD OF  
ENDURANCE  
RACING AND  
THE QUEST  
TO TRAMPLE  
THE TRA-  
DITIONAL  
MARATHON  
INTO THE  
DIRT

# A

After three hours of climbing walls, crawling through tunnels, scrabbling under barbed wire, swimming in ice water, hoisting cement blocks and other cruelties, you come to a 50-foot trough of icy mud. Dozens of yellow wires hang from its wood-plank roof like jellyfish tentacles. The wires sting like jellyfish too, because they're electrified. This is Electroshock Therapy, the last of 32 obstacles on the 10-mile course. You're wet, freezing, wheezing, bruised, cramping, spent. There's only one thing to do.

Actually two. You could crawl under the wires, gargling muddy water and wasting time. But that's not you, is it? No, you charge through the live wires at a run, yelling "Piss! Shit! Bite me!" and assorted



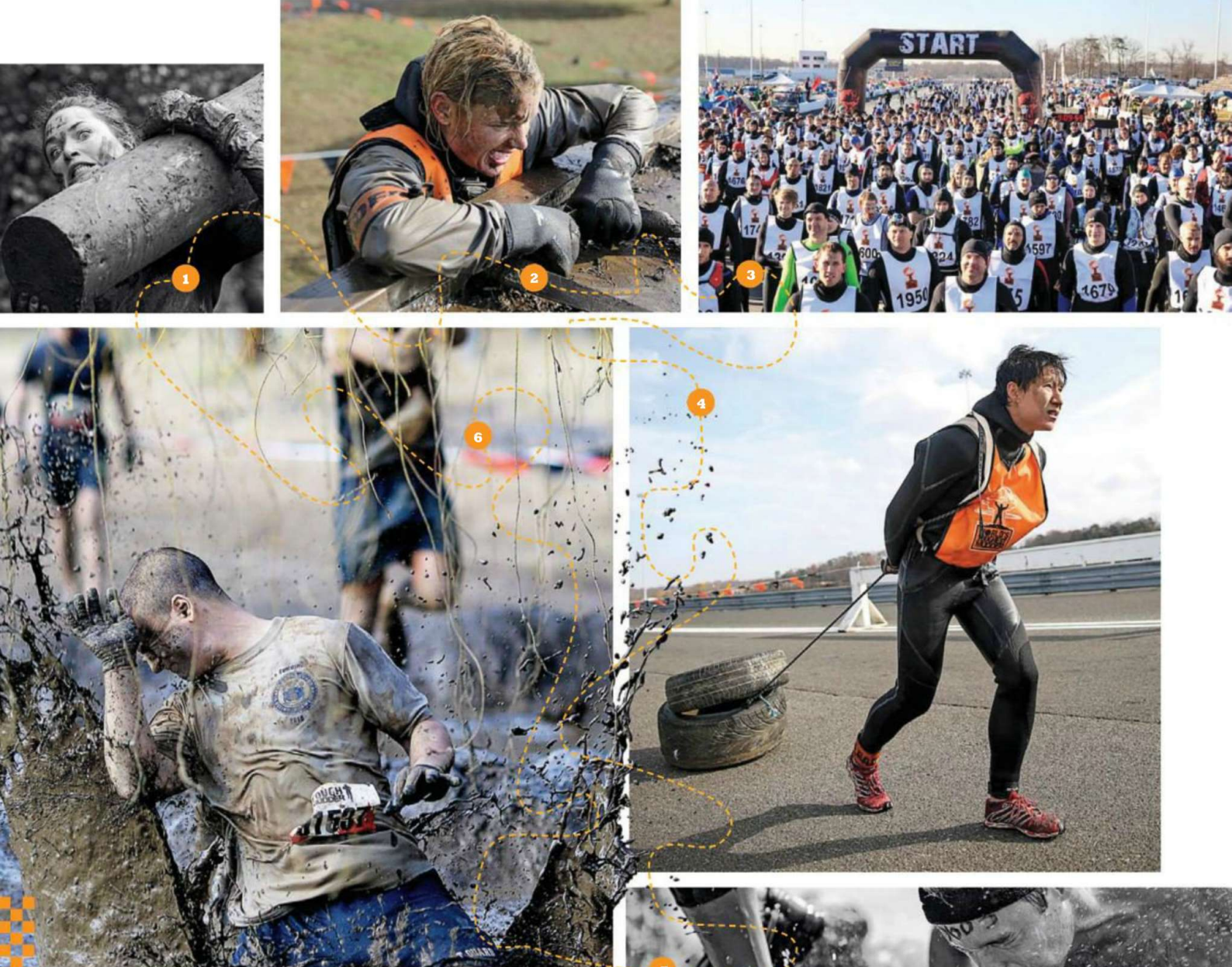


BY

**KEVIN  
COOK**

PHOTOGRAPH BY  
**MARK LAITA**





## THE DEATH WAIVER, AT LEAST, IS REAL.

ape grunts as the wires kick sparks off your face and aching limbs. Finally, six seconds later, it's over. Yes! Now it's a half-mile jog to the finish line. You're rounding the last turn into the stadium, where loudspeakers pound Guns N' Roses as you wave your mud-caked paws at the crowd. Fans cheer; your buddies hug you. You just survived the World's Toughest Mudder, the ultimate test of the world's most rugged new sport. Now you can strip off this wet suit, rinse off, grab a blanket and a parka and a beer. And sit down.

Unless you want to win. In that case you'll need to start over. To win you'll need to run the 10-mile obstacle course again. Eight more times.

"Tough Mudder is the worst day you'll ever have. And the best," one mudder says.

A cross between endurance race and boot camp, the world's fastest-growing sport inspires extreme descriptions. It's been called a masochist's marathon and more: "Probably the toughest event on the planet."

"A real-life fight club."

"Ironman meets Burning Man."

"Trial by fire, ice, dirt, monkey bars, electric shocks—and more fire."

There are plenty of other extreme sports—the traditional 26.2-mile marathon, plus ultramarathons of 50 kilometers and up, triathlons (swim, bike and ride), Ironman triathlons (swim 2.4 miles, bike 112 miles, then run a marathon, you nut), and newer events such as Spartan Race, Muddy Buddy, Dirty Dash and Rugged Maniac, most featuring obstacles, some involving tree chopping,

1. The Hold Your Wood challenge can mean hauling a log uphill or half a mile over flat land. 2. Women's winner Amelia Boone climbs the Everest obstacle. 3. Participants at the starting line of the 2012 World's Toughest Mudder. 4. Men's winner Junyong Pak endures the Drag King obstacle. 5. The Kiss of Mud lives up to its name. 6. A mudder gets messy.

vegetable slicing, beer drinking, fighting *American Gladiators*-style bodybuilders armed with Nerf lances, even memorizing the names of U.S. presidents. The boot-campy ones have been growing quickly, challenging older events the way MMA beat down boxing a decade ago. And Tough Mudder, with almost a million adherents, leads the field. Which fits its cocky corporate goal: "We aim to replace Ironman as the preeminent brand in endurance sports." Not bad for a concept dreamed up four years ago at Harvard, like (continued on page 124)





*"Ride 'em, cowboy...!"*



20Q

BY ERIC SPITZNAGEL  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY GAVIN BOND

Kevin

**JAY AND  
SILENT  
BOB ARE  
STILL ALIVE  
AND HAVE  
PLENTY  
TO SAY  
ABOUT BEN  
AFFLECK,  
BRUCE  
WILLIS  
AND NEIL  
PATRICK  
HARRIS**

## Q1

**PLAYBOY:** Most people know you as Jay and Silent Bob, the slacker best friends from the movies *Clerks*, *Dogma* and *Jay and Silent Bob Strike Back*, among others. The characters have also been in comic books, a TV show and a feature-length cartoon that came out this spring. What's next for them, a musical?

**SMITH:** We want to do a projection—you know, like they did with Tupac Shakur. We're going to record a lot of shit now so that when we're gone, they can bring us out onstage.

**MEWES:** I think a video game would be pretty cool.

**SMITH:** Oh yeah. We've done some app games, but maybe a game where we're shooting at each other. *Jay vs. Silent Bob*—that might be badass. Can you imagine those guys armed to the teeth? All right, we just talked ourselves into it.





# Smith



# JASON MEWES







## Q2

**PLAYBOY:** You've done 10 films together, not counting the upcoming *Clerks III*. Who owes their career to whom?

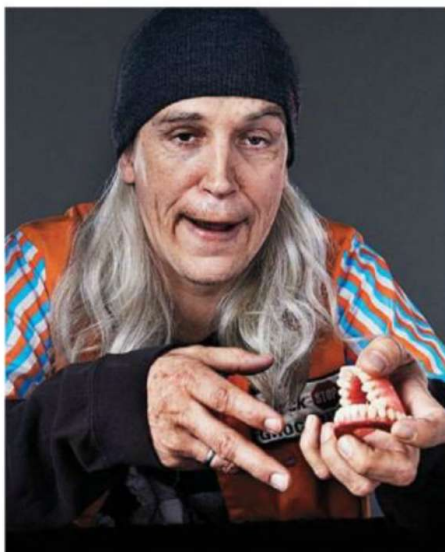
**MEWES:** I definitely owe everything to Kevin. I never would have thought to write a script or direct a movie or put somebody like me in it. It was all Kevin's idea.

**SMITH:** I truly feel my biggest creative influence is Mewes. The guy is unfiltered and fucking unfettered. I grew up in a world where things happen up here [points to head] and they go through a filter and get sifted before they come out here [points to mouth]. The beauty of Mewes is somebody pulled his filter out at birth. A thought pops into his brain and it immediately falls out of his mouth.

## Q3

**PLAYBOY:** You two met in your hometown of Highlands, New Jersey. Were you instant BFFs?

**SMITH:** Not really. At first I was jealous of him. I started hanging out with him when I was 18 and he was 14. I inherited him from my friends Walter and Bryan. We were going to a comic book show in New York, and I was driving. So I showed up and Mewes was with them. He was Dennis the Menace but way



dirtier. Everything was "pussy, pussy, pussy," even though he obviously hadn't seen a pussy since he'd sprung from one. And then, while we're on the highway, he takes out his penis.

## Q4

**PLAYBOY:** Because...why exactly?

**MEWES:** I thought it was funny.

**SMITH:** He was like, "Man, is it cold in here or is it me?" And you look down

and he's pulled his pants to his knees and he's sitting there with his dick out, flapping it, going "Naauugggg!" At first it was like, "Put that away!" After months of hanging out with him, you realize that's just what Jason does. I've seen his dick more than I've seen my own. So yeah, we weren't friends right away. It took a while to percolate, but now he really is my best friend. Every morning we get up at 10 A.M. and walk in the hills with our dogs. If you're driving around the Hollywood Hills, periodically you'll turn a corner and see Jay and Silent Bob walking their fucking dogs.

## Q5

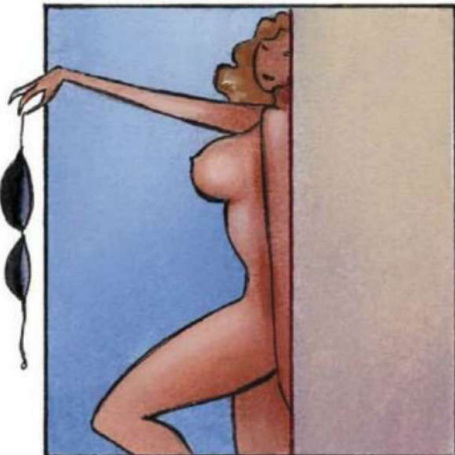
**PLAYBOY:** You co-host a podcast called *Jay & Silent Bob Get Old*. You're 38 and 42. Is that what counts as old now?

**SMITH:** The title is more about making fun of ourselves before somebody else does. It steals their thunder. I remember suggesting the title to Mewes and he got really defensive and uptight about it. He was like, "We're not old!"

**MEWES:** I don't feel old, but I'm definitely feeling older. For me, the "get old" part is more about our history. We've been doing this shit for 25 years. We've had ups and downs. We're not necessarily old, but you know.... (continued on page 150)



# What Really Matters





# THE SUN GODDESS

Summer's here! Hit the beach in Malibu with radiant Miss June

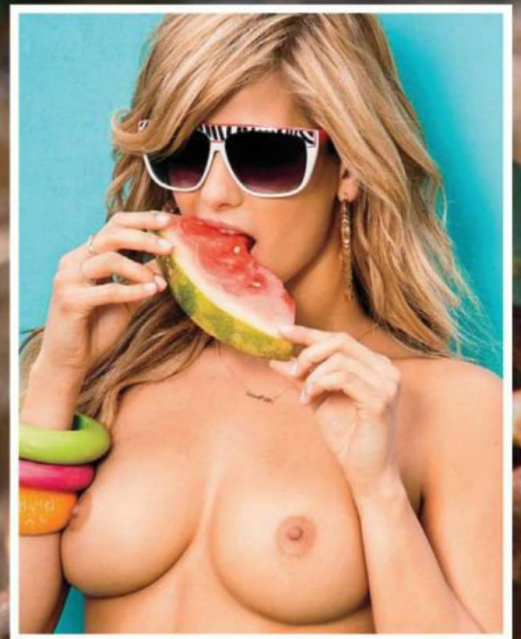
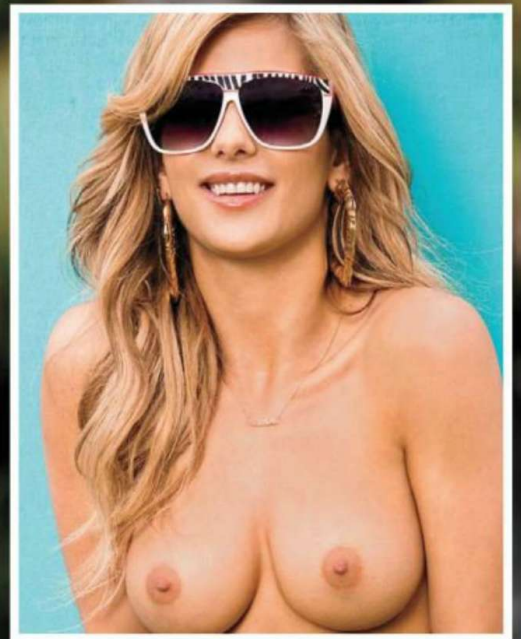
PHOTOGRAPHY BY  
SASHA EISENMAN

Sometimes a trip out West is just what the doctor ordered. Ask Miss June. "You can't be naked in Colorado," says Audrey Aileen Allen of her home state. "It's so frigid. When *PLAYBOY* flew me out to sunny Malibu to shoot my pictorial, I was like, 'Yes!'" It was our pleasure. Audrey comes alive in the sun; the solar rays take her radiance to another level. Her journey to this beach, and to these pages, was a long one. Four years ago she made Playmate-hood her goal when she discovered the lady she calls her idol, Playmate of the Year 2007 Sara Jean Underwood. "Sara put this beautiful light on *PLAYBOY* for me, with her artful innocence and sweetness," says Miss June. "She had this natural glow that I could relate to, and I thought, I have to make this happen for me too!" After she hit a Denver casting call last fall, the second-year industrial and organizational psychology major's wish began to materialize, culminating in the celebration of sunny seaside fun you see here. "My shoot does a great job of depicting me," she says. "I'm young, playful, goofy and, not to be immodest, sensual too." As much as Audrey comes alive in front of the camera, her Playmate experience reached perfection two days after her shoot. She was at the Mansion when Sara Jean Underwood herself showed up. "I was so taken aback," Audrey says. "For Sara to show up at the Mansion—it was icing on the cake. For me it was like, I'm here. I'm officially a Playmate. I did it!"



Click for  
more  
photos























MISS JUNE

PLAYBOY'S PLAYMATE OF THE MONTH









Audrey Allen Allen





PLAYMATE DATA SHEET

NAME: Audrey Aileen Allen  
 BUST: 34C WAIST: 22" HIPS: 34"  
 HEIGHT: 5'2" WEIGHT: 105 lbs.



BIRTH DATE: 4-8-91 BIRTHPLACE: Edina, Minnesota

AMBITIONS: To further my career with Playboy, complete my bachelor's degree and make a difference in the world.

TURN-ONS: Confidence, honesty, a sense of humor and a beautiful mind (pretty muscles never hurt either <sup>24</sup>).

TURNOFFS: Stinky anything (breath, armpits, etc.), wretched table manners and guys with too much liquid courage (be it booze or any testosterone-stimulating substances).

DOWNTIME HEAVEN: I love books because they take me out of myself and into another world. Journeys into the heart of Hogwarts and dragon rides in Pern laid the foundation for my spirit of adventure as an adult.

MUSIC TO MY EARS: Country! Lately, I love Jake Owen's "Alone With You."

IDEAL SUMMER VACATION: One where you never leave the hotel. ♡



Baby's first trip to the beach.



At a Renaissance festival.



This is what winter looks like at -5°.



# PLAYBOY'S PARTY JOKES

**F**ool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice, shame on me. Fool me 862,593 times and you're the weatherman.

**F**atherly advice: Never get on one knee for a girl who won't get on two for you.

**A** woman complained to her husband, "Our new neighbor said her husband has sex with her twice a day. Why can't you do that?"

He answered, "I haven't even introduced myself to her yet."

**F**emales are the only objects that defy the law of gravity—the heavier they are, the easier they are to pick up.



**L**osing a wife can be hard. In many cases it is almost impossible.

**O**ver breakfast, a man said to his wife, "Were you faking it last night?"

"No," she said. "I was really asleep."

**A** guy met a girl in a bar and they went back to her apartment. When she brought him into her bedroom, he saw it was filled with shelves of fluffy toys. He thought that was odd, but he quickly put it out of his mind once they started fucking.

After they finished he asked, "How was I?"

She replied, "Take anything from the bottom shelf."

**W**hen a man showed up at work an hour late for the second time in a week, his boss called him into her office. She asked, "What's your excuse this time?"

He shrugged and said, "I slept in."

"For fuck's sake," she screamed, "at least tell me something I haven't heard before!"

He replied, "You're looking lovely today."

**W**hy is being in the military like a blow job?

The closer you get to discharge, the better you feel.

**D**id you hear about the gay dwarf?

He came out of the cupboard.

**I** wear the pants in my relationships," a woman said to one of her friends over tea.

"Well," her friend said, "I'd rather be in a relationship where no one wears the pants."

**A** man said to his friend, "I was so upset when the doctor gave us the bad news about my wife that I can't remember if he said she has AIDS or Alzheimer's."

"I have a simple solution," his friend offered. "First you drive her to the other side of town. Then if she finds her way home, don't fuck her."

**W**hile alcohol might not always be the answer, it certainly helps you forget the question.

**D**id you hear about the flasher who was thinking of retiring?

He decided to stick it out for one more year.

**W**hat do you call a couple who uses the rhythm method of birth control?

Parents.

**B**efore you insult a man, walk a mile in his shoes. That way, when you insult him, you'll be a mile away and you'll have his shoes.

**O**nce a month, women go completely crazy for about 30 days.



**T**wo cows were out to pasture. The first one said, "Moo."

The second one said, "Damn, I was going to say that."

**G**oing to a fast food restaurant for a salad is like going to a prostitute for a hug.

**A** woman in a supermarket rushed to the express line with a few items. The clerk had his back turned to her, so she said, "Excuse me, I'm in a hurry. Could you please check me out real quick?"

The clerk turned, looked her up and down and said, "Nice tits."

Send your jokes to *Playboy Party Jokes*, 9346 Civic Center Drive, Beverly Hills, California 90210, or by e-mail to [jokes@playboy.com](mailto:jokes@playboy.com). PLAYBOY will pay \$100 to the contributors whose submissions are selected.

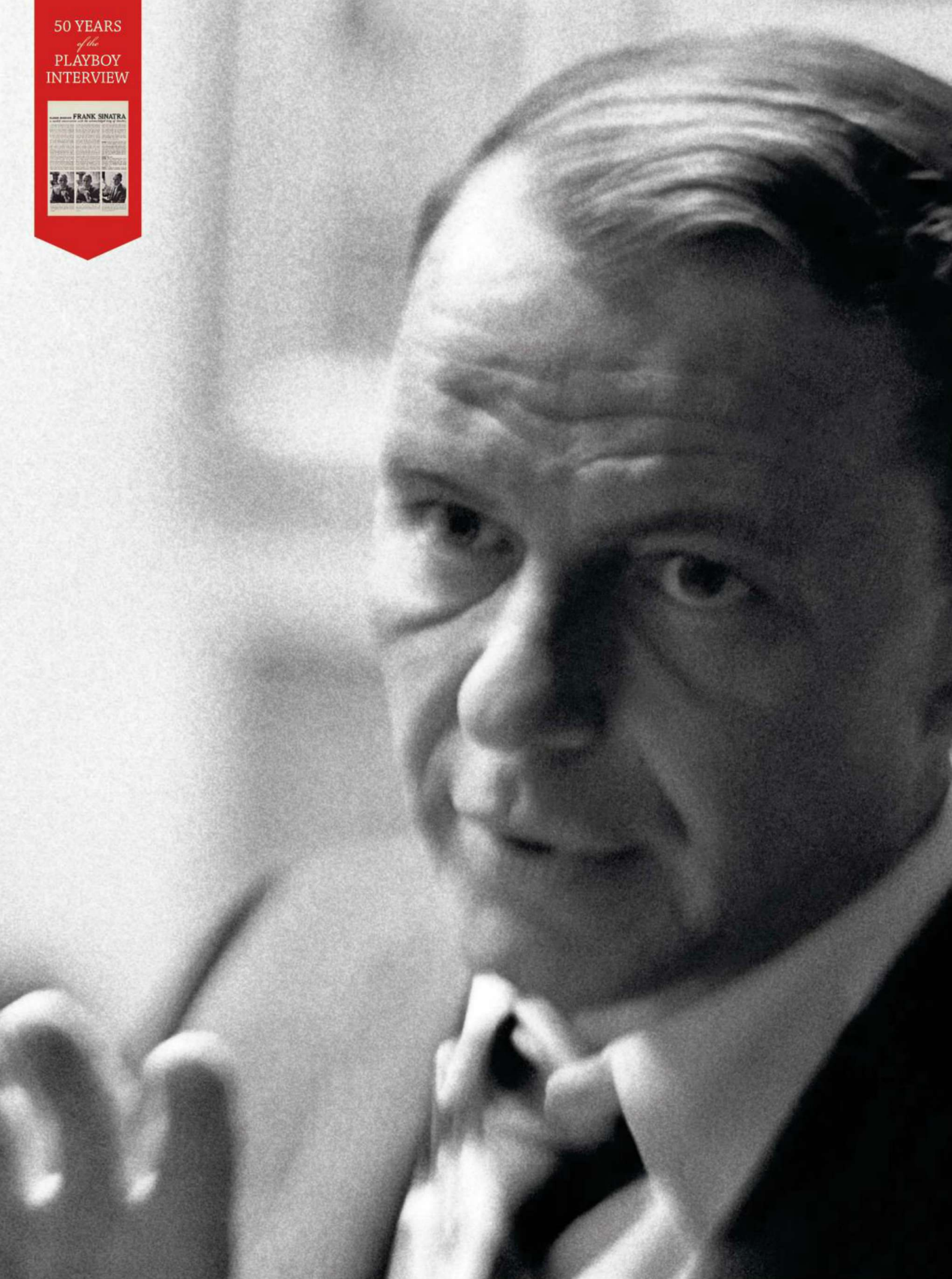




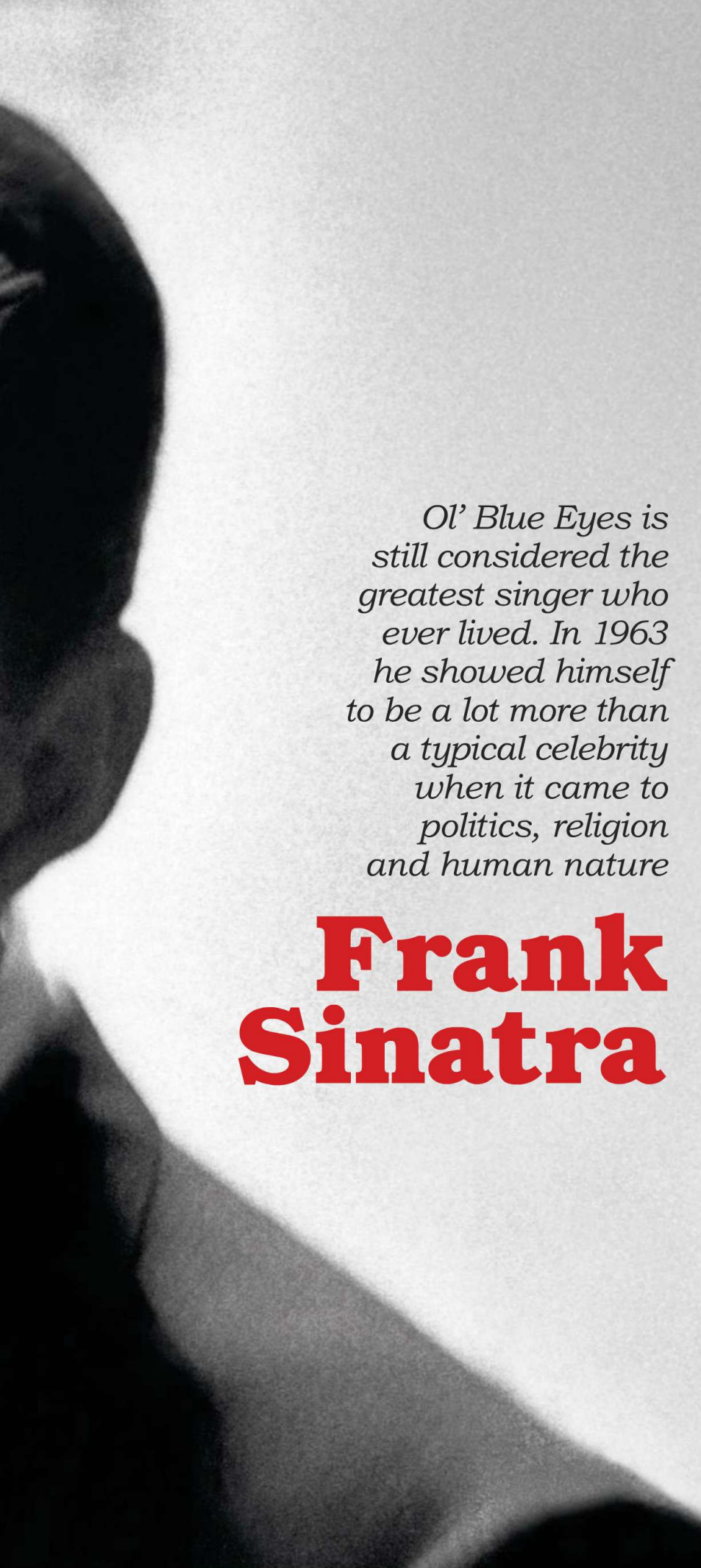
*"Collateral? Well, now, how's about Friday nights for six months?"*



50 YEARS  
*of the*  
PLAYBOY  
INTERVIEW







*Ol' Blue Eyes is  
still considered the  
greatest singer who  
ever lived. In 1963  
he showed himself  
to be a lot more than  
a typical celebrity  
when it came to  
politics, religion  
and human nature*

# Frank Sinatra

**F**rank Sinatra—Ol' Blue Eyes, the Chairman of the Board, the Voice—is considered by many to be the greatest singer ever. As Elton John put it, Sinatra “was simply the best—no one else even comes close.” Even unlikely fan Jim Morrison of the Doors once said, “No one can touch him.”

At the height of a career that spanned five decades, Sinatra was the highest-paid nightclub performer in show business and the biggest of the businessman-stars (with a fortune of \$25 million, considered an empire in 1963). He sold more than 150 million records, won 12 Grammys (including three honorary awards) and was a seven-time winner of PLAYBOY's All-Star Jazz Poll. His biggest hits—“My Way,” “New York, New York,” “Strangers in the Night”—still sell.

Sinatra didn't soar only in music. He was also one of his era's biggest movie stars, an Academy Award winner whose now-classic movies include *The Man With the Golden Arm*, *From Here to Eternity* and the original, brilliant *Manchurian Candidate*. He was a founder of the Rat Pack, a group of show business pals that included Dean Martin and Sammy Davis Jr., and he was a close friend of presidents, including John F. Kennedy. Their relationship lasted until the president severed ties with Sinatra because of the singer's connection to Mafia boss Sam Giancana. Among Sinatra's four wives were the actresses Mia Farrow and Ava Gardner. He had an affair with Marilyn Monroe.

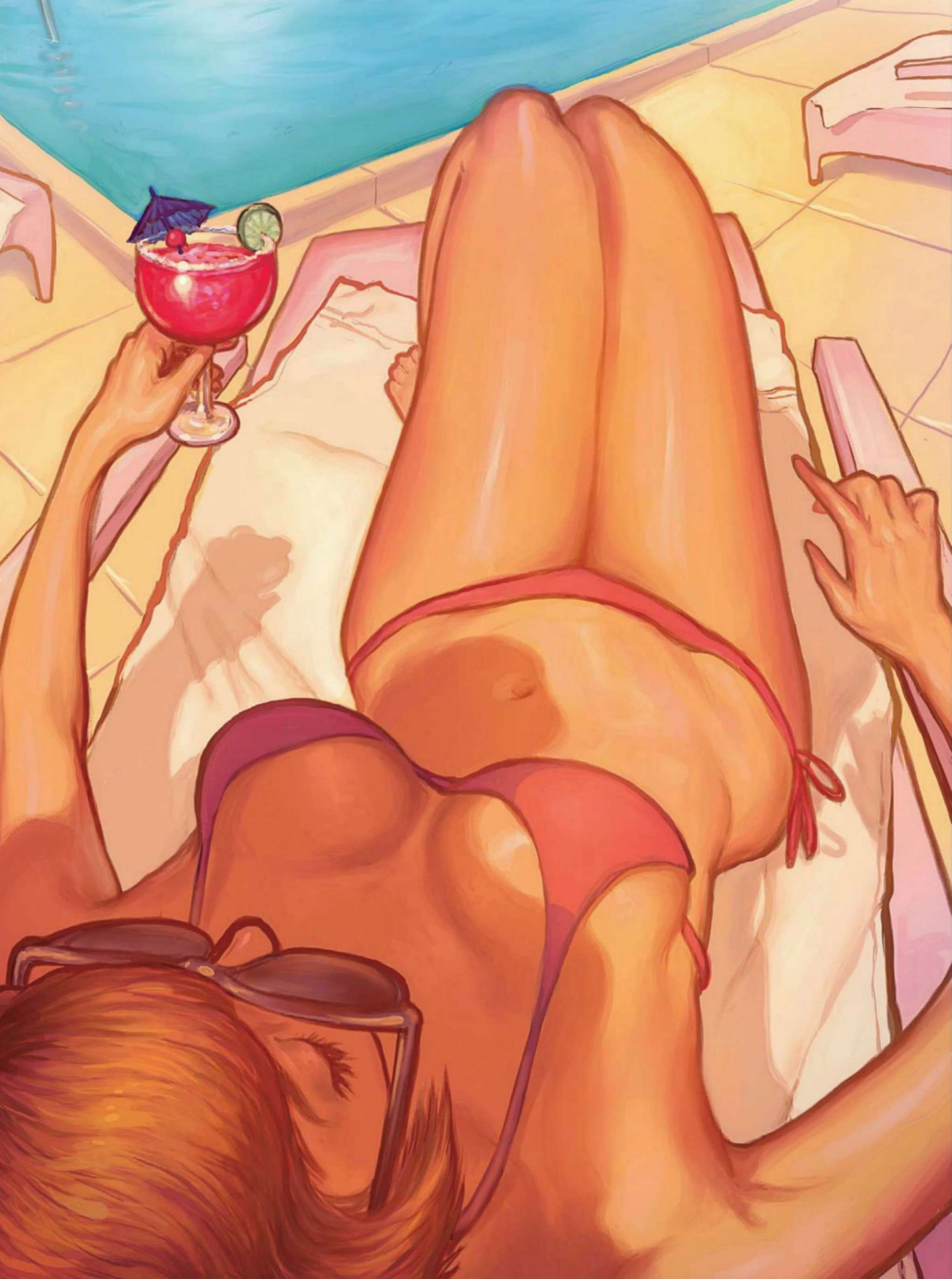
In 1963 PLAYBOY approached Sinatra to sit for an interview. Our interviewer, **Joe Hyams**, spent an entire week with the star. The interview took place on the set of the movie *Come Blow Your Horn*, in Sinatra's Dual-Ghia, during breaks at a recording session with Count Basie, in corridors heading to and from staff summit meetings on upcoming movie and recording projects and in his Beverly Hills home. As PLAYBOY points out in the introduction to the interview, “The conversation that emerged from these catch-as-catch-can taping sessions is a courageous public declaration of private convictions from a major figure in a business wherein most stars seem concerned less with earning good reviews for their performances than with avoiding offense in their personal lives. Many people will be shocked by what he has to say, but many more, we aver, will feel that the candor of his insights adds a new dimension to their understanding of the complex, articulate and thoughtful man who is the chief executive of his profession.” When Sinatra died of a heart attack in 1998, the writer Gore Vidal summoned one of the singer's legacies: “I would say that half the population of the United States over the age of 40 was conceived while their parents were listening to his records.”

**PLAYBOY:** Many explanations have been offered for your unique ability—apart from the subtleties of style and vocal equipment—to communicate the mood of a song to an audience. How would you define it?

**SINATRA:** I think it's because I get an audience involved, personally involved in a song—because I'm involved myself. It's not something I do deliberately; I can't help myself. If the song is a lament at the loss of love, I get an ache in my gut. I feel the loss myself and I cry out the loneliness, the hurt and the pain that I feel.

**PLAYBOY:** Doesn't any (continued on page 139) 105







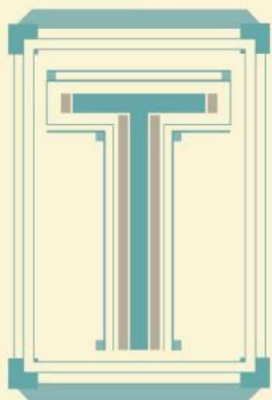


# GETTING MY BABY TANKED



FICTION BY  
**LIESL  
SCHILLINGER**

HE WAS SO GENEROUS, AND SO MESSED UP



hey had been on the gambling boat outside of Fort Lauderdale for two hours, and Carl had gone to order Greta a third margarita, which she didn't want. She lay on the deck chair, drowsy, expectant and slick with Bain de Soleil, a towel thrown over her midriff, where she rested her greasy forearms as she leafed through a Graham Greene novel for the third time. The pages were translucent with orange gelée smudges.

"Here we are." Carl showed up, grinning, blocking her sun, holding up a plastic mug with a winking whale and the words BAHAMA MAMA printed on it. Three umbrellas bobbed among the ice cubes. He hovered over Greta for a moment, a tall, rumpled figure in an ink-stained madras jacket and a battered fishing hat, then handed over the margarita and sank bonelessly into the deck chair next to her.

*(continued on page 136)*

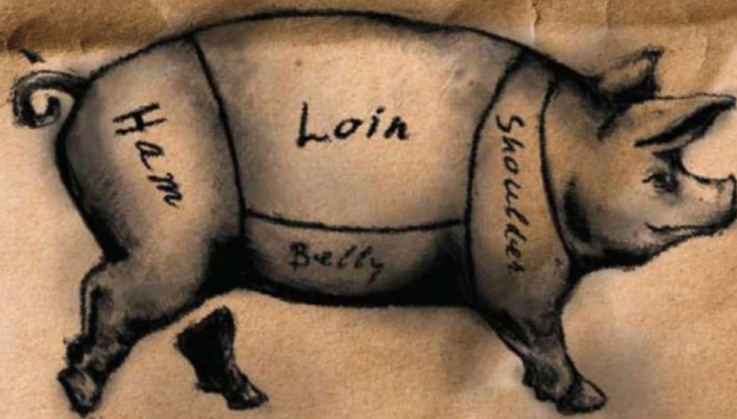


PLAYBOY'S®  
GRILLING GUIDE  
2013

- The -

# NEXT PIG THING

PHOTOGRAPHY BY FRANCESCO TONELLI



ANYBODY CAN COOK A  
STEAK. PORK IS THE TRUE  
TEST OF A GRILL MASTER.  
HERE'S THE RIGHT WAY TO  
GO WHOLE HOG

**W**

e're in the middle of a pork revolution, with all things hog-related ruling restaurant menus and filling up the butcher case (likely lorded over by a butcher emblazoned with bacon tattoos). Rare heirloom breeds marbled with fat and packed with flavor are making a comeback, besting the chewy factory-produced varieties that go from raw to rubbery on the grill. But now that the other white meat has become the noble white meat, let lesser men strut their grilling skills with burgers and steaks. That's mere child's play compared with the challenges and attendant rewards of perfecting your pork-grilling prowess: You need the right meat, the right recipes and the right techniques. Our guide will elevate your next party from humble cookout to a pig-out for the ages.





DISH 1

## BOURBON-ROSEMARY PORK CHOPS

*Try tracking down Berkshire pork for this recipe. The heirloom breed has a higher fat content than most supermarket varieties ([nimanranch.com](http://nimanranch.com) and [heritagefoodsusa.com](http://heritagefoodsusa.com) are excellent sources). If you strike out, the bourbon-spiked brine will yield flavorful results with any kind of pork. Recipe serves two.*

### DIRECTIONS

1

❖ Combine brown sugar, salt and rosemary in a large bowl. Add hot water and whisk until brown sugar and salt are dissolved. Let steep five minutes. Stir in cold water, bourbon and oil. Pour this mixture over chops, turning the meat a couple of times to coat evenly. Refrigerate for two hours, turning once after an hour. Pat dry before grilling.

2

❖ Build a two-zone fire on your grill. If using a charcoal grill, mound hot charcoal on one side, leaving other side cold. If using a gas grill, turn half the burners to medium-high. Cook chops on cool side, covered, about 15 minutes. To finish cooking, move chops to hot side and cook until grill marks appear and an instant-read thermometer reaches 140 degrees—about five minutes per side. Let chops rest another five minutes before serving to keep juices from spilling out.

#### • Hot Tip •

#### HOW TO GET THE HEAT JUST RIGHT

Beef can stand up to a blazing grill, but pork requires a more moderate heat to coax out its flavors yet remain unctuous and tender. High heat can dry out lean cuts of pork or cause fatty cuts to flare up and scorch. Get the right temperature by letting the coals cool down or setting your gas grill to medium. Place the palm of your hand five inches above the grate. If you can count to seven before having to pull it away, you're good to grill.



### INGREDIENTS

- 3 tbsp. brown sugar
- 3 tbsp. kosher salt
- 4 sprigs fresh rosemary
- 1 cup hot water
- 2 cups cold water
- 4 tbsp. bourbon
- 2 tbsp. canola oil
- 2 one-inch-thick bone-in pork-rib chops





DISH 2

## PORK-BELLY TACOS

*Inspired by the Korean tacos served by L.A.'s Kogi food trucks, this dish has become a street-food classic. Pork belly is essentially uncured bacon. Give it a bath in a spicy marinade, put it on a tortilla, top it with kimchi and you've tripled the deliciousness factor. Recipe serves four.*

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 tbsp. sesame oil
- 3 tbsp. low-sodium soy sauce
- 1 tbsp. sambal oelek or other chili paste
- 2 tbsp. brown sugar
- 4 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 2 tbsp. fresh ginger, chopped
- 1 lb. thick-cut fresh pork belly, cut into quarter-inch strips
- 12 corn tortillas
- 2 cups kimchi
- 1 cup scallions, chopped
- ½ cup fresh cilantro, chopped

### DIRECTIONS

❖ In a large mixing bowl add oil, soy sauce, sambal, sugar, garlic and ginger; stir until combined. Add pork belly and mix until all pieces are well coated. Refrigerate for two hours. Set up a two-zone fire to medium heat. (For a charcoal grill, rake coals to one side; for a gas grill, turn on half the burners.) Allow grill to reach correct heat—see our “Hot Tip” on the previous page. Grill pork-belly strips, uncovered, until cooked through and nicely browned, about five minutes per side. If flare-ups occur, move pork belly to the cool side of the grill until flames subside. Once cooked, chop pork belly into half-inch pieces. Warm tortillas on the grill, then top with pork, kimchi, scallions and cilantro.

### • Swine Wine •

#### THE THREE BEST WINES TO SERVE WITH OUR MENU

##### PRIORAT RED

Don't grab a cab. Opt for red wine from Spain's Priorat region, made primarily with gutsy grenache grapes, to stand up to juicy pork chops.

**Try:** 2009 Alvaro Palacios Les Terrasses, \$40

##### DRY RIESLING

No, not all riesling is sweet. Dry (trocken) riesling from Austria has intense aromas and a tart backbone. Serve with pork-belly tacos.

**Try:** 2011 Keller Estate Riesling Trocken, \$20

##### ROSÉ

Real men drink pink. Rosé is actually more badass than beer: It's sharper and has twice the alcohol. Serve with cured pork.

**Try:** 2010 Domaine du Gros Noré Bandol Rosé, \$26





## DISH 3

### KILLER APP

Serve the king of cured meats while your guests watch you play *Iron Chef* at the grill.

❖ *Jamón Ibérico* is Spain's rightfully revered ham. Until a few years ago it was illegal to import. While basic *Ibérico* is amazing, the best of the best is spectacular. You want *jamón Ibérico pata negra bellota*. *Pata negra* is the black-footed breed of pig considered the superior *jamón* pig. *Bellota* means "acorn," which is what the pigs feast on. The combination of the two yields the sweetest, nuttiest, deepest-flavored results. Wham, bam, thank you, ham. *{ \$48 for three ounces of jamón Ibérico de bellota, tienda.com }*

## ❖ BIG ON PIG ❖

Three artisanal pork products that will blow your mind

1



### PROSCIUTTO AMERICANO

- Made in Iowa from organically raised pigs, this salty-sweet cured ham gives the Italians a run for their money. *{ \$16 for three ounces, zingermans.com }*

2



### SECRETO IBÉRICO

- In Spain, the *secreto* (or "secret") cut is what we call skirt steak. When sourced from a Spanish pig that foraged for acorns in the forests of Córdoba, this cut has a baconlike richness that's perfect for a quick sear on the grill. *{ \$38 per pound, tienda.com }*

3



### OLYMPIC PROVISIONS SAUSAGE

- Portland's Olympic Provisions takes dried sausage to another level with versions such as Italian *finocchiona* made with fennel and garlic and Greek *loukanika* made with cumin and orange zest. *{ \$10 per sausage, olympicprovisions.com }*





# BOARD CERTIFIED

FASHION BY JENNIFER RYAN JONES

PHOTOGRAPHY BY TONY KELLY

STYLING BY CHRISTOPHER CAMPBELL FOR ATELIER MANAGEMENT

**WE TOOK HOTSHOT PRO SKATEBOARDERS STEVIE WILLIAMS, TONY ALVA, ARTO SAARI AND BRANDON BIEBEL TO A SUN-BLEACHED POOL IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, DRESSED THEM UP IN THE FRESHEST SUMMER SUITS AND TURNED THEM LOOSE. FASHION HAS NEVER LOOKED SO NATTY OR SO GNARLY**

## THE KICK-STARTER

Stevie Williams skated his way out of the mean streets of Philadelphia, hitchhiking across the country to launch his pro career in San Francisco. Once homeless, he's now considered the Michael Jordan of skateboarding. Williams is also a successful entrepreneur, overseeing the thriving DGK (Dirty Ghetto Kids) skate-brand empire, which is inspired by the principles of struggle and self-reinvention.





## THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARDS

Tony Alva is the elder statesman of modern skating. As a member of Venice, California's legendary Z-Boys, Alva developed a revolutionary aggressive skating style (refined in empty pools like the one used for this shoot) that gave birth to many of the aerial tricks that remain the foundation of the acrobatic styles of today.

### {OPPOSITE PAGE}

**Suit:** Calvin Klein Collection, \$1,250.  
**Shirt:** Ralph Lauren Purple Label, \$450.  
**Sunglasses:** Carrera, \$140.  
**Tie:** Ralph Lauren Purple Label, \$215.  
**Tie bar:** The Tie Bar, \$15.  
**Belt:** Hugo Boss, \$115.  
**Shoes:** Supra, \$95. **Skateboard:** DGK.

### {THIS PAGE}

**Vest and pants:** Ralph Lauren Purple Label, \$5,995 (part of suit). **Shirt:** Ralph Lauren Purple Label, \$450. **Tie:** Ralph Lauren Purple Label, \$215. **Shoes:** Vans, \$65. **Skateboard:** Alva Skates.





## THE VISIONARY

{ABOVE AND OPPOSITE PAGE, SEATED}

As a teenager in Finland, Arto Saari sent videotapes of his street skating to American companies, eventually landing sponsors and becoming regarded as one of the top skaters in the sport. It wasn't the last time the camera would lead him to great things. In addition to having a thriving skating career, Saari is an accomplished photographer and recently shot an ad campaign for Hurley.

**Evening suit:** Paul Smith, \$2,325. **Shirt:** Turnbull & Asser, available at mrporter.com, \$330. **Sunglasses:** Oakley, Saari's own. **Pocket square:** Ralph Lauren Black Label, \$115. **Shoes:** New Balance, \$75. **Skateboard:** Flip.

## THE ROAD WARRIOR

{OPPOSITE PAGE, SKATING}

"Always be skating" could well be Brandon Biebel's motto. Clocking thousands of miles a year skating for sponsors Red Bull, Girl, Dakine and others, Biebel embodies the wheel life as a technically adept master of street skating.

{ON BIEBEL}

**Suit:** from Golyester Vintage Clothing, \$248. **Shirt:** from Golyester Vintage Clothing, \$225. **Hat:** Stetson, \$175. **Scarf:** Burberry London, \$375. **Watch:** Victorinox, \$395. **Shoes:** Lakai, \$70. **Skateboard:** Girl.

{ON SAARI}

**Suit:** Gucci, \$2,100. **Shirt:** from Golyester Vintage Clothing, \$148. **Tie:** from Golyester Vintage Clothing, \$88. **Pocket square:** from Golyester Vintage Clothing, \$28. **Belt:** Barneys New York, \$145. **Shoes:** New Balance, \$75.









# The Playmate of the Year

SO HOT WE HAD TO COOL  
HER DOWN! THE AMAZING  
RISE OF RAQUEL

RAQUEL  
POMPLUN

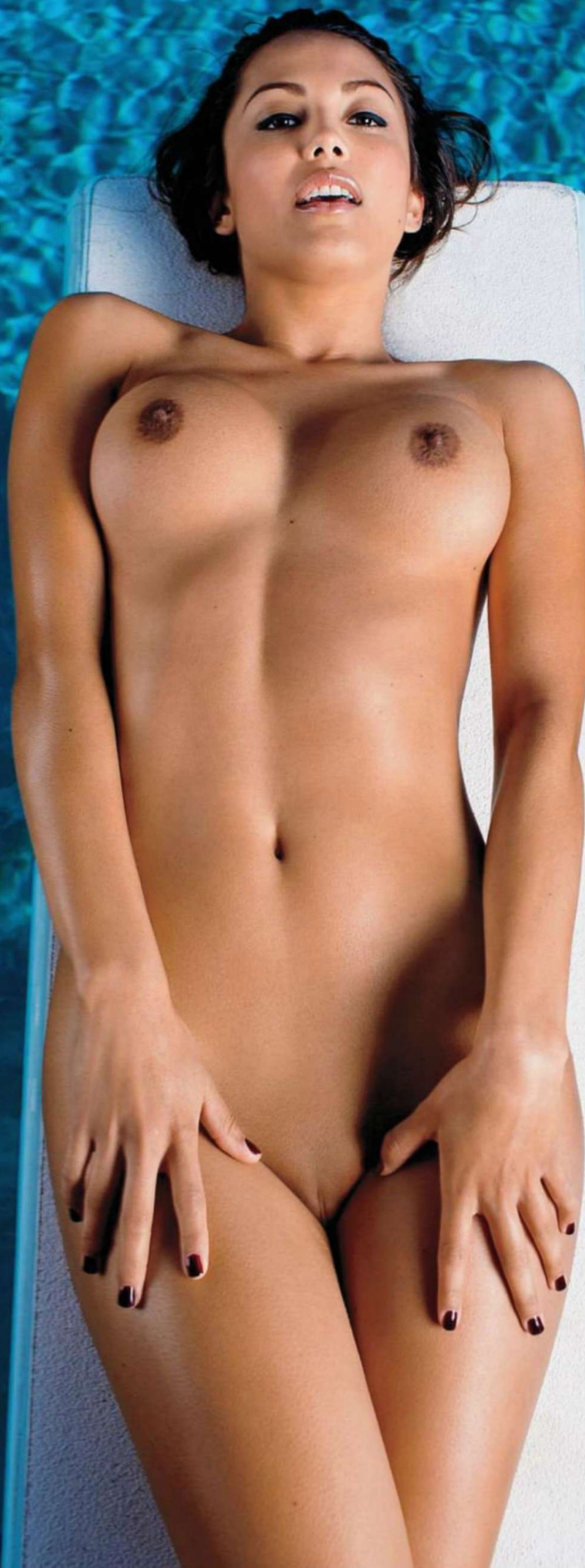
PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL BERNARD







Ladies and gentlemen, behold the American dream. Yes, it is still alive, as personified by the beauty you see here, Raquel Pomplun. Two years ago Raquel (who was named for Raquel Welch) was walking on her college campus in southern California, exhausted from a full course load and a 50-hour-a-week job, when she saw some graffiti: DON'T FOLLOW YOUR DREAMS, CHASE THEM. "So I did, damn it!" says the 25-year-old Mexican American, who grew up in the hills of Tijuana. She sent a few pictures to PLAYBOY. The next thing she knew, she was shooting the cover of the April 2012 issue with R&B superstar Bruno Mars. Raquel was just getting started. Riding the momentum of her PLAYBOY cover, she quickly nailed a job hosting *Rockin' Rounds* on the MMA network Blackbelt TV. She also started hosting a show on Playboy Radio called *Playmates*, with Miss May 2012 Nikki Leigh. "Our chemistry was so amazing on air that the producers gave us our own show," Raquel says. "We interview up-and-coming bands every Wednesday, and Nikki has become one of my best buddies." Next, she booked parts in two movies, one called *Snake and Mongoose*, which tells the story of drag-racing legends Don Prudhomme and Tom McEwen, and a second film she can't name as of yet, in which she appears on-screen flashing her gorgeous breasts at an Oscar-winning actor. Which brings us to her latest—and greatest—success: Raquel Pomplun is your 2013 Playmate of the Year. "PLAYBOY has taught me a side of myself I didn't know before," says Raquel. "When the world sees this pictorial, they'll see me as sensual, kind and, I hope, classy." All of the above, Raquel, and so much more.

























# MUD RACING

(continued from page 86)

Facebook, by a pasty entrepreneur, like Facebook, with a big boost from Facebook.

In 2009 Will Dean, a tall, sleepy-eyed veteran of the British government's counterterrorism unit, sat in a chair-desk at Harvard Business School, defending his entry in the school's famous Business Plan Contest. His pitch: an endurance sport based on British Special Forces training, one that could top what he termed the "grim monotony" of marathons and triathlons with the bracing variety of military conditioning—plus music, killer blogs, pictures and podcasts, friendship, even fun.

A marketing professor flipped through Dean's proposal. "Rope ladders. Crawling through mud," he said. "Who would do this?"

"I think I can get 500 participants to pay about a hundred dollars each."

"And if they survive your obstacle course, what will they win?"

"A headband."

Dean lost the Harvard contest to a team whose idea became CloudFlare, now a web-security firm backed by investors to the tune of \$20 million. But he kept plugging. He moved to Brooklyn and brought in an old boarding-school chum, London attorney Guy Livingstone, as chief operating officer. They pulled together \$20,000 in seed money, \$480,000 short of Facebook's start-up stake five years before. In their first and most crucial investment, Dean and Livingstone spent \$8,000 on Facebook ads. "They were still cheap in 2010," Dean says. Soon Tough Mudder had 11,000 Facebook likes. The founders spent the rest of their stake renting a ski resort in Pennsylvania, hiring construction crews to build obstacles, checking the obstacles for splinters and stray nails, and rounding up a medical team, cleanup crew and volunteer firefighters to keep a lid on the wall of flames at the last challenge. "Then we started worrying."

They opened registration. As the online tally shot into the upper hundreds, Dean thought there might be a bug in his website. No, there were just more weekend warriors and cross-training jocks than anyone knew, a Generation P90X hungry for a killer workout. Instead of 500 entrants, the number Dean had pulled out of his hat at Harvard, the first Tough Mudder boasted a field of 4,500. Entrants paid from \$70 for early-bird entry to \$100 for "Lazy Ass Late Entry," adding up to a gross of more than \$250,000. Dean and Livingstone had just made 10 times their investment in a week.

All he had to do now was stage the thing—a new sport anxiously awaited by 4,500 highly motivated customers who didn't realize that Tough Mudder LLC consisted of Dean, Livingstone and a few interns. "We were incredibly naive. We thought everything would go according to plan," Dean recalls. Then the sun came

up on Sunday, May 2, 2010, the dawn of the Tough Mudder era. "We found climbing walls that were supposed to be 12 feet tall were only five feet." Instead of scaling the walls like marines, entrants hopped them. "And we'd mismeasured the course. It wasn't the seven miles we promised but more like five and a half. Which seemed like a blessing when we ran out of drinking water." Somehow everyone made it to sundown. Happy mudders talked up the event. The founders put on two more Tough Mudders that year, grossing \$2.2 million. Three years later they're knee-deep in mud money.

As a business Tough Mudder is almost evilly simple. It's an experience, not a race. As Dean says, "If you climb a mountain, nobody asks how long you took to do it." Nobody pays you either. Dean and Livingstone bet that Tough Mudder T-shirts, tattoos and the now-iconic orange headband that goes to each finisher would mean more to their public than cash prizes. And with no cash prizes, they kept entry fees low and revenue high. After expenses, including a free beer for everyone who finished—one beer—the rest was profit. They banked enough in 2010 to expand to 14 events in 2011. Total revenue: \$22 million. Last year's schedule jumped to 35 events in 16 states plus Australia, Canada, Scotland and England, for a take topping \$70 million. This year's schedule features more than 50 events in those countries plus Germany.

The wires at Electroshock Therapy might spark and bite, but it's not the toughest Tough Mudder obstacle. Nor is Arctic Enema, a jumbo tub of ice water that mudders have to swim, ducking under a wall festooned with barbed wire. Tougher still is Everest, a greased quarter pipe 15 feet high, and here's where Tough Mudder differs from Ironman and every other race. Some mudders may be fast and sure-footed enough to run halfway up, grab the rim and pull themselves over, but others can't make it. Six and a half miles into the course, their legs are jelly. They'll take a running start, charge up the ramp and fall just short. Some get their fingers to the top, then cuss and groan as they lose their grip and slide back. Another running start, another try. This can go on for 10 tries over 20 long minutes. Everest is so steep, you'd probably find half the mudders in a writhing mass at the base of the ramp if not for the pledge that sets this game apart.

"I put teamwork and camaraderie before my course time," reads the Tough Mudder pledge. "I help my fellow mudders."

When the curved wall proves too steep for some entrants, others wait. They yell encouragement: "C'mon, you're killing it. You got it this time!" They perch at the top of the wall, reaching down to grab a hand or wrist and haul the next mudder to the top. Something similar happens at

the 20-foot climbing walls elsewhere on the course: Stronger mudders form human ladders, letting weaker ones climb their backs to the top, where war whoops and bro hugs ensue.

"That's the spirit!" Mark Givens yells. A tall, mustached Iraq war vet decked out in a poncho and sombrero, Givens is new to the sport—"I ran my first Tough Mudder this year"—and isn't entered this day. He doesn't know anyone who is. "Don't need to know 'em to support 'em," he says, ringing a cowbell for every mudder going by. "I'll tell you something. I was in the U.S. Marine Corps for 28 years, and these bastards right here are the toughest I ever saw. I've run nine marathons, and you know what? Marathons are boring. With this thing, you got variety. Fun! Those electric wires? It's like a rattlesnake bite—you do the funky chicken, check to see you're still alive and keep going. And maybe you can't get over Everest, but the other guys pull you up. Teamwork—that's what makes this thing cooler than a marathon."

Like a lungfish rising from Mesozoic muck, this thing evolved. It might have died with a name like Badass Ninja Jog, a name Dean actually considered. He was sitting in a Boston bar with friends four years ago, feeding his laptop a list of words that might fit his still-nameless sport. *Challenge. Ninja. Badass. Run. Jog. Dash.* "Warrior Challenge. How's that sound? Or Ninja Battle. Check to see if Ninjabattle.com is available."

"Try this," Dean said. "Badass Mudder. BAM for short."

"It's better than your other lame names, Will."

Then it hit him. Like a spark. "Tough Mudder. 'I want to be a Tough Mudder,'" he said, trying out the sound of it.

That first Tough Mudder on Pennsylvania ski slopes featured awards for best mullet and best costumes: Most Bad-Ass for the best, Most Ass for the skimpiest and Most Likely to Have Been in the Village People for cops, leathermen and Native American chiefs. One early obstacle, Blood Bath, called for entrants to eat a fiery habanero pepper and plunge into a pool of red ice water. The founders dropped Blood Bath when mudders began puking in the water. Puking and worse. Hence an unofficial pledge: Challenges should not be digestive.

Tough Mudder comes complete with a corporate wink. Over photos of "ridiculous team costumes," Toughmudder.com announces that "Mudders do not take themselves too seriously." Even as eight-figure revenue and corporate sponsors make the sport more respectable, you can still see the occasional SpongeBob or Batman costume at Tough Mudder events. You still run past jokey signs on the course:

IF YOU'RE HUFFING AND PUFFING NOW, WE  
FEEL SORRY FOR YOUR BETTER HALF  
LEAVE YOUR DIGNITY HERE  
REMEMBER, YOU SIGNED A DEATH WAIVER





*"But, George, you're always encouraging me to try for multiple orgasms."*



The death waiver, at least, is real. A three-page, single-spaced release describing Tough Mudder as “a hazardous activity that presents the ultimate physical and mental challenge,” the death waiver is both a legal document and a sales tool. Signed by every entrant, it holds Tough Mudder LLC blameless for injuries due to “smoke and open flames, barbed wire, pipes and electric shocks, inadequate first aid and/or... errors in judgment by personnel working the event.” Mudders agree that it’s their job to inspect every inch of the 10- to 12-mile course and hold themselves liable for “broken bones, torn ligaments, concussions, exposure, heat-related illness, mental stress or exhaustion, infection and concussions.” Maybe concussions make the list twice because you may be concussed. The waiver goes on to absolve Tough Mudder LLC of any responsibility for mudders’ “spinal injuries and paralysis, stroke, heart attack and even death.” A subsection adds possible death sites, “including but not limited to stands, sidewalks, parking areas....” The list includes “restrooms,” presumably in case some poor mudder makes a toilet bowl his final Arctic Enema.

Still, the grungy spirit of Tough Mudder gets a little less ironic as Under Armour, Dos Equis and other brands sign on as sponsors. Less like a party, more like a business. This year the empire will expand into 70,000-square-foot headquarters in

Brooklyn, where Dean, now 32, still lives with his fiancée and rides his bike to work. His company outgrew its old HQ by growing from eight employees to more than 120 in less than two years. They tend to be young, fit and resolutely on-message about the Tough Mudder experience, one that arrives engineered from the mud up for a generation that values experience above all else and craves the social ammunition—photos, videos, tweets—events like Tough Mudder provide. Climbing a mountain is sweet, but posting a photo from the summit to the envy of your Facebook friends is even sweeter. You can buy a ticket for Coachella. You have to survive Tough Mudder.

“Experience is the new luxury good,” one lean, T-shirted executive says, showing off a Lego model of a climbing wall, a gift from a Tough Mudder fanboy, and a photo of another fan who hung yellow wires on his head and went out on Halloween as Electroshock Therapy.

“We live the brand,” says another.

“We’re not like our parents’ generation,” says a third. Meaning not settling for a suit-and-tie job and saving up for a McMansion. “We’re about what we do, not what we own.”

If it sounds a little canned, it’s not because they don’t mean it. It’s because staying on-message is part of the curriculum at Tough Mudder University, the corporate training program. Employees read Starbucks company history for tips on how to expand

while maintaining quality control. They study the way JetBlue formed a “counter-corporate” culture and how companies mine data on consumer habits. They discuss how the reality show *The Ultimate Fighter* helped UFC establish its brand. (Don’t be surprised if Tough Mudder turns up on cable as a reality show pegged to the season-ending World’s Toughest Mudder.) They discuss how their brand is more like Harley-Davidson—a social club, a state of mind—than like any lame-ass traditional sport. And they prefer to avoid questions about Mr. Mouse.

Billy Wilson, a.k.a. Mr. Mouse, is a retired British soldier who claims Will Dean stole his idea. In 1986 the colorful, quotable Wilson, who once ran the London Marathon in costume—as the back end of a horse—began hosting military-style obstacle races on his farm in England’s Midlands. “I did not invent cross-country running nor army assault courses,” he says. “What I did was put them together, then added my own quirky names of terror-testing tortures.”

Dean visited Wilson and studied his Tough Guy races prior to developing his Tough Mudder business plan. He also researched other obstacle runs and insists he couldn’t “steal” such commonplace ideas. A Harvard review found no clear wrongdoing but cited Dean for bending the university’s standards of honesty and integrity. So Mr. Mouse sued Tough Mudder in 2010. Dean’s company settled the lawsuit by paying a reported \$725,000, but that didn’t stanch the bad blood between them. Mr. Mouse, who has called Dean “a scoundrel” and a “squelchy plagiarist,” sent PLAYBOY an e-mail promising he’d expose Dean once and for all in 2013.

Another rival, Spartan Race co-founder Joe DeSena, told *Outside*, “There’s not a person I despise more than Will Dean. Every day I wake up just out of spite for the guy.”

Meanwhile Dean seems as cool as an Arctic Enema. “We’re building a brand,” he says. End of story. For now, anyway.

On Saturday more than a thousand mudders gather at Raceway Park, a rusty old drag-race and motocross arena in Englishtown, New Jersey, for the World’s Toughest Mudder marathon. The goal: Run as many 10-mile laps as possible in 24 hours. The format makes WTM more demanding than any Ironman triathlon. In fact, the annual Ironman World Championship has gotten easier since it began in 1978. That year’s winner took 11 hours and 46 minutes to swim 2.4 miles, bike 112 miles and run a marathon, while today’s Ironman champions do the same in a little over eight hours. At the 10-hour mark they’re getting massages and reading congratulatory texts.

Tough Mudder is harder, or at least hard longer, which happens to be a motto of one of the best teams in the competition, Nine Inch Males. At WTM, efficiency only makes the ordeal more demanding. Last year’s winner, Junyong Pak, an engineer from Beverly, Massachusetts, completed seven laps. It will take more than that this year, and who knows how many laps the



“Wake up! Who’s Bruce?”



champion will have to run in 2020. Fifteen? Twenty? Twenty laps would be 200 miles and 640 obstacles at a seven-minute-mile clip, which may not be humanly possible.

"We're testing limits," Dean says.

Only the top five percent at 34 regional events qualified for this Mudder. Those elite 1,200, *la crème de l'enema arctique*, stretch and crack their necks behind the start-finish line a little before 10 A.M., wishing each other a happy Mudder's Day. Then loudspeakers blare "Go, go, go!" and the race is on.

Twenty-three hours, 59 minutes and 45 seconds to go.

Defending champ Pak zips ahead at a quick jog. Pak, 34, thinks eight laps might win—80 miles by this time tomorrow. "If it takes more, I'm ready," he says. "Because I'm really competitive." A lean-muscle running machine with a 2:33 Boston Marathon to his credit, Pak says he's not a great athlete. "But if it comes down to who wants it more, the other guy better have a Ph.D. in hurting." Calling Tough Mudder "voluntary torture," he says he's the man to beat.

Two hotshots dog his steps in the early laps. Nikolay Nachev and Bryce Wilk, skinny upstarts with family and friends jogging along the course with them, cheering them on, stick with the champ through three and a half laps. That's 35 miles—more than a marathon, more than most of the other mudders will complete in the next 24 hours. Pak, Nachev and Wilk are already an hour ahead of the rest of the pack. "Those two guys were sticking with me step for step, like it's a footrace, which was pretty annoying," Pak later recalls. "I had two thoughts. One was, It's gonna be a long night. The other was, They're gonna lose."

When Nachev ducks into a warming hut, one of five heated tents on the course stocked with drinking water, bananas and energy bars, Pak speeds by, picking up the pace. "I'm thinking, I'm going to drop this guy." Soon Pak and Wilk, a skinny park ranger from Virginia, are dueling for the lead, going stride for gooe stride through Funky Monkey—where mudders monkey-bar their way over an icy water hazard—while the sun and the temperature drop.

Leaders don't rest.

Pak finishes lap five at 9:14 on Saturday night. This is when the cold starts to pull your balls up into your larynx. Early pace-setter Nachev, nursing a sore foot, drops out. Ranger Wilk takes the lead, stretching his margin over Pak to an hour, but Wilk is starting to show signs of strain, his eyes glassy as he maintains a killer pace, stride after stride, 20,000 strides per lap, colder every step.

Pak dashes into his tent on pit row. He peels off his wet suit and trades his cold, wet shoes and socks for dry pairs. "Gotta hustle," he says. "It's easy to burn 10 minutes on a pit stop." It takes almost that long to pull a dry, skintight wet suit up his legs, over his chest and arms—at which point he remembers, "I've really gotta pee."

Full-bladder disclosure: Mudders pee in their wet suits. That quick shot of warmth is a pleasure in the middle of an icy night. Unfortunately for Pak, a team of Tough

Mudder videographers is tracking his every move with lights and a boom mike. It won't do for the defending champ to grit his teeth and soak the crotch of his wet suit to the tune of sibilant relief, so he peels the suit down again, turns away from the camera and fills a Gatorade bottle. Zips back up, hurries back to the drag strip to start his next lap, only to realize he's misplaced the timing chip that tracks his progress around the course. That's a 20-minute penalty. Pak cools his sore heels in pit row, waiting out the penalty, kicking himself for his mental error, "I just made two mistakes that cost me 30 minutes," he says. "Wilk's an hour ahead of me. That puts doubts in your head. Maybe I just blew it."

He could quit. No disgrace in that: Out of the 1,200 who started on Saturday morning, only 237 will be running at the end.

Pak shrugs. "Here goes." Jogging from his tent to the blacktop drag strip that leads to the first obstacle, a mud hill called Cliffhanger, he gives the videographers a wave. Ninety minutes behind the leader, he takes off at a run.

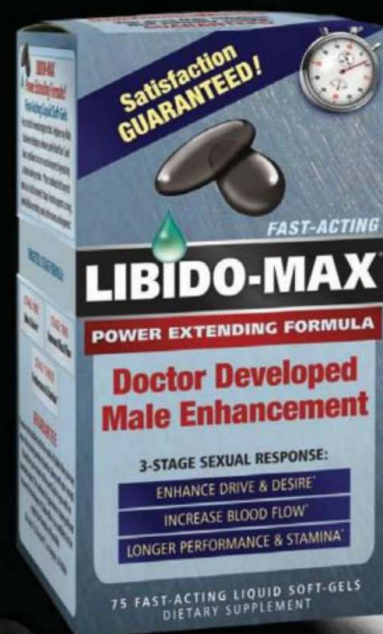
"This is the fun part," says Amelia Boone.

Boone, 29, leads the women's division. A round-faced blonde beauty with broad shoulders and eight-pack abs, she was a schoolgirl softball and soccer star before law school and an alpha career at Skadden, Arps—one of the nation's top law firms—left her dying for a physical challenge. Now she handles corporate bankruptcies during the week and runs endurance races on weekends. Her office in Skadden's sleek Chicago branch features several dirt-caked Tough Mudder headbands and a skull she won at a Spartan Death Race.

Boone is the women's favorite because Juliana Sproles, a personal trainer from Ojai, California, got frostbite on her foot while winning the female division in the first WTM. A year later Sproles is nowhere to be seen, leaving Boone and 77 other women to measure themselves against Pak and more than a thousand other men. Some say women have a better chance in obstacle races than other sports, due to the role of determination over sheer strength or speed, and maybe the insulating power of body fat. (Male athletes average about nine percent body fat, females 17 percent.) Not that this is easy for anybody. According to one woman who's both a mudder and a mother, "getting through a Tough Mudder is harder than childbirth."

Nobody expects Boone to stay close to the men's-division leaders. "I go as hard as I can before nightfall," she says, jogging into her third lap. "This is the fun part. From here it gets harder." Boone, who admits she's a "gearwhore" on her blog, Race Ipsa Loquitur (hydration tip: "Grape Pedialyte is the bomb"), jogs on as night falls. She keeps going by plotting the course in her head, using the same mud tunnels and monkey-bar routes each lap, never slowing down enough to let the cold sap her energy. She stays alert by singing Macklemore's "Thrift Shop" under her breath hour after

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hour, lap after lap: "I'm just pumped up on some shit from a thrift shop."

Ten hours into the race she's still mumbling Macklemore: "That's a bargain bitch, I'ma take your grandpa's style—"

The course looks eerie after dark. By midnight most of the field has pitted to eat and sleep or at least rest. Some eat cold soup right out of the can. Some gossip about the tightest sort of Tough Mudder teamwork: loud sex in pit-row tents. Only the toughest keep trudging the course. They wear headlamps that bob like fireflies over the dark, muddy landscape. Follow one to the four-mile mark and you hear labored breathing as a weary mudder approaches. A crunchy tread as he reaches Boa Constrictor, an array of black plastic pipes. A curse as he kneels and chooses a pipe to crawl into. All silent for a minute as he clambers ratlike downhill and then up, emerging with a splash in a pool of freezing mud.

Who wants to spend Saturday night like that? Hundreds of thousands of guys in their 20s and 30s trying to prove they're not wimps, apparently. One used to wonder if his girlfriend doubted his manliness. "I never punched a guy to protect her. I never built a fire or skinned a rabbit," he says. After he ran a Tough Mudder, "we both liked me better." Another weekend warrior told *The New York Times* that the new sport is "the only chance for a guy like me to feel like King Leonidas." The paper quoted a sociology professor who called obstacle events "the physical representation of masculinity. By associating themselves with military training, these men are becoming masculine by association."

Mudder macho turns up everywhere from the bodybuilder in the WTM logo to obstacles emblazoned BALL SHRINKER, DONG Dangler and HOLD YOUR WOOD. There is NO TOUGH TITTY. Still it's Amelia Boone passing men, not the other way around, as the night wears on. A little before midnight Boone, wearing an orange bib that marks her as the women's leader, passes a pair of exhausted guys hobbling to the end of their third lap. She's on her fifth. The founders, monitoring the race, can't believe Boone's performance. They never expected a woman to finish in the top 10 percent, much less the top 10.

As Boone laps the cramping, limping men, one of them croaks, "Amelia, marry me."

Near dawn, it's 30 degrees out. Scotsman Mark Stirrat reaches Funky Monkey, where contestants negotiate monkey bars over frigid water. Shite, he thinks, a man's not meant to see his breath when he swims. Stirrat and his ruddy, jolly teammates, the Fuddy Muckers, came all the way from Aberdeen, Scotland for this. Like most mudders they slip off the monkey bars, then splash and wade the rest of the way. Climbing out shivering, Stirrat does jumping jacks to keep his blood going. He then ducks into a heat hut and comes out smiling. "Hot broth and ibuprofen, these are welcome gifts!" He still has six miles to go.

Soon Steve Larson bites the mud. A zookeeper at Sedgwick County Zoo in Wichita, Kansas, buzz-cut Larson is one of the

toughest mudders in the field, an ultrajock who thinks marathons are for wusses. "Once P. Diddy and Oprah ran marathons, I thought, Anybody can do that," he says. So Larson, 33, ran an ultramarathon. He tried the competitive eating tour and won \$100 for gulping 14 hot dogs in five minutes, then "had a blast" at a regional Tough Mudder event. Larson has the best description of the electric shocks on the course: "They hurt worse than a penguin bite." But tonight he cracks a rib on one obstacle and spends 45 minutes trying to climb a 20-foot wall a mile from the finish. At last, weeping with frustration, he quits.

"Not my night," says the onetime contender.

The hour before dawn is the worst. The course is almost empty, with only the leaders and a few dozen sleepless, dripping diehards plodding through subfreezing cold under a moon the color of ice. Now is when the occasional mudder succumbs to hypothermic shock. His eyes glaze. He mumbles. These hypothermic zombies sometimes curl up in the mud and might die there if other mudders didn't stumble over them and call for help.

Amelia Boone's still humming along. She conserves cranial heat by keeping her head

---

*His eyes glaze. He mumbles.  
These hypothermic zombies  
sometimes curl up in the mud  
and might die there if other  
mudders didn't stumble over  
them and call for help.*

---

above water during ice swims and stays alert by talking to the volunteers manning obstacles and medical tents.

"Doing great, Amelia!"

"Am I?"

"Pak just went through here half an hour ago."

Pak had outlogged Wilk. Earlier in the night the park ranger, slowed by the cold, ducked into his tent after six laps. He wound up leaving pit row—and the race he led for more than 12 hours—with help from his mother and fiancée. When a course worker gave Pak the news, he pumped his fist. "I've got him now," he thought. "You don't take a pit stop with an hour lead. At this point you take a pit stop if you're broken."

With Wilk down and out, Pak relaxes. He's sailing through a record eighth lap, one more than his winning total last year, while the sun and rising temps draw mudders from their tents for one more go-round.

Passing the inflatable arch at the start-finish line, Pak rolls into his ninth lap. Eighty miles and 256 obstacles down, 10 miles and 32 left.

Two hours later, trudging toward Everest, three and a half miles from the finish,

he hears a fan call, "You've got all the men beat!" This is good news for Pak, who's suffering. Tendinitis in one knee, frosty feet, cramps—he can barely walk, much less run. It's good news until the fan adds, "But Amelia is five minutes behind you."

"What?"

One of 13 women still in the race, lawyer Boone has been chipping away at Pak's lead since midnight. Singing under her breath, chatting with other mudders, forcing herself to jog while they walk, she's pulled within four minutes with three miles left. She's close enough to see Pak at Electric Eel. He saves time by rolling sideways through the mud, under the live wires, then stands, wiping black goo from his eyes. Visibly gathering what strength he has left, he takes off at a trot.

Mudders, fans, friends, family, videographers and volunteers gather at the finish line, hooting and ringing cowbells, craning to see who'll round the last corner and enter the stadium first. It's Pak, stretching his lead over Boone at the end. He waves, bends at the waist, catches his breath as a volunteer with a garden hose pats him on the back, then rinses him off.

Boone jogs in nine minutes later. The two hug and pose for pictures. Pak's official margin of victory, eight minutes and 56 seconds, represents six tenths of one percent of the race. Boone had him running scared.

As men's and women's champions they win \$15,000 apiece. But it's Pak who's called to the winner's platform to shake hands with founders Dean and Livingstone, to be presented to the crowd as "the toughest human being on this planet!"

"Maybe next year," Boone says.

Other mudders are still out there, struggling toward the stadium. At one end of the course Scotland's Fuddy Muckers trudge toward Electric Eel. Pak rolled through the mud to save time here, but the wheezing Scotsmen are long past technique. When one catches a sparking wire inside a nostril, Stirrat laughs his semicoherent butt off. "We've done many a fitness race," he says, "but nothing beats this for awesomeness."

Two weeks later a regional Tough Mudder south of Tampa caused a 10-mile traffic jam outside the venue. Dozens of mudders jumped out of their cars and—why not?—jogged the last few miles to the starting line.

Three years in, Tough Mudder was looking less like a sport and more like a community. Less like a brand, more like a cause.

One mudder motorist got stopped for speeding after the Florida event. "I was wearing my orange headband with pride," Jim Redmond posted on Tough Mudder's Facebook page. The cop who pulled Redmond over demanded his license and registration, and noticed his Tough Mudder headband.

"You run the Tough Mudder?" he asked.

"Sure did," Redmond said.

The officer returned to his cruiser. When he came back he was wearing an orange headband of his own.

"Slow down, mudder," he said. He gave Redmond a fist bump and sent him on his way.





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## AI WEIWEI

*(continued from page 64)*

capitalism is. I saw New York and saw a river of light, and it was like moving in a dream. Never in my life did I imagine it could be like that. When I grew up, there was no energy, no electricity. I always remember the image of New York.

**PLAYBOY:** What did you do in the U.S.? You were 23. How did you earn a living?

**AI:** I found jobs to make some money. I did housecleaning and repairs. I worked as a gardener and babysitter and whatever kind of job I could find. I was also in an English program for half a year. Then after that I went to my girlfriend's. She was at the University of California, Berkeley. I went to the Berkeley Adult School to study English.

**PLAYBOY:** Were you also making art?

**AI:** I occasionally did some drawings. Then I went to Parsons the New School for Design one year later in New York to do art.

**PLAYBOY:** Some of your art involves performance. Early pieces involved breaking or transforming ancient Chinese antiques. Were you expressing your anger at Chinese culture?

**AI:** For people from the West, that was quite a shocking act, but for me, it's quite natural. It goes back to when I was a child and had to burn all my father's books during the Cultural Revolution. Those books were so beautiful. I burned them all in front of him; we had to. Otherwise it would cost us our lives. I tore every page. Beautifully printed books, art books he brought back from Paris. Page by page. So I know how to destroy. Chairman Mao taught us, so I know.

**PLAYBOY:** You've created pieces in which you literally say "fuck you" to China—or at least to the Communist Party. In one you flip off Tiananmen Square with the Forbidden City looming in the background.

**AI:** Yes. That's so terrible to them that I would do that.

**PLAYBOY:** Were you also saying fuck you to the government when you photographed your wife holding her dress up in Tiananmen Square?

**AI:** For the first few years after I came back to China from New York, I went with her to Tiananmen Square just to walk on the June 4 anniversary. There were so many undercover police, and I told her, "Let me take a photo of you." We did the Marilyn Monroe pose, just lifting her skirt like that.

**PLAYBOY:** More recently you went on a new antigovernment attack, this time in another medium: rock and roll. Have you always been an aspiring rock star?

**AI:** I've never sung a song in my life except the songs forced on us during the Cultural Revolution. I went to the Elton John concert and was very much inspired by his voice as a kind of star penetrating the darkness of the sky. I decided it doesn't matter that I cannot sing. I am 55 years old, and maybe I'll be the oldest person to start in rock and roll. I made nine songs. They are about the current condition in China. One is about my confrontation with the police during the earthquake research on the dead students. Another is about Chen Guangcheng and the Great Firewall.

**PLAYBOY:** Why did you choose heavy metal?

**AI:** I love metal music. It's as powerful as nature. It's poetry within a storm.

**PLAYBOY:** Do you use your art to publicize events like the earthquake or persecution of dissidents, or is it an expression of your frustration and anger?

**AI:** When there's an extremely difficult situation, I think it's a unique opportunity for me to make some art. Something extreme gives me a strong reason to react to it, to respond to the situation. So if they do something extreme, then I'm sure I'm going to come up with something.

**PLAYBOY:** Students were murdered and dissenters brutally crushed when tanks rolled into Tiananmen Square in 1989. That must have reinforced the message that you don't speak out.

**AI:** Yes. A few hundred thousand people were there. My father was there.

**PLAYBOY:** In a wheelchair, we read.

**AI:** Yes, and also my mom with steamed dumplings she brought to the students.

**PLAYBOY:** What was your reaction to the protests as you watched them from New York?

**AI:** There was a moment of great excitement. Dan Rather and all those people saw this moment, and we watched and were all very excited. It's so unbelievable, the whole thing.

**PLAYBOY:** Were you in touch with your family during that time?

**AI:** Yeah, I talked with them. I could hear the helicopters flying above them. At the beginning they were excited. Then they felt shocked. Of course everybody was shattered by such a brutal reaction.

**PLAYBOY:** What's the legacy of the demonstrations? Did they change China?

**AI:** Maybe most young students don't even know it happened.

**PLAYBOY:** In Beijing we tried searching the internet for the words *June 4*, and information about the protest and crackdown appears to be blocked. Do you think the government doesn't want people to know about the protests because of the massacre it perpetrated or because it doesn't want people to know it's possible to organize?

**AI:** Both. First, government officials don't want people to know they can unite and have such powerful expression. Also, they don't want people to know they crushed the masses with tanks. It's why some people in this country still don't know they arrested me. Many people don't know.

**PLAYBOY:** How did your April 2011 arrest unfold?

**AI:** They took me from the airport. A black hood was put over me and they took me to a security detention center. I do not know where. We have tried to find out, but I still don't know. The first question I asked when they started to talk to me was "Can I have a lawyer?" They said no. I said, "Can I make a phone call to my family?" They said no.

**PLAYBOY:** Were you worried about your family? Your son was two at the time.

**AI:** I blamed myself. I thought, Why did I put myself in this position, to deal with a government that has no respect at all for human rights, human dignity or even common sense? So many people warned me, and I knew my condition was quite fragile.

They told me I would be sentenced for a very long time. They told me quite clearly, "When you leave jail your son will probably be 14, 15 and will never recognize you. And your mom may be passed away already." I was very sad to think about that.

**PLAYBOY:** When you became a father, did you think differently about your political activism? If you remained imprisoned, your son would grow up without a father.

**AI:** I didn't think about that until I was arrested. When I was arrested, when they told me I could not make any phone calls for at least half a year, I felt very sorry.

**PLAYBOY:** How else has being a father changed you?

**AI:** You have someone who very much depends on you. And for another 30 years, you could be some kind of influence on this child. You discover how the human species doesn't have to learn, that something is already there, and how it struggles to grow. It's kind of a miracle to see. Quite gradually it has to build up a kind of logical way of behaving, how to deal with life, which is sad in some ways. But yes, I felt very sorry about him when I was arrested and could not even call.

**PLAYBOY:** What were the conditions of your imprisonment?

**AI:** Two guards stood over me every minute. It's a tough situation. I think it was a kind of psychological warfare. You are watched every moment, even while you sleep, and when you sleep your hands have to be outside the blanket. You cannot turn.

**PLAYBOY:** Why would they care how you slept?

**AI:** I think it's a punishment.

**PLAYBOY:** How do they prevent you from turning?

**AI:** If you turn, they order you. You have to sleep like this, like a cross. [*holds his arms out*] The camera has to see your arms. You don't know how to respond to this kind of degradation.

**PLAYBOY:** Could you exercise?

**AI:** No, no. You can't move near the door.

**PLAYBOY:** Did you become depressed?

**AI:** I think I was more than depressed. You're alert because the situation is so unknown. You don't know their intentions. And you don't know what the future is.

**PLAYBOY:** Could you write or draw?

**AI:** I could not do anything. When I was sitting, I had to sit in one position, like this. [*sits erect with hands on thighs*] Before you make any move, you must report it to a soldier. If you need to scratch your head, you must ask. I must ask if I want to go to the table to have a sip of water.

**PLAYBOY:** Did they bring meals to your cell, or did you eat in a communal area?

**AI:** They brought the meals to me. The meal would never come with chopsticks. I had one plastic spoon.

**PLAYBOY:** Did they prohibit chopsticks because they could be a weapon? Were they worried you might try to harm yourself?

**AI:** Yes. In my morning food there was always an egg. The egg had no shell. After a while I realized there was a little bit missing from the egg. Why was there always like a little mouse bite missing from the egg? When we became familiar, I asked a guard about this. He said, "We leave a sample of



every dish you get in a box." Later, if something happened to me, they could examine it in the laboratory. A doctor came three times a day. Sometimes seven times a day.

**PLAYBOY:** Did you become hopeless?

**AI:** I felt I would never be released.

**PLAYBOY:** Were you ever officially charged?

**AI:** They announced different crimes—taxes, violation of exchange of foreign currency to Chinese money. Just excuses. I think they wanted to get the people thinking badly of me. They charged me with having a double marriage, which I never had. I have a son with a girlfriend, but we were never married. They charged me with obscenity for putting nude photos on the internet.

**PLAYBOY:** Were the obscenity charges based on the art pieces you made in which you are nude?

**AI:** They weren't even art. People always come and want to take photos, so as a kind of joke I said one time, "Okay, let's take a photo." I took off my clothes. I jumped. I used this thing, a doll called a grass mud horse, to cover my dick. It's a joke, really.

**PLAYBOY:** A grass mud horse?

**AI:** It's a fake thing created for the internet to fight government censorship. You can say *cǎonímǎ*, or "grass mud horse," which isn't a real animal; it's internet-made. It's a fake animal's name, so you can say it, but it also means "fuck your mother." You cannot say "fuck your mother" on the internet in China, but you can say this animal's name. So I made this photograph and someone put it on the internet and people got excited about it. It was for fun, just for some excitement at the moment. You have a combination of meaning there, "grass mud horse" and "fuck your mother." Saying this to the central government will be the most brutal thing you can say in China; you can be killed for doing that.

There was another photo of me and these four women who came to see me one day. I try to avoid seeing so many people, so I joked, "Okay, we'll have to take nude photos." I thought that would scare them away, but everybody agreed and we did it. One of the women is an activist for sex workers who speaks out about AIDS, and others are students. It was a kind of statement.

**PLAYBOY:** Does the reaction to the nudes say something about Chinese culture in general compared with Western culture when it comes to sex? Is China more puritanical?

**AI:** I don't think so. I think China is an old culture and sex is very developed. It's just as rich as any old culture. These photos are not about sex. It's about privacy. Someone put this photo online and called it *One Tiger, Eight Breasts*. Sounds like a porn title, right?

**PLAYBOY:** While you were imprisoned, were you ever harmed physically?

**AI:** No, just intimidated.

**PLAYBOY:** Earlier you'd been hit by a police officer when you went to testify in the trial of Tan Zuoren, the Sichuan writer and activist who had also been investigating the earthquake. He had been accused of inciting the subversion of state power. You were accosted in a hotel and struck on the head by an officer. What exactly happened?

**AI:** There was a bang on the door, "Open

up. It's the police!" They locked us up for 11 hours so we couldn't go to the trial. Tan Zuoren is in jail now, serving a five-year sentence. I was going to court to support him. I brought my materials to show he was innocent.

**PLAYBOY:** How severe was the blow?

**AI:** I felt pain and went to the hospital with a friend and two police. I had a regular check-up and nothing was wrong, but later it developed into a hemorrhage. The doctor said if I came to see him any later I'd be dead.

**PLAYBOY:** Are there any aftereffects of the hemorrhage?

**AI:** You hear my way of talking—it's slow. I can sense it's slower; the words jump out slower than they should. My memory is very bad now.

**PLAYBOY:** After that assault and your arrest at the hands of the state, do you still consider yourself a patriot?

**AI:** Even though maybe I am, I will never announce myself as a patriot. You're not entitled to say you're a patriot if you don't have a nation.

**PLAYBOY:** Don't you consider China your nation?

**AI:** No. You have a nation when you share the nation itself, when it holds up your beliefs or you're identified with it. If a country ignores your right to vote, you're not a citizen. You cannot make any kind of decision. You cannot relate to other people because you cannot support each other. You cannot share joy because there's no way to communicate freely. How can you call yourself a citizen? You don't bear responsibility. Any-

thing that happens is not because of you; it's because of the government. The nation is not the people; it's the party. It represents only the party's ideas. The party controls the army. It controls the judicial system. It controls the natural resources. It's a group of elites, maybe 500 families, maybe fewer.

**PLAYBOY:** Finally, when you were released from prison, were you again hooded so you wouldn't know where you were?

**AI:** Yes, everything was the same. Two police sat on two sides and one military soldier in the front. They brought me to a local police station and there I met my mom and my wife. My mom had to sign a paper to guarantee my release for one year of probation.

**PLAYBOY:** What are considered violations of your parole?

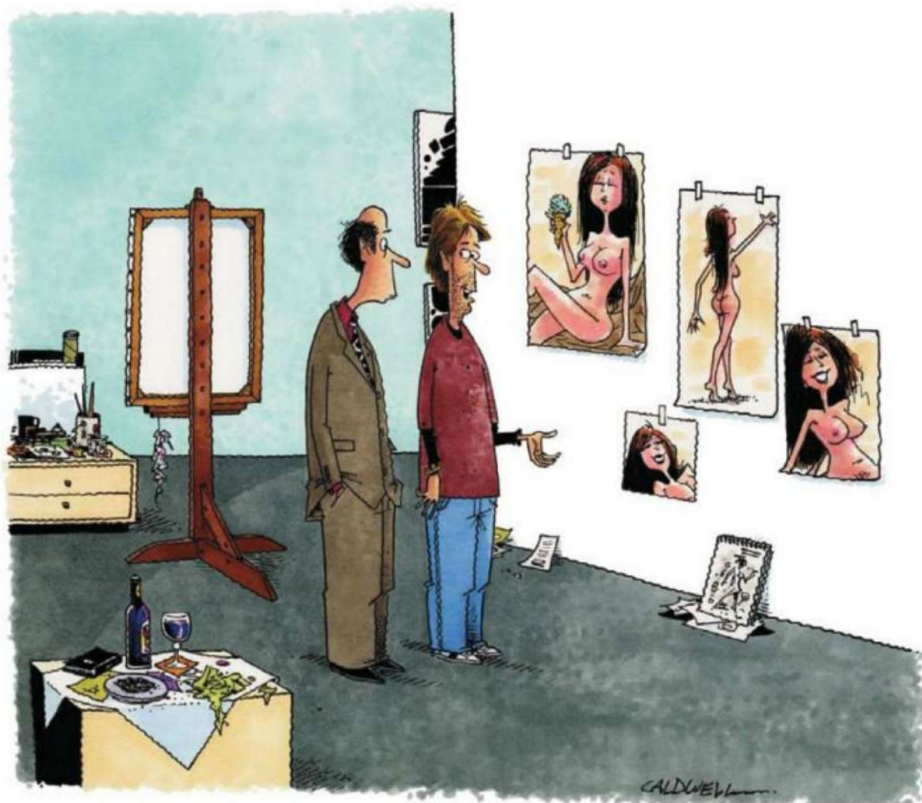
**AI:** Before I was released I had to sign an agreement with about nine different principles, including that I cannot go on the internet, cannot talk about what happened inside the detention center, cannot talk to journalists, cannot meet with people who are activists, cannot write articles.

**PLAYBOY:** It seems you've ignored every one.

**AI:** Basically yes. First I tried to do less. They have said, "We can always arrest you again and we don't ever have to release you."

**PLAYBOY:** Doesn't that warning scare you? Are you tempted to cease speaking out?

**AI:** Of course it scares me. It's not a joke. But I cannot gradually let my life deteriorate without talking about what's on my mind. That's not possible. I will not stop.



*"No, I didn't say these are studies for a painting I'm doing. I said they're studies of a waitress I'm doing."*



# KNOCKED OUT

(continued from page 68)

end. Coffin draped in the Puerto Rican flag, his three championship belts polished for the occasion. Four, five deep on the sidewalks, the roses of Spanish Harlem all weeping.

Jennifer, all the cameras, hoping for a scene like the one a few days earlier at the wake in Puerto Rico. Open casket, the mortician having spackled over the bullet hole in Macho's head. One of Macho's girlfriends on the receiving line bent and kissed the waxy corpse on the lips. That set off another girlfriend, and they got into a brawl right there in the chapel. In New York they knew enough to keep all the girlfriends separated.

Back on the Hutch a dozen or so Harleys blow past me, the Hygrades and Nuyoricán Original motorcycle clubs. Puerto Rican colors flying. I am edging 75 miles per hour. "This is like a drag race," Jennifer says. "The Indy 500 or something."

That is the description I use later, when I meet Héctor Camacho Jr. His father's funeral cortege like the Indy 500.

Héctor Jr. grins. Not wistful. Wry. Machito, they call him. Boxer like his old man. Says, "Exactly how Pops woulda wanted it."

## THE SON

Héctor Camacho Jr. was training for a fight in Kansas City last November when his wife took the call. His father was on life support in a San Juan hospital. Coma. Brain dead. *Abuelita* Maria ready to pull the respirator plug. "My wife didn't say nothing at first," Machito says. "But I could tell the moment I saw the look on her face. Didn't even ask how. Went out for a walk. Prayed and cried all night. Next day I asked what happened. She said, 'He got shot.'"

Single bullet. Entered the left side of 50-year-old Héctor Sr.'s jaw, sliced his carotid artery, destroyed two vertebrae in his neck, lodged in his right shoulder. Shot while sitting in the passenger seat of a late-model Mustang outside a bar in Bayamón, Puerto Rico. Seven at night. The driver, Adrián Moreno, capped three times, died on the scene. Moreno's pockets stuffed with nine glassine envelopes filled with cocaine.

"Damn streets," Machito says. "I told him to stay the hell off the streets. I'd say, 'You're old now. You have granddaughters. Change your life around, Pops.' He'd just smile and say, 'Everything's good. I'm the Macho Man.'"

Bayamón is scary, dangerous at night. Particularly along the infamous 167 Avenue, the town's main artery that runs just west of San Juan. Bakery near the bar in question; Pentecostal church and paint-ball arcade flanking the very spot, in front of a lawyer's office, where Macho was shot. Seems an innocuous enough neighborhood in daylight. "But once the sun goes down it's like two different countries," says a former New York City narcotics detective who worked in Bayamón on the DEA's joint drug task force. "That strip of road, that whole area, turns. People buying heroin and coke. We were cops, for Christ's sake,

and they used to warn us never to stop at a red light after dark in Bayamón or else we'd get carjacked."

Macho's oldest son, one of four boys, nods his head. All of them sensed it. Their father's high life a movie set waiting to be struck. Subtraction by addiction. "The cocaine was his downfall," Machito says. "He loved that fuckin' drug."

I catch up with Héctor Jr. on a brisk, sunny February morning in upper Manhattan, the edge of El Barrio. Making a promotional appearance at a milk and soda warehouse. A handsome and bearded light-middleweight, Machito flew to New York from his home in Panama to fight on an undercard in Brooklyn. But one of the headliners busted a rib in training and the entire slate was postponed. His lawyer set up the promotional gig to salvage a few bucks out of the trip. "With what happened to his father, he's got about a year left to capitalize on his name," the lawyer tells me. "Less if he loses his next fight. He's no kid."

Machito is thoughtful, funny, honest. A convert to Islam, he holds no illusions about the fight game, about his old man, about his own shadowed space between the two. At 34 years old, with a 54-5-1 record that includes 29 knockouts, he recognizes he is on the downside of a prosaic career. Still, not many fighters can say they fought on the same card as their dad three times—both winning all three. The sparring together, the tips in the ring, the life lessons on the street, perhaps they make up for the fact that Macho wasn't much of a father.

"I don't think he knew any better," Machito says. "He didn't have his own father around."

The pattern repeated starting with Machito's birth. His father, then 16 and coming off the first of his three amateur Golden Gloves boxing titles, missed the occasion. He was doing his first stint in New York City's infamous Rikers Island detention center for car theft. A few months after his release he was back inside, convicted of being an accessory to a carjacking.

"The kid was trouble," says retired NYPD detective Juan Checo, who worked Spanish Harlem during Macho's teenage years. "He would have been just another of the hundreds of skels we put away who nobody would have ever heard of if he hadn't become such a great boxer."

Macho had arrived in America at the age of three after his mother, María Matías, separated from her husband and moved her four children at the time from Bayamón into a New York City housing project. She doted on Macho, then her youngest, and he grew up spoiled and wild, running with gangs, street fighting. His idol was Bruce Lee, and when one of his high school teachers noticed his flair for karate, he convinced Macho to channel that athleticism into boxing.

"I may not have agreed with the way he lived his life outside the ring," says Machito of his father. "But he was still a special man. And you want to know something? He never lied to me, no matter what the circumstance. He was always honest. His heart was great. He enjoyed life, and the people loved him. He was just an overgrown kid. He had toys.

All his karate things. His nunchakus. His fighting sticks. Played with them all the time. At home he would change clothes four or five times a day. Put on a Superman outfit, then walk out dressed like a ninja. Then the Spider-Man costume."

Despite his success in the ring, committing felonies was another habit Macho never outgrew. His rap sheet is long and varied, drugs and alcohol inevitably involved. A warrant was issued for his arrest as recently as last year in Florida for allegedly assaulting his youngest son. Perhaps the most bizarre incident occurred in 2004 when Macho was convicted of clambering through a skylight to burglarize a Gulfport, Mississippi computer store. He pissed on the rug and made off with a pile of laptops. Police found ecstasy pills when they caught up with him in a hotel in Biloxi. Seven-year sentence was commuted. Served less than three weeks. A notorious tax scofflaw over his lifetime, Camacho owed several states and the federal government more than half a million in back taxes, with New Jersey still going after him for \$300,000 at the time of his murder. Didn't seem to bother him. Not much did.

"One time he had to take a drug test," says Machito. "He was on probation, and he had been getting high for a couple of days. We were driving, and I said, 'What are you, fucking crazy? You got a drug test today. You're gonna get caught.'"

"So he pulls over into a project. Sees this little kid, calls him over. 'You behaving in school? You being good with your mother and father? You want some money?' Kid nods his head yeah. He says, 'I'll give you a hundred dollars if you pee in this cup right now.' The kid peed in the cup and he gave him a hundred dollars and we left."

I mention to Machito that I've been trading phone calls with Shelly Salemassi, Macho's fiancée. I'd met her at the funeral. Pretty blonde from Detroit, her cheeks stained by the tears smudging her mascara. Shelly met Macho 15 years ago. He was training at Emanuel Steward's Kronk Gym in Detroit. She didn't even know he was a boxer, much less a celebrity. It wasn't love at first sight, she says. But he grew on her. She finally fell, stayed fallen. Hard not to. Trim, hard body topped by that gorgeous face. "He still took my breath away after 15 years," she says.

Shelly tells me a story; I tell Machito. About his dad and Shelly's jealous ex-husband. Early in their relationship, the ex rings her house. Shelly is out; Macho answers. "Who the hell is this?" demands the ex.

"Who's this?" Macho replies.

"What if I were to come over and ask you that question in person?"

"My brother, then it's Macho time!"

Shelly echoes Machito—Macho's not a bad guy, just forgot to grow up. Oh, she's got stories. Time she bailed him out of jail after he'd pushed his orange Jag all night from Florida to Michigan. Time she dragged him out of a saloon by his famous spit curl after she'd kicked in a bathroom door and found him with another woman. Says she knew about all of them. Dozens, scores.

"He called me his white Puerto Rican. He wanted me to marry him and move to Puerto



Rico. But I couldn't yet. My kids came first. That's why I accepted the other women. People never got that. They said, 'You know, he's cheating on you.' I said, 'I know, but he loves me.' He was with a lot of women, but there was no intercourse except with me. Oral sex, yeah. And he had toys that he liked to use. I would not let him use them on me."

It was for Shelly that Macho tattooed a unicorn on his prick. "We had a deal. I got a tattoo with his name. He was in New York and he called me and said, 'Okay, Mama, I got a tattoo.' I said, 'Oh, sweet. My name?'"

"He told me, 'No, I got a unicorn.' I asked him, 'How the hell did you stay hard long enough for them to do it?' I guess the tattoo guy's wife.... I don't know what she did or how she did it."

Then there was the cocaine. Shelly didn't like it and didn't like Macho doing it. But she couldn't help herself. By then she was hooked. On his beautiful body. On his blithe persona. On his generous spirit. "He'd give a stranger, some hobo, his last hundred dollars if the guy asked for it."

But most of all, Shelly was hooked on Macho's tenderness. During one of our conversations her voice seemed to float as she described sneaking away with "Mach" for one of their long weekends. Booking a quiet hotel room. Spending the days and nights ordering room service and slow dancing naked.

The tale makes Machito smile again. Melancholy this time. Lost in his own recollections. Then, "Shelly loved my dad. And I think he loved her. He just couldn't stop himself from foolin' around. Was his nature. Shelly would tell me, 'I hate that motherfucker. But his heart is good and I love him.' That was my dad. Yin and yang."

As Machito grew up, the father and son seemed to reverse roles. "Not too long ago I see him and I say, 'Pops, let me ask you a question. How many days you been up?'"

"He says, 'Three days, goin' on four.'"

"I said, 'Pops, you're 50 years old. How much more time you think you can do these kinds of tricks? How much more you think you'll be able to take before you die?'"

"He told me, 'Let me tell you something, motherfucker. I've done 10 days. I'm fuckin' strong. What you talkin' about?'"

"He still didn't get me, didn't get what I was trying to say. That he wasn't a kid no more."

Silence for a while. Both of us lost in

Macho memories. I break the mood. Describe for Machito some of his father's early fights. Fights I saw, fights Machito was too young to remember. The old Felt Forum. The Sands in Atlantic City. The fast and savvy southpaw circling and jabbing, a louche and graceful predator owning the ring with his cobra quickness. Banging through Johnny Sato, Melvin Paul, Greg Coverson, good fighters all. Then, 1983, the 21-year-old Macho blasting Bazooka Limón in San Juan to win the World Boxing Council super-featherweight title. Machito and I laugh; Bazooka did have a bazooka. Macho moving up in weight to take the lightweight belt. Even beat legendary trainer Freddie Roach. All leading to the first grand showcase three years later. Macho, unbeaten in 28 fights, barely outlasting Edwin Rosario on Madison Square Garden's big stage to retain his title.

mad at me," he told *Sports Illustrated*. That never happened before. Macho danced and ran, took a close split decision. Crowd booed, turning on the skittish Nuyorican in favor of the slugging "true" Puerto Rican. A right and a left turned Macho into a dancer for the rest of his career.

"He went from somebody with dreams of being great to the reality of trying to make the most money he could," says Merchant, retired now, on the line from his home in Santa Monica. "He found out in that fight that he didn't like getting hit. Given how Camacho had soared up to that point, just his being in a close fight, his being challenged, his being hit, in that sense it was a defeat. He had never gone into the ring where he couldn't just dazzle with his dominance. So when you run up against a fighter like Rosario who just hits you like that, sometimes it seems like you lost, even if you didn't lose."

Marley you don't telephone; Marley you meet for drinks. Jimmy's Corner, Times Square. Maybe the last boxing bar in New York City, not counting the taquerias north of 110th Street. Fight posters and publicity shots, ragged-edged newspaper stories framed in smoky glass, sepia-toned boxers staring back at you from every inch of paint-peeled wall.

Marley, fast talking, smart. Now a successful Manhattan defense attorney. Goes back with Macho. To the amateurs. Remembers the trainers Billy Giles and Bobby Lee Velez, "old-school," he calls them. They molded the kid who had been in and out of Rikers. Guided him from the Golden Gloves to a professional career. Made him a name, a hero,

a champion. Then the bitter break. Giles claiming Macho was "drowning in drugs."

"New York is famous for its neighborhood fighters." Marley lifts a Beck's, takes a long swig. "Rocky Graziano from the Lower East Side. Mike Tyson coming from Brownsville. Mark Breland from Bed-Stuy. The old Jewish fighters, Benny Leonard, Bummy Davis. Camacho came up after that time. But he would have fit perfectly on Eastern Parkway or the Sunnyside Gardens or the old St. Nick's arena over on the west side. Quintessential New York fighter."

Like Machito, like Merchant, like just about everyone around the fight game, Marley talks about the two Machos. Pre-Rosario and post-Rosario. "He was a

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Machito shakes his head. "He got hit good in that fight. First time. Changed him, changed his style. He never thought in the ring before. Just throwin' punches. Now he'd say, 'Nobody knocking me out.'"

### THE TRAINER

The Rosario fight. A war. Larry Merchant calling it for HBO, Mike Marley covering it for the *New York Post*. (Me in the second row.) Four rounds of Rosario stalking, measuring, a human drill bit. He opened the fifth with a straight right and a crushing left hook that buckled Macho's knees. Did it again in the 11th.

Macho gobsmacked. "Fought me like he's



changed guy after that. Decided not to take the risks.

"Now when people remember Macho they think of the carnival," Marley says. "The gladiator outfits and the tiger-striped loincloths. The spit curl. The pretty-boy face and the naked weigh-ins. And it was true. Nobody enjoyed being the Macho Man more than Macho. Impossible not to like. But people forget. He was so well schooled in the fundamentals. He was unhittable."

Until Rosario hit him.

Couple nights later. Across the Hudson in Staten Island. Teddy Atlas's kitchen. Voice like a crow, singing a broken song. "You know I paid for the guy's burial?"

I did not.

Atlas, maybe the best trainer left in the game. Runs a charity, the Dr. Theodore A. Atlas Foundation, in honor of his late father. Has helped, literally, thousands of underprivileged New York City kids. Lately hundreds of Staten Island families rocked by Hurricane Sandy. The night I meet him,

he's just returned from putting up new roofs in one of the borough's most storm-shattered neighborhoods.

"Got a call the night before the funeral," he says. "Old friend, a fighter. I'm in a nice restaurant with my wife." Elaine Atlas nods. She is at the stove, ladling chili over rice and slicing a ball of mozzarella. Her look says, My Teddy, the soft touch.

"I never trained Macho, never worked with him," Atlas shrugs. "Everybody knows I have the charity foundation. Anyway, the guy tells me the Camacho family needs \$3,000 or the cemetery won't bury him. I'm like, \$3,000! This after I see on the television they got a glass carriage for a hearse and white horses pulling him through Spanish Harlem. How much did that cost? Why don't you skip that and pay the cemetery?"

"Next morning, Saturday morning, day of the funeral, I have my assistant in the foundation call to make sure. Nope, won't put him in the ground without the money. I guaranteed 'em a check. You believe that bullshit?"

"Eat your dinner," Elaine says. Puts down a plate of chili and cheese. "What's done is done."

Like Macho, Atlas was a rough kid. High school dropout. Street fighter. The half-moon scar that arcs down the left side of his face comes from a knife wound that took 400 stitches to close. Did time in Rikers on an armed robbery beef. So he can relate. But Macho never grew up. Atlas did. Now, at 56, he possesses a deep and innate intelligence masked by the *dese, dems* and *dose* of his Bowery Boy delivery. When he pulls back the curtain, whether breaking down the mechanics of a George Foreman uppercut or a Twyla Tharp arabesque, a listener walks away from the conversation illuminated. Which is why I pay special attention when Atlas uses the terms *genius* and *pioneer* to describe Héctor Camacho's boxing prowess.

First there was Macho's ungodly ring speed and quickness, he says. "A guy with pure speed can intimidate. You're afraid of pure speed. Afraid of the timing. Afraid to do things you normally would do. Camacho's mobility, his confidence and obviously his technique—he could put punches together—were there. But it was all predicated on his great speed."

"Also, he had a great chin. He was on the floor, what, three times in 88 fights? And never knocked out. He never gets credit for his chin."

Now Atlas is into the subject, a physicist lost in a reverie of string theory. That speed, he says, that chin—combine them with Macho's "signature move, his trip-hammer jab."

Quick as a mongoose Atlas leaps from the kitchen chair and throws one. His knuckles brush my right cheekbone. Most fighters, he says, "have the jab where they turn it over, the fist rotates counterclockwise. That's the conventional, traditional way. But if you look at Camacho, he would just drop the jab like this."

Aims another at my face, this time no rotational torque. Downbeat of an ax. "It got there maybe a millisecond quicker. Whatever tenth of a second he bought by doing that allowed him to discombobulate the guy, to throw the guy's rhythm off. It was his own little mark of what separated him, his own little genius. I don't use that word lightly."

This "first Camacho," Atlas says, "fought on his terms." Rose to the top on "aggressiveness. He always thought he was the boss."

Then came Rosario. Atlas gives a sad shake of his head. "He gets caught with that left hook and he gets hurt good. He moves and he grabs, and the new Camacho showed up. We didn't know that at the time. But he never fought with that confidence anymore, with that bravado. He still had the speed, but he didn't have that aggressive mind-set. He didn't have that confidence. His world was thrown off its axis."

Macho stepped into the ring 59 more times after the Rosario bout. Fought into his late 40s, taking another legitimate title as his physique inevitably grew thick. No one ever knocked him out—an accomplishment about which he often boasted. Yet he was never the same. "Still talented," says Atlas. "But for the rest of that time he was just gonna survive."

A long night. Time to go. "I liked Macho," Atlas says. "There was a sensitivity to him. No maliciousness, no mean-spiritedness. He was



"That's his chauffeur. Go take him for a spin."



a knucklehead. But considering everything, I think he wasn't a bad kid inside. Maybe a kid that was hiding things, insecurities that maybe he was never able to deal with. So the way he dealt with them was to talk and to be real fast with his hands and to be a champion. But that didn't mean those doubts were taken away. Doesn't mean that the money and the Corvettes and the machismo and the skirts that he wore and his outrageous behavior took away those inadequacies."

This last hangs in the air as I rise from the kitchen table. Atlas stands too, hesitates, motions—wait. Walks to his living room, returns with a scrapbook. "Wasn't sure to mention this."

Flips to a page, a yellowed newspaper clipping. The sportswriter Dick Young's column in the *New York Post*. Small item reporting that the 30-year-old trainer Teddy Atlas and the lightweight boxing champion of the world Héctor Camacho threw down in Gleason's Gym. A week before the Rosario fight. "He got the gist of it right," Atlas says. "Not all the particulars."

Tells the story. Training one of his fighters, paid for the ring time. Macho and his entourage roll into the gym. Macho wants the ring. Gets in, won't leave. Atlas politely asks him to get out. Macho: "It's Macho time!" Atlas, not so politely now, tells him to go fuck himself. And then they went at it. Bare knuckles.

"He's flicking that jab. Landing a few. Not hurting me. But I know I can't let this go on too long. I got maybe 20 pounds on him. I lunge for him, try to get him in a headlock. But he's so lathered up in baby oil he slips out of my hold. Now he's doin' all that Macho shit. Taunting, jabbing, dancing. I think he drew a little blood over my eye. I fake a jab and lunge again. This time I get him by the hair with both hands. Pull him into my body."

"I got him in a headlock. I hit him two solid uppercuts, lefts, then two more, still holdin' on to his hair with my right hand. I bring my knee up and drive it into his gut. Do it again. I heard later that some of his posse tried to get in the ring, break it up. My guys kept 'em out. I knee him again, hit him again. Now he's bleeding. My fighters are yelling, 'Break his arm, break his face.' He says, real low, like a whisper only I can hear, 'Okay. Enough.' I let him go. The whole bunch of 'em slink out of the gym like pussies."

"The next day he shows up at Gleason's. Alone, leaves his entourage outside. Walks up to me in front of everybody. Says he wants to apologize like a man. Out loud, so everyone can hear. And he does."

We are at the front door now, Teddy Atlas seeing me off. "I tell you what," he says. "Héctor Camacho was a stand-up guy."

In Atlas's worldview that's the highest compliment. I understand why he paid for the funeral.

#### THE INVESTIGATOR

Not long ago, New York City. Guy thinks he recognizes Héctor Camacho Jr. "You Macho's son?" he asks.

"Yeah."

"Your father stole my hubcaps when he was a kid."

I repeat the story, and Ángel Jiménez,

police commissioner of Bayamón, breaks into a sly grin. "You hear about all his legal problems in the States," he says. "But he was never in trouble in Puerto Rico."

Jiménez, 22 years on the job. Former Puerto Rico state policeman. Narcotics, intelligence, a year with special operations. Good-looking man, in buff shape for 45 despite complaints about "the beer belly I'm growing." Cruising down 167 Avenue, pulls his SUV over in front of the bar where Macho was drinking that night.

"He came out, walked to his friend's car over there." Points. "We think it happened right after he got in."

Macho was famous on the island. Like a male Kardashian, touching fire to what was left of the candle. Swanned on *Mira Quién Baila*, the Spanish-language *Dancing With the Stars*. Appeared regularly on the Univision entertainment program *El Gordo y la Flaca* ("The Scoop and the Skinny"), a Latin mash-up of *TMZ* and *Entertainment Tonight*. Starred in a reality dating show titled, of course, *Es Macho Time*. Posed twice for *Playgirl*, the last time a mere three years ago.

"One of my sergeants is the first on the scene," Jiménez says. "He calls and tells me that through all the blood it looks like Macho Camacho is one of the guys shot." Shakes his head. "I didn't believe it."

Jiménez throws it into reverse. "Let's go see the captain," the state police investigator in charge of the case. Not talking to the press, but for his old partner Ángel Jiménez a little favor. Rain heavy, traffic light. Jiménez points out the Bayamón Art Museum, the engineering museum, obvious pride in his hometown. Doesn't mention the crime. Passes the stadium where he last saw Macho alive. "Back in August, at a Wilfredo Vázquez Jr. fight," he says. "We were both guests of honor."

Up into the hills, driving east. Crossing from Bayamón into Guaynabo. Two-lane road wending through copses of Spanish elms, African tulips, royal poincianas. Now, taller hills, a small village at the summit. Pull over; duck under crime-scene tape, hike the last 100 yards. Uniformed cops milling about. In Puerto Rico, Jiménez explains, local officers, the police who work for him, handle all crimes except murder. Homicides are the province of the state police. Captain Rafael Rosa Córdova. Plainclothes brown suit, standing outside a small, single-story home where earlier this morning a junkie son robbed and killed his father. Córdova and Jiménez embrace. Been too long, they both say.

If there were a *Law & Order: Puerto Rico*, Captain Córdova would be its Jerry Orbach. Hangdog, seen-it-all homicide investigator. Dark, heavy-lidded eyes that dart like a basilisk's. Deep, husky voice; probably speaks English, just not to me. Commissioner Jiménez interprets. "Unlike previous published reports, my investigation shows me that Camacho was not the target of this attack. From what we've learned so far it was a simple robbery."

So the rumors that Macho was bankrolling the drug dealer who died in the car with him are false?

Córdova, sad smile. "The other man in the car was the intended victim. The shooters had no idea that Héctor Camacho was



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sitting in the car with him.” He adds that Adrián Moreno, the other man, had a sheet: drugs, a weapons charge. Macho did not—at least not in Puerto Rico. “From what we understand, Macho and the other man were just having a few drinks together.”

And probably a snort. I ask if the assailants were after money or drugs. “When the shooting began the perpetrators had no idea that Macho was sitting in that car. Macho took the very first shot. He was just in the wrong place at the wrong time.”

And so it goes for half an hour or so. Small talk about the neighborhood where the shooting occurred, the early news reports that had two suspects in custody. False alarm, Córdova says. He admits that the police know what kind of car the murderers drove, though he won’t tell me the model. This implies there are witnesses. And yes, he says, his investigation has narrowed to two suspects.

“I am a professional,” the captain tells me before I depart. “I put the same amount of energy into any homicide investigation, no matter the victim. That said, I do feel bad. Héctor Camacho was beloved here on the island. I am not unaware of that.”

Now he gives his old partner Jiménez a half smile and clamps a hand on my shoulder. My invitation to leave. “It’s an open case right now,” Córdova says. “But yes, we’re going to get them.”

As we walk back down the hill I tell Commissioner Jiménez that I sense there is pressure—on the state police in general, Captain Córdova in particular—to wrap this up.

“If you spoke Spanish you would have been able to read between the lines,” Jiménez says. “That last thing he said? I took it to mean that there is going to be an arrest in this case soon.”

In fact, two months later several members of Macho’s family phoned me. A teenager, I was told, had been taken into custody in Puerto Rico and charged with the shooting. The killings had been, as the captain had predicted, over one of Moreno’s drug feuds. I felt then as I felt the day Commissioner Jiménez and I walked down that hill in Guaynabo. Macho. Wrong place at the wrong time. Probably inevitable. Still prosaic. Jiménez and I had driven away from Córdova’s crime scene lost in our own thoughts, until the commissioner broke the silence. “Such a damn waste,” he said.

The Bronx. St. Raymond’s Cemetery. Cold, gray, overcast. Sad. Thousands of mourners. Old pugs, bent noses, cauliflower ears. Kids hawking Macho T-shirts from the trunk of a Chevy beater. Flowers, tons of flowers. Macho’s younger brother, Félix, organizing the procession. Keeping his stooped and keening mother, María, upright. She won’t leave the grave. Has to be dragged away.

Couple of NYPD uniforms off to the side. Crowd control. So young. One says, “So this guy was a famous boxer, huh?”

I nod.

“Before my time. What was he, like, known for?”

“It’s Macho time,” I say and turn to leave.



## GETTING MY BABY TANKED

(continued from page 107)

A damp unlit cigar hung from his lip. “I’m getting my baby tanked,” he said, satisfied, and started to slurp his fifth Diet Coke. Putting it down on the deck, he leaned over, drew his hands across her belly to soak up some suntan oil, rubbed his face, then leaned back into his chair. He picked up *The New York Times* and began reading, gumming his cigar. Greta opened her novel at random and began to read. “In human relations, kindnesses and lies are worth a thousand truths.” She sipped her drink and started spacing out, watching the gulls through her sunglasses. Carl had only been out of rehab for a couple of months, and Greta was still married. Well, separated. They were both on holiday from themselves.

She remembered the day Carl had shown up at her office, three months before—in December, not long after they’d met. It was the day after her birthday, and he was late. She stood in the lobby, wearing a new coat, a fur hat, a new red handbag. He was taking her to the Rangers game as her present. Greta felt exhilarated; here was a man who made plans. Box seats. He was 25 minutes late, and still she didn’t lose heart; she felt condescendingly magnanimous: Carl would come. And then he was there, sheepish, determined and in motion, streaming through the lobby, a cloud in khaki, long loose legs bobbing forward like the jointed limbs of a wooden dancing doll. He grabbed her arm, linked elbows, whooshed them through the revolving doors and glided her to the curb on a soft carpet of excuses. “I am disgruntled,” Greta said teasingly, thinking she should seem to be, at least a little, out of self-respect. “Oh darling—be grunted,” he wheedled, not noticing she wasn’t angry. He liked to be in the wrong with girls and be forgiven, she guessed: to be the kind of guy for whom exceptions were made.

At Madison Square Garden, the seats were fantastic, 12 feet from the ice. Stewards bustled about, bringing them everything Carl wanted—burgers, fries, chicken, Cokes. “I got you a present,” he had said exultantly as soon as they sat down, and before Greta could react, he started fumbling through a shopping bag he had brought and pulled out a silver-wrapped box. “I got it at Barneys,” he said. In his excitement, he began unwrapping it as he gave it to her, but she grabbed it from him in time so she could open it first. She unfolded the protecting white tissue paper. Inside was a soft, smooth pair of chocolate-colored chamois-suede hand-sewn gloves. She never shopped at Barneys; she couldn’t afford it. Carl beamed at her, transported to a rapturous plane by his thoughtfulness. Done with the present, he pointed to the ice and began to explain to Greta about hockey. And she saw that the players moved on ice the way Carl moved on land: skating through life with clumsy male grace, intent disguised as carelessness.

That morning in South Beach, they had both looked terrible. The hotel with the art deco name had turned out to be hideous—

a Thousand Island dressing-colored hulk looming over a cement courtyard through which a neon-lit wading pool meandered, wrapping around a bar that served keg beer and cocktails in plastic cups. College boys with nitrate-red tans and Big Mac bodies clustered around the bar, braying and belching, buying vodka tonics and cosmos for women who laughed too loud and had coarse mouths. When they’d arrived the previous night, they’d both found the scene funny for five minutes; then the irony petered out and they wished they could go someplace else, but it was spring break (which they hadn’t realized when they had booked the flight to Miami the day before, on a whim) and there was nowhere else to go.

Carl and Greta’s room was on a high floor overlooking Ocean Drive. Greta had looked forward to throwing the curtains open the first morning and unveiling the beachfront below waiting like a tropical Disney welcome mat: the fringe of emerald palms dividing the black stripe of asphalt from the golden stripe of the sand; the Aquafresh-blue water; the lavender sky. But in the morning, the room’s sheetrock walls sucked up the white early light like a drain, and the color that washed over the room was gray and leaching. When they woke up and saw each other they shuddered.

“Do I look as bad as you?” Greta asked.

“Worse,” he said and, covering his eyes, tried to give her a jokey kiss. Greta pushed him away and ran to the bathroom to throw water on her face, trying to splash away the pall. “Let’s get out of town,” Carl said. And so they drove to Fort Lauderdale.

It was a gorgeous day—hot, with the sun sweating overhead. The white-painted railings of the gambling boat looked so nautical, Greta thought. “Yar,” Katharine Hepburn would have called it—was that right? Fat vacationers in overly bright clothing lolled like seals on white plastic rocks, eating. At the back corner of the deck, a steward in a white uniform began speaking through a bullhorn.

“Skeet shooting starts at noon on B deck,” he announced.

Carl and Greta turned around.

“That’s in five minutes. Do you want to shoot?” he asked, moving his cigar to the left of his mouth, holding it in place with his molars.

“I’ve never done it,” Greta said. “And I don’t want to kill anything.” She thought skeet were birds; someone would release them from a bag or a box, they’d fly up in terror, they’d be shot down.

“No, they’re made of clay,” Carl said. “No blood.”

He was amused, and she felt stupid. “I’ll show you how,” he said. She followed him to the steward, they were first in line, it cost something, and Carl paid. He let her go first and showed her how to hold the gun, cradling her body in his, folding her shoulder and gun into his long arm. She loved how small he made her feel, like a child, his chin grazing her head. She remembered how he had skated backward at the Wollman Rink in December, holding her by the waist so she could travel backward with him. She had never done that before.

The steward set up a practice shot so Greta could feel the kick of the gun. Then she went



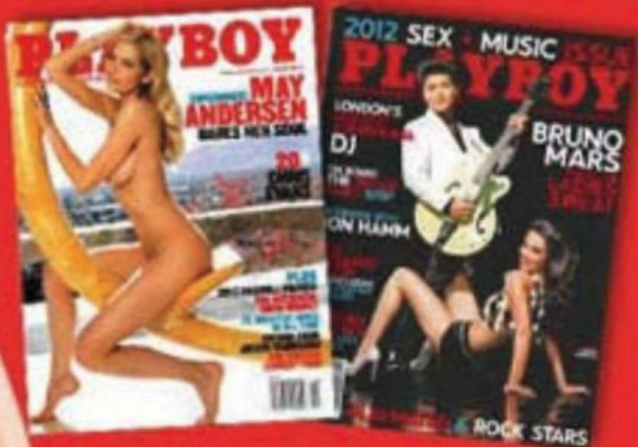


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to the railing, and the steward put a disk in the slingshot arm and released it. An orange blip shot into the sky. Three times he released it, three times Greta shot. She hit the target each time. Carl took the gun from her, displeased. Greta was embarrassed. She would have missed on purpose if she hadn't assumed she'd miss no matter what she did. It was important for a woman to lose when losing didn't matter. That's why she liked pool. Carl shot three times and missed everything. They went back to the chairs. Greta looked down at the deck, not wanting to look Carl in the face, in case he might read some expression in her face that would annoy him, and he went to get them more drinks. "Getting my baby tanked," he said, returning, and they sat and read, and in a while, he ordered sandwiches.

There was something furtive about the two of them. They were good at keeping silent. They were also good at talking, but it was the silence that drew them together. Knowing when the other was not really there, knowing when conversation wasn't necessary.

"You're so pretty," Carl had said the night they met, at a dinner with friends. James hadn't been there; he'd stayed home to work, or to read, or because he knew Greta wouldn't care if he didn't come.

"And you're kind of vicious, aren't you?"

"I'm married," Greta had retorted. Which was technically, though not really, true.

"I'm crestfallen," Carl said.

He had walked her home after the dinner, talking about rehab and the grand vision he had for Eastern Europe. When she told him about a trip she was taking to Prague, he started talking about the ambassador, and she realized with confusion that he knew the ambassador personally. She was thinking about this when Carl grabbed her and kissed her, in front of her house, where her husband could have seen, where all the neighbors were.

"I'm married," Greta said, pulling away from him angrily, and he smiled at her, turned and walked away. He didn't know that her marriage was over, Greta thought sulkily. It was disrespectful. It was true that the only reason James hadn't moved out was that he kept putting off finding a place to move to, but Carl didn't know that. Maybe Carl will do it, she thought; maybe Carl will make it so James leaves. But she resented him all the same, for assuming he could kiss her, for assuming she wouldn't stop him and for being right about both things.

The next day Carl had called her at work, when she was on deadline. "Come out with me tonight. I want you to meet my mother. We're going to a fund-raiser for a senator who's a friend." "I can't," Greta said, "I've got to finish an article." "Oh come on," Carl said. "Don't be afraid. It's early. You can get home to hubby by nine and finish your article later." Greta hated being called a coward, hated the word *hubby* and hated Carl for patronizing her husband, even if James's rights to that word had run out.

"No," she said.

"I just want you to meet people; you'll enjoy yourself," Carl continued. "Come. Or don't come. It's totally aboveboard."

Two hours later, at an imposing old hotel

on Park Avenue, Carl introduced Greta to his mother, who looked searchingly at her, smiling anxiously, as if to say, "Are you a woman who could be a safe custodian of my son?" Then she met the senator and the mayor, and after that she ran into far too many people she already knew, who also knew James. She told them she was so sorry James couldn't come that night; he was at the office but would join her later. She felt frightened. Irreversible things were happening.

Carl dragged Greta out of the reception into an empty adjoining parlor, an echoing room with high ceilings, oil paintings of captains of industry on the walls, Brunswick curtains at the tall windows, deep lush carpets on the parquet floors, massive marble fireplaces. He steered her onto a leather sofa and began to kiss her extravagantly. Greta felt helpless, like a hare being coursed by a sportsman who knew the forest better than she did, who had all the marble, wood, leather and guns of the establishment behind him. She tried to believe her defenselessness exonerated her. The senator's wife came into the room, and Carl jumped up, beaming, and introduced Greta as his "date." Greta smiled and shook hands, then excused herself. Once out of the room, she crept toward the marble

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*The doorbell rang at  
8:30, and there he was,  
arriving like good times,  
to be embraced, not ques-  
tioned. Greta felt a rush of  
childlike elation.*

---

spiral staircase to the lobby, then hurried down the stairs, stepping lightly so her heels wouldn't click. Carl ran after her, easily catching her up with long, loping steps. "When can I see you again?" he asked.

"Let go of me," she said desperately and ran out the door. He didn't follow. This happened several times, things like it. And then, one Saturday morning, Greta and James were at home, getting ready to throw a Christmas party, when Carl called. "I have to see you," he said. Greta's throat caught. James was in the shower; what if he had answered? At the same moment, she remembered that James would be leaving the apartment right after the party; he was seeing a play in midtown with an old friend.

"All right," she whispered. "We're having people over this afternoon, but James has to be somewhere at eight. Do you want to come over? I'll make dinner."

That afternoon, while making mulled wine and quiche and cookies for the party, Greta stealthily prepared a secret dinner while James was out getting the tree. She hid the dishes under the bed—the wedding china they'd never used. She made a casserole and hid it in the back of the oven, parboiled pork chops and stowed them in a Dutch oven, tucked a

salad in the back of the fridge. Dessert would have to be leftover Christmas cookies.

The party began at four. Soon after it started, a heavy snowstorm descended on the city. Perhaps because of the lulling seasonal diorama—their piney tree glossed with ornaments and white lights, the cinnamon, savory heat from the kitchen, the melting pastries, the clovey, sweet wine, the blizzard through the window—the guests settled snugly in for hours, showing no signs of wishing to head into the whirling snow. At seven P.M., with frantic gaiety, Greta encouraged a snowball fight on the street to kill the party's momentum. It worked. When the last guests left at 7:30, taking James with them, Greta smiled, kissed cheeks and good-byed, and once the door shut behind them, she collapsed on the bed and wept from tension and relief.

After a minute or two, she recovered herself, patted her cheeks and rose to get ready for Carl. She showered, she moisturized. She put on velvet, silk, a soft long skirt, high heels. Misted herself in perfume. Put on a glittering crystal necklace. Removed the china from under the bed, set the table, lit candles and put Gershwin on the CD player. "Funny Face" came on; it was his song, she thought. Whenever she went running and it popped up on the playlist, she thought of Carl and smiled and ran faster: "Though you're no Handsome Harry/For worlds I'd not replace/Your sunny, funny face." The doorbell rang at 8:30, and there he was, arriving like good times, to be embraced, not questioned. Greta felt a rush of childlike elation. Carl looked at her silently, let the door slam shut behind him, picked her up and carried her to the bedroom.

Greta hadn't known James long before he became her husband; James was handsome and kind, she was romantic and on the rebound; they married on impulse. After the wedding, she found out she'd contracted herself to a chaste game of house with a diffident stranger, perhaps for eternity. A couple of years passed before she gathered the courage to have the hard talk. It had happened last summer, almost a year ago now. They both had cried. James had agreed the marriage hadn't worked, had agreed he would leave. Only then, he didn't. Greta didn't want to be unkind; she wanted to give James time to detach and leave on his own terms, rather than wrench him roughly away. But now his lingering had become a kind of cruelty. She was worn out from worrying about hurting him. Why didn't James go, since he didn't want to kiss her?

Maybe she should have felt guilty, she thought, as she admired Carl, so jubilant, so sure, lying beside her on the bed. But she didn't feel guilty. She didn't feel she was there at all. It was as if they were a movie she and Carl were watching, of someone else's life. They ate dinner by candlelight in silk bathrobes. The china was gorgeous. Greta drank wine, Carl drank shirley temples—she'd gotten maraschino cherries for him. By 10:30 he was out of the house, and by 11, when James returned, there was no trace of the second party. But Greta felt queasy from deceit. She was unaccustomed to underhandedness. The



worst was that James hadn't suspected anything. It shouldn't have been so easy, so consequenceless. A week or two after the party, she confronted James; at last he moved out. She wondered if she would ever marry again. She wished she could unmeet James, rewind and walk down a different street, where she might have met a different man, one who could have kept her ideals of marriage intact, her faith in male confidence unbowed. Her marriage hadn't felt real. But she supposed her divorce would.

The cruise had a couple of hours to go, and Carl started to fidget after he finished the *Times*. "We could get a cabin," he said. "What for?" Greta said and knew she shouldn't have. They looked at each other spitefully. She was getting back at him for having said she looked awful that morning, even though it was true. But she wasn't really in a bad mood, so she smiled and said, "Or..." but Carl was already saying, "Well then, let's gamble!" He stood up. Greta pulled on a sundress from her beach bag, and they descended into the dark, air-conditioned interior of the boat, where the metallic ping of slot machines and the tinny jingle of taped theme songs echoed above flashing lights. Old women in polyester

pants and men in short-sleeve Cuban shirts stood at the slot machines, cigarettes in one hand, jumbo plastic cups in the other to catch falling coins. They pulled the machine arms with their smoking hands. Their faces were expressionless. "Outstanding," Carl crowed.

With his baggy jacket, slouchy hat, khakis and cigar, Carl looked like a young old man. Rubbing his hands together theatrically, he stuck his cigar between his teeth like FDR and strode toward the roulette table. The felt-covered table brightened in welcome as he approached. The croupier at the wheel nodded deferentially. Carl bought chips for himself and separated out a couple hundred worth for Greta. He began to place bets scientifically, according to his theories: a heap on odds, a heap on evens, a heap on black, a heap on red. His piles began to increase, to double, to triple. Greta watched disapprovingly but with respect. She wasn't a gambler; she left her chips untouched. But Carl knew how to bet. Onlookers began to encircle the table, watching Carl play. And then Greta had a presentiment. She knew it was ridiculous, but she couldn't keep herself from telling him.

"Put it all on black 29," she said. Carl looked at her impassively, completely uninterested. "Put it all on black 29," she said

again, knowing it sounded silly but feeling too sure to keep quiet. He ignored her and kept on distributing the piles his way. The croupier watched, the spectators stared.

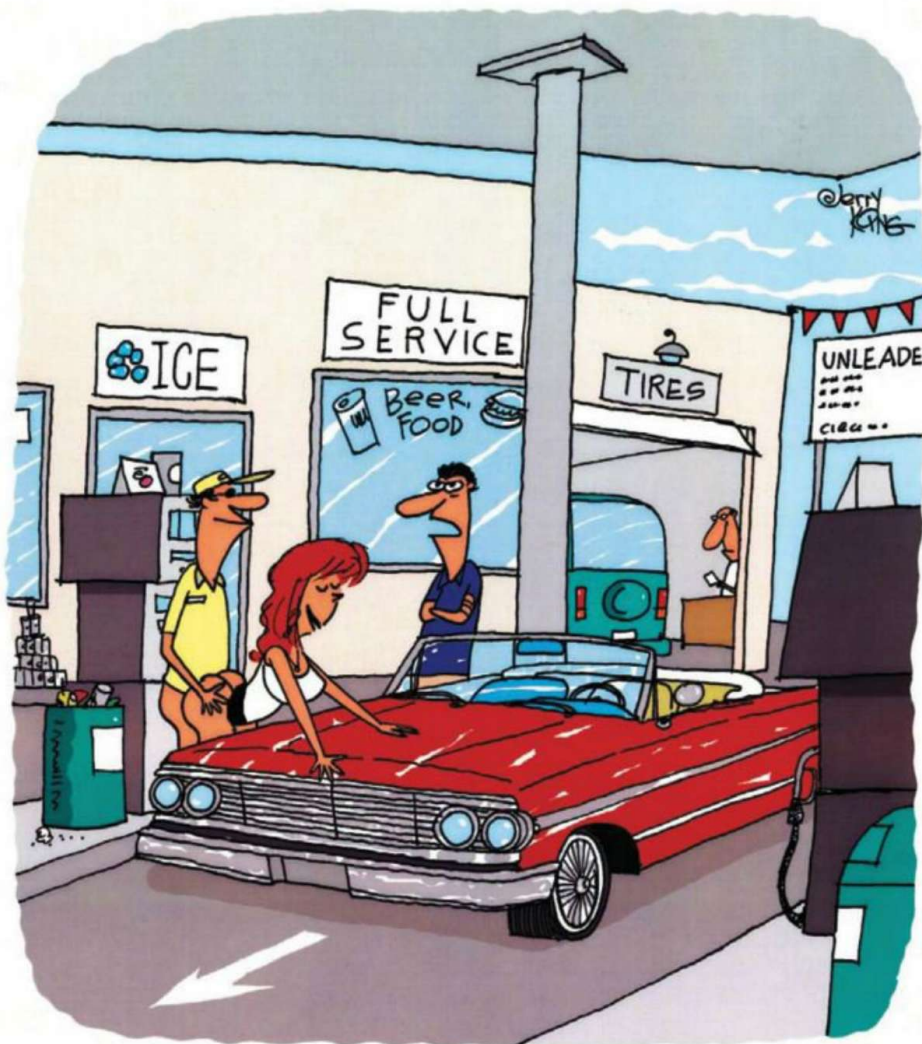
"All right, then just put half of it on black 29," she said. As the roulette wheel started spinning, the croupier glanced at them both questioningly. He dropped the silver ball into the whirring wheel; it bounced and bounced, and the numbers flew under it, around and around. Greta looked at Carl, Carl looked at Greta, the croupier looked at Carl, and finally, as the whir slowed to a spin, the croupier said, "All bets are off." The ball skittered and leapt, the wheel slowed and slowed, and finally the ball came to a rest, in black 29.

"Holy hell, you're bad luck, that's it," Carl said. He cashed in what was left of his chips, and they went back to the deck. Greta wondered if the roulette wheel had been rigged. The croupier was probably having a little joke on her, playing God. Still, she felt dizzy, knowing that if Carl had done what she'd said, he might have broken the bank. And even if he hadn't, the winnings would have more than paid him back for the vacation. Everything would have been her treat, then, many times over.

"Waiter," Carl said once they'd climbed back to the sunny deck and found new chairs. "Another Bahama Mama for my girl. I'll have a ginger ale." "Margarita?" "Yeah," Carl said. The waiter nodded and went off. As the waiter left, Greta noticed that she was in an excellent mood, which probably meant Carl was too. In the settling afternoon sunlight, he looked splendid, at ease, manly, in himself. She averted her eyes. Once, Carl had caught her admiring his body at his loft in Manhattan, and he hadn't liked it. She had watched him in the dark, lit only by the glow of a streetlamp through the blinds, as he walked to his dresser, where he kept an open box of condoms, scores of them, arranged in rows, like a prophylactic card catalog. At the time, feeling guilty about James, she'd found the profusion reassuring, as if what she and Carl got up to hardly counted, a rounding error.

Naked, Carl was surprisingly lithe and muscular. He was broader shouldered and more athletic than he looked in his floppy clothes. In the black-and-white light of the night, he looked like a statue to her, pure, clean, alabaster lines, a David. Turning, Carl had seen Greta eyeing him appraisingly and frowned; he shrugged off her regard. He was the one who was supposed to do the staring. So now Greta knew not to look at Carl, but she thought about the body under his khakis and his ink-stained madras jacket, and wished they'd taken the cabin after all, but it was too late. She took off her sundress, re-oiled and leaned back into her deck chair. She was just reaching for her novel when Carl looked over at her, cupped her bobbed hair in his palm and said, "Hey. What are you doing so far away?" And he dragged her chair against his and pulled her half into his arms. She leaned her head into his soft collar. He took the dangling cigar out of his mouth, looked into the sun, then leaned down and gave her an upside-down kiss.

"Outstanding," he said.





# SINATRA

(continued from page 105)

good vocalist “feel” a song? Is there such a difference—

**SINATRA:** I don’t know what other singers feel when they articulate lyrics, but being an 18-karat manic-depressive and having lived a life of violent emotional contradictions, I have an over-acute capacity for sadness as well as elation. I know what the cat who wrote the song is trying to say. I’ve been there—and back. I guess the audience feels it along with me. They can’t help it. Sentimentality, after all, is an emotion common to all humanity.

**PLAYBOY:** Of the thousands of words that have been written about you on this subject, do you recall any which have accurately described this ability?

**SINATRA:** Most of what has been written about me is one big blur, but I do remember being described in one simple word that I agree with. It was in a piece that tore me apart for my personal behavior, but the writer said that when the music began and I started to sing, I was “honest.” That says it as I feel it. Whatever else has been said about me personally is unimportant. When I sing, I believe. I’m honest. If you want to get an audience with you, there’s only one way. You have to reach out to them with total honesty and humility. This isn’t a grandstand play on my part; I’ve discovered—and you can see it in other entertainers—when they don’t reach out to the audience, nothing happens. You can be the most artistically perfect performer in the world, but an audience is like a broad—if you’re indifferent, Endsville. That goes for any kind of human contact: a politician on television, an actor in the movies or a guy and a gal. That’s as true in life as it is in art.

**PLAYBOY:** All right, let’s start with the most basic question there is: Are you a religious man? Do you believe in God?

**SINATRA:** Well, that’ll do for openers. I think I can sum up my religious feelings in a couple of paragraphs. First: I believe in you and me. I’m like Albert Schweitzer and Bertrand Russell and Albert Einstein in that I have a respect for life—in any form. I believe in nature, in the birds, the sea, the sky, in everything I can see or that there is *real* evidence for. If these things are what you mean by God, then I believe in God. But I don’t believe in a personal God to whom I look for comfort or for a natural on the next roll of the dice. I’m not unmindful of man’s seeming need for faith; I’m for *anything* that gets you through the night, be it prayer, tranquilizers or a bottle of Jack Daniel’s. But to me religion is a deeply personal thing in which man and God go it alone together, without the witch doctor in the middle. The witch doctor tries to convince us that we have to ask God for help, to spell out to him what we need, even to bribe him with prayer or cash on the line. Well, I believe that God *knows* what each of us wants and needs. It’s not necessary for us to make it to church on Sunday to reach him. You can find him anywhere.

**PLAYBOY:** You haven’t found any answers for yourself in organized religion?

**SINATRA:** There are things about organized

religion which I resent. Christ is revered as the Prince of Peace, but more blood has been shed in his name than any other figure in history. You show me one step forward in the name of religion and I’ll show you a hundred retrogressions. Remember, they were men of God who destroyed the educational treasures at Alexandria, who perpetrated the Inquisition in Spain, who burned the witches at Salem.

**PLAYBOY:** Hasn’t religious faith just as often served as a civilizing influence?

**SINATRA:** Remember that leering, cursing lynch mob in Little Rock reviling a meek, innocent little 12-year-old Negro girl as she tried to enroll in public school? Weren’t they—or most of them—devout churchgoers? I detest the two-faced who pretend liberality but are practiced bigots in their own mean little spheres.

**PLAYBOY:** But aren’t such spiritual hypocrites in a minority? Aren’t most Americans fairly consistent in their conduct within the precepts of religious doctrine?

**SINATRA:** I’ve got no quarrel with men of decency at any level. But I can’t believe that decency stems only from religion. And I can’t help wondering how many public figures make avowals of religious faith to maintain an aura of respectability. Our civilization, such as it is, was shaped by religion, and the men who aspire to public office anywhere in the free world must make obeisance to God or risk immediate opprobrium. Our press accurately reflects the religious nature of our society, but you’ll notice that it also carries the articles and advertisements of astrology and hokey Elmer Gantry revivalists. We in America pride ourselves on freedom of the press, but every day I see, and so do you, this kind of dishonesty and distortion not only in this area but in reporting—about guys like me, for instance, which is of minor importance except to me; but also in reporting world news. How can a free people make decisions without facts? If the press reports world news as they report about me, we’re in trouble.

**PLAYBOY:** Are you saying that—

**SINATRA:** No, wait, let me finish. Have you thought of the chance I’m taking by speaking out this way? Can you imagine the deluge of crank letters, curses, threats and obscenities I’ll receive after these remarks gain general circulation? Worse, the boycott of my records, my films, maybe a picket line at my opening at the Sands. Why? Because I’ve dared to say that love and decency are not necessarily concomitants of religious fervor.

**PLAYBOY:** If you think you’re stepping over the line, offending your public or perhaps risking economic suicide, shall we cut this off now, erase the tape and start over along more antiseptic lines?

**SINATRA:** No, let’s let it run. I’ve thought this way for years, ached to say these things. Whom have I harmed by what I’ve said? What moral defection have I suggested? No, I don’t want to chicken out now. Come on, pal, the clock’s running.

**PLAYBOY:** All right, then, let’s move on to another delicate subject: disarmament. How do you feel about the necessity and possibility of achieving it?

**SINATRA:** Well, that’s like apple pie and mother—how can you be against it? After all, despite the universal and unanimous assumption that both powers—Russia and the United States—already have stockpiled more nuclear weaponry than is necessary to vaporize the entire planet, each power continues to build, improve and enlarge its terrifying arsenal. For the first time in history, man has developed the means with which to expunge all life in one shuddering instant. And, brother, no one gets a pass, no one hides from this one. But the question is not so much whether disarmament is desirable or even whether it can be achieved but whether—if we were able to achieve it—we would be better off or perhaps infinitely *worse* off.

**PLAYBOY:** Are you suggesting that disarmament might be *detrimental* to peace?

**SINATRA:** Yes, in a certain very delicate sense. Look, I’m a realist, or at least I fancy myself one. Just as I believe that religion doesn’t always work, so do I feel that disarmament may be completely beyond man’s capacity to live with. Let’s forget for a moment the complex problems we might face in converting from a cold war to a peace economy. Let’s examine disarmament in terms of man’s political, social and philosophical conditioning. Let’s say that somehow the UN is able to achieve a disarmament program acceptable to all nations. Let’s imagine, a few years from now, total global disarmament. But imagine as well the gnawing doubts, suspicions and nerve-racking tensions which must, inevitably, begin to fill the void: the fear that the other side—or perhaps some third power—is secretly arming or still holding a few bombs with which to surprise and overcome the other. But I firmly believe that nuclear war is absolutely impossible. I don’t think anyone in the world wants a nuclear war—not even the Russians. They and we and the “nth” countries—as nuclear strategists refer to future nuclear powers—face the incontrovertible certainty of lethal retaliation for any nuclear strike. I can’t believe for a moment that the idiot exists in any nation that will push the first button—not even accidentally.

**PLAYBOY:** You foresee no possibility of world war or of effective disarmament?

**SINATRA:** I’m not an industrialist or an economist; I know I’m way out of my depth when I attempt even to comprehend the complexity of shifting the production of a country from war to peace. But if somehow all those involved in production of implements of destruction were willing to accept reason as well as reasonable profit, I think that a shift in psychology might be possible. And if this were to happen, I believe that the deep-seated terror in the hearts of most people due to the constant threat of total destruction would disappear. The result would be a more positive, less greedy, less selfish and more loving approach to survival. I can tell you this much from personal experience and observation: Hate solves no problems. It only creates them. But listen, you’ve been asking me a lot of questions, so let me ask you a question I posed to Mike Romanoff [famed Beverly Hills restaurateur who falsely claimed to be a Russian prince] the other night. You



know, Mike is quite a serious thinker; when we spend an evening together, we play an intellectual chess game touching on all topics, including those we are discussing here. Anyway, I asked Mike what would happen if a summit meeting of all the leaders in every country in the world was called, including Red China, at the UN. Further suppose that each leader brings with him his top aides: Kennedy brings [Secretary of State Dean] Rusk, Khrushchev brings [Minister of Foreign Affairs Andrei] Gromyko, Mao brings [Vice Chairman] Zhou Enlai. All these cats are together in one room, then—boom! Somebody blows up the mother building. No more leaders. No more deputies. The question I asked Mike, and the one I ask you, is: What would happen to the world?

**PLAYBOY:** You tell us.

**SINATRA:** I told Mike I thought it might be the only chance the world has for survival. But Mike just shook his head and said, "Frank, you're very sick." Maybe so. Until someone lights the fuse, however, I think that continuation of Cold War preparedness might be more effective to maintain the peace than the dewy-eyed notion of total disarmament. I also wonder if "total" disarmament includes chemical and bacteriological weapons—which, as you know, can be just as lethal as nuclear weapons. Card players have a saying: "It's all right to play if you keep your eyes on the deck"—which is another way of saying "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty."

**PLAYBOY:** Do you feel, then, that nuclear testing should be continued?

**SINATRA:** Absolutely not. I think it's got to stop, and I think it *will* stop—because it has to stop. The name-calling in the UN and the finger-pointing at peace conferences is just a lot of diplomatic bull. Both sides have to live on this planet, and leaders in

all countries know that their children and grandchildren have to live here too. I suspect that when the limits of strontium 90 in the atmosphere get really dangerous, scientists in both camps will persuade the politicians to call a final halt to testing—probably at precisely the same time, with no urging from the other side.

**PLAYBOY:** You spoke a moment ago of the fear and suspicion that might nullify any plan for lasting and effective disarmament. Isn't continuing nuclear preparedness—with or without further testing—likely to engender these emotions on an even more dangerous scale?

**SINATRA:** Fear is the enemy of logic. There is no more debilitating, crushing, self-defeating, sickening thing in the world—to an individual or to a nation. If we continue to fear the Russians, and if they continue to fear us, then we're both in big trouble. Neither side will be able to make logical, reasoned decisions. I think, however, that their fear and concern over the ideological balance of power in some areas is far from irrational. Our concern over a sovietized Cuba 90 miles from Key West, for instance, must be equated with Russian concern over our missile bases surrounding them. It is proper that we should be deeply concerned, but we must be able to see their side of the coin—and not let this concern turn into fear on either side.

**PLAYBOY:** On a practical level, how would you combat Communist expansion into areas such as Cuba, Laos and the emerging African nations?

**SINATRA:** It strikes me as being so ridiculously simple: Stop worrying about communism; just get rid of the conditions that nurture it. Sidestepping Marxian philosophy and dialectical vagaries, I think that communism can fester only wherever and whenever it is

encouraged to breed—not just by the Communists themselves, but by depressed social and economic conditions, and we can always count on the Communists to exploit those conditions. Poverty is probably the greatest asset the Communists have. Wherever it exists, anyplace in the world, you have a potential Communist breeding ground. It figures that if a man is frustrated in a material sense, his family hungry, he suffers, he broods and he becomes susceptible to the blandishments of any ideology that promises to take him off the hook.

**PLAYBOY:** Do you share with the American right wing an equal concern about the susceptibility of our *own* country to Communist designs?

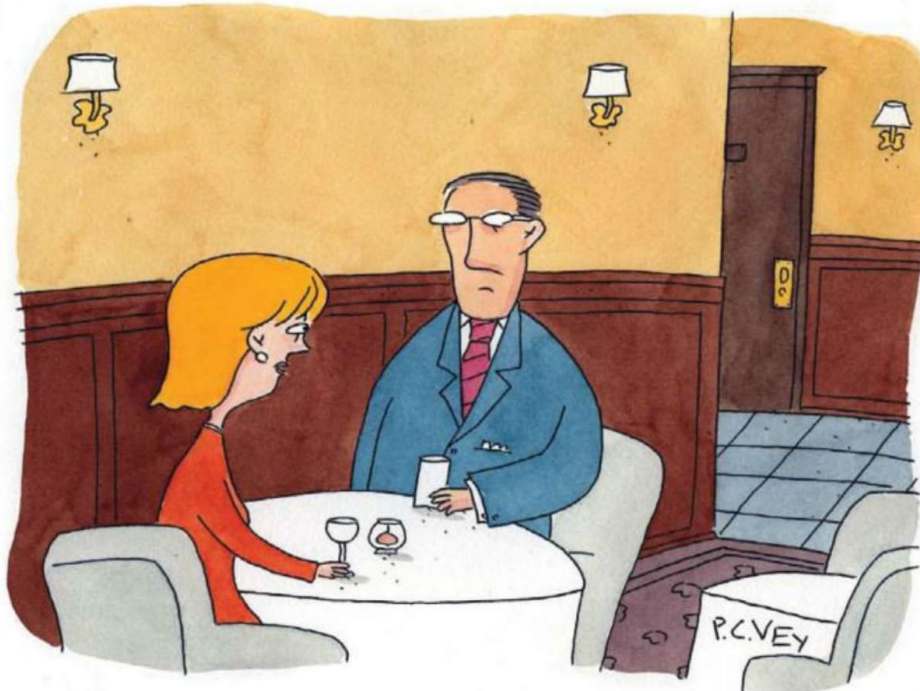
**SINATRA:** Well, if you're talking about that poor, beaten, dehumanized, discriminated-against guy in some blighted Tobacco Road down in the South, he's certainly in the market for offers of self-improvement. But you can't make me believe that a machinist in Detroit, ending a 40-hour week, climbing into his 1963 Chevy, driving to a steak barbecue behind his \$25,000 home in a tree-lined subdivision, about to begin a weekend with his well-fed, well-clothed family, is going to trade what he's got for a party card. In America—except for tiny pockets of privation which still persist—Khrushchev has as much chance of succeeding as he has of making 100 straight passes at the crap table.

**PLAYBOY:** In combating Communist expansion into underdeveloped areas here and abroad, what can we do except to offer massive material aid and guidance of the kind we've been providing since the end of World War II?

**SINATRA:** I don't know. I'm no economist. I don't pretend to have much background in political science. But this much I know: Attending rallies sponsored by 110 percent anti-Communist cultists or donning white sheets and riding with the Klan—the one that's spelled with a *K*—isn't the answer. All I know is that a nation with our standard of living, with our Social Security system, TVA, farm parity, health plans and unemployment insurance can afford to address itself to the cancers of starvation, substandard housing, educational voids and second-class citizenship that still exist in many backsliding areas of our own country. When we've cleaned up these blemishes, then we can go out with a clean conscience to see where else in the world we can help. Hunger is inexcusable in a world where grain rots in silos and butter turns rancid while being held for favorable commodity indices.

**PLAYBOY:** Is American support of the UN one of the ways in which we can uplift global economic conditions?

**SINATRA:** It seems to me that a lot of us consider the UN a private club—ours, of course—with gentlemen's agreements just like any other exclusive club. Only instead of excluding a person, a race or a religion, the members of the UN have the power to exclude entire nations. I don't happen to think you can kick 800 million Chinese under the rug and simply pretend that they don't exist. Because they do. If the UN is to be truly representative, then it must accept *all* the nations of the world. If it doesn't represent the *united*



*"I just think we should start seeing other soul mates."*



nations of the world, then what the hell have you got? Not democracy—and certainly not world government. Everybody seems to have forgotten that President Kennedy, before he became president, in his book *Strategy of Peace*, plainly advocated recognition of Red China. So I'm not too far out on the limb, am I?

**PLAYBOY:** With or without mainland China in the UN, what do you feel are the prospects for an eventual American rapprochement with Russia?

**SINATRA:** I'm a singer, not a prophet or a diplomat. Ask the experts or read the Rockefeller brothers' reports. But speaking just as a layman, an ordinary guy who thinks and worries, I think that if we can stay out of war for the next 10 years, we'll never have another war. From all I've read and seen recently, I'm betting that within the next decade the Russians will be on the credit-card kick just as we are. They're going to want color TV, their wives are going to want electrified kitchens, their kids are going to want hot rods. Even Russian girls are getting hip; I've seen photos of them at Russian beach resorts, and it looks just like the Riviera. They're thinning down, and I see they're going the bikini route. When GUM department store in Moscow starts selling bikinis, we've got a fighting chance, because that means the girls are interested in being

girls and the boys are going to stop thinking about communes and begin thinking communally. I've always had a theory that whenever guys and gals start swinging, they begin to lose interest in conquering the world. They just want a comfortable pad and stereo and wheels, and their thoughts turn to the good things of life—not to war. They loosen up, they live and they're more apt to *let* live. Dig?

**PLAYBOY:** We dig.

**SINATRA:** You know, I'd love to visit Russia and, sometime later, China too. I figure the more I know about them and the more they know about me, the better chance we have of living in the same world in peace. I don't intend to go there with a mission, to sell the American way of life; I'm not equipped to get into that kind of discussion about government. But I'd love to go and show them American music. I'd take Count Basie and Ella Fitzgerald with me and we'd do what we do best. We'd wait up a storm with real American jazz so that their kids could see what kind of music our kids go for, because I'm sure that kids are the same all over the world. I'm betting that they'd dig us. And that's *got* to create some kind of goodwill, and man, a little goodwill is something we could use right now. All it takes is goodwill and a smile to breach that language barrier. When the Moiseyev dancers were in Los Angeles,

Eddie and Liz Fisher gave a party for them, and although I couldn't speak a word of Russian, I got along fine. I just said, "Hello, baby" to the dancers and they shouted, "Allo, babee" back at me. We had a ball.

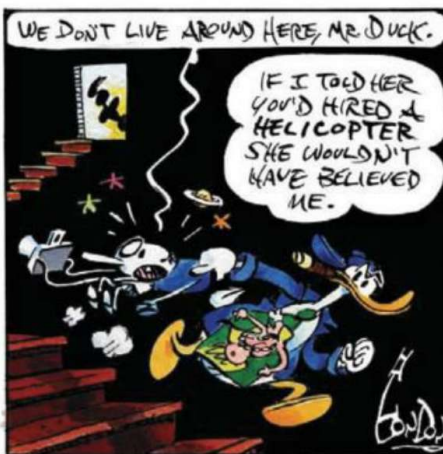
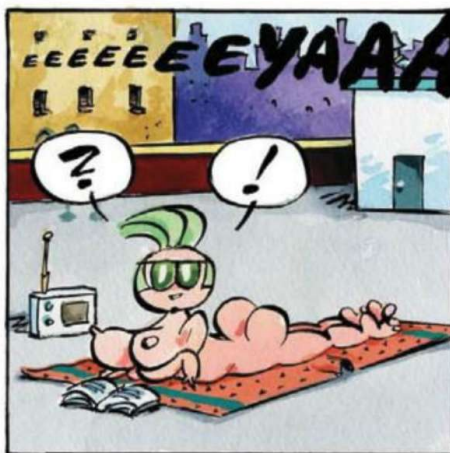
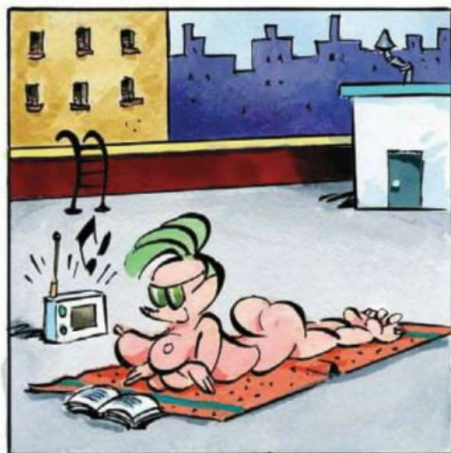
**PLAYBOY:** Frank, you've expressed some negative views on human nature in the course of this conversation. Yet one gets the impression that—despite the bigotry, hypocrisy, stupidity, cruelty and fear you've talked about—you feel there are still some grounds for hope about the destiny of Homo sapiens. Is that right?

**SINATRA:** Absolutely. I'm never cynical, never without optimism about the future. The history of mankind proves that at some point the people have their innings, and I think we're about to come up to bat now. I think we can make it if we live and let live. And love one another—I mean *really* love. If you don't know the guy on the other side of the world, love him anyway because he's just like you. He has the same dreams, the same hopes and fears. It's one world, pal. We're all neighbors. But didn't somebody once go up onto a mountain long ago and say the same thing to the world?

*Excerpted from the February 1963 issue.*



# Dirty Duck<sup>®</sup> by Bobby London





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## BONE THIEVES

(continued from page 72)

in the Gobi Desert have known of the treasure buried in their midst, embodying the hope of a better life. A single discovery of the right sort of dinosaur bones can turn a man's fortunes forever.

The presence of this prehistoric material came to light in the 1920s, thanks to an American scientist named Roy Chapman Andrews. Some claim Andrews was the inspiration for Indiana Jones. A dashing adventurer and an early director of the American Museum of Natural History, Andrews was instrumental in the development of paleontology. When he first ventured to Mongolia, Central Asia was nearly as difficult to reach as the North Pole. In 1922 he came upon a large U-shaped cliff formation in the Gobi Desert. This area would become one of paleontology's most significant sites.

"Everyone was enthusiastic over the beauty of the great flat-topped mesa on the border of the badlands basin," Andrews later wrote. "The spot was almost paved with bones and all represented animals which were unknown to any of us.... The great basin with its beautiful sculptured ramparts would prove the most important locality in the world from a paleontological standpoint. We named the spot the Flaming Cliffs."

During five expeditions to the Gobi Desert, Andrews and his team discovered several new species of dinosaur, including protoceratops, oviraptor and velociraptor. At the Flaming Cliffs he became the first to discover a dinosaur egg.

Communism enveloped Mongolia in 1924, shutting off the Gobi to outsiders. It wasn't until the early 1990s, after the country shifted to democracy, that Western paleontologists returned. Drawn by the Gobi's rich bed of dinosaur fossils, these scientists hired locals as drivers, porters, diggers and spotters.

While the scientists encountered one fossil and then another, their Mongolian helpers watched, learning several valuable lessons: how to locate and recognize dinosaur fossils, how to extract them from the ground and, most important, how to craft friendships with foreigners. Outsiders with deep pockets, not scientists but poachers, were hanging around the edges. The international trade in Mongolian fossils, a black market, became one of paleontology's open secrets.

I had come thousands of miles to explore this black market myself.

"Come downstairs," Chinzo said over the phone. It was past midnight. I left the apartment and walked outside. The only movement was the exhaust that billowed out of the Toyota SUV parked at the end of the lane. Behind the right-hand steering wheel an old man swung his head around to assess me as I slid into the backseat. He grimaced. The deep inlays of his face folded in on one another like a bellows.

This was the man we had phoned earlier. His poker game was over.

Chinzo sat next to me as the car passed silently through Ulaanbaatar's sleeping hours. We drove along potholed roads, the smoke of coal fires curling beneath the streetlamps that guided us to the edge of town.

Already the day had been eventful. We met with one man behind a row of shops on Peace Avenue. Sitting in the back of Chinzo's Land Cruiser, he pulled a tampon box out of his jacket. Reaching in, he produced an oblong object about eight inches long, reddish brown, lined and pebbled. He handed it to me. It was the egg of a theropod, a grouping of carnivorous dinosaurs. The egg weighed close to 10 pounds. I rolled it over in my palms. I knew from my research that it was at least 65 million years old, and here it was, still intact. "We're looking for something bigger," Chinzo told the man.

Now we were in the Toyota, on the hunt for something bigger indeed. The driver approached a metal gate and honked the horn. A man with an alcohol-blurred face appeared through a door in the gate, his eyes squinting into our headlights. We passed through the opened gate and drove into a yard of industrial castoffs: a Kamaz truck on blocks, snow-dusted piles of metal scrap, a factory's rusted furnace.

We got out of the car. The air was bitterly cold, to the point of distraction. The old man led us to a shipping container in a corner of the enclosure. He gripped a flashlight between his teeth, fumbling with the lock. Our footsteps echoed through the container's metal interior, which was filled with boxes labeled in *hanzi* and Cyrillic.

Quickly the old man snatched a crowbar. I realized the drunken man who had opened the gate now stood between us and the exit of the shipping container. The old man brandished the crowbar. I looked at Chinzo, but he betrayed nothing.

The old man turned away from us. He placed the crowbar's pronged end into the lid of a crate. The box measured five feet long, three feet tall and two feet wide. He leveraged the crowbar, popping the lid off the crate.

In the flicker of his flashlight I saw that the crate was filled with sand. The old man began scraping away at the sand, spilling it onto the floor. Little by little a shape began to reveal itself. There was something there.

The old man gripped the object with two hands, straining with the effort required to raise it from the box. As the object caught the illumination from the flashlight, I saw what it was—a dinosaur skull.

The mandible was missing, as were the teeth, but the eye sockets and nasal cavities were evident. The skull was four feet long and two feet wide. The old man struggled to hold it. He propped the skull on a bucket. As he did so, he chipped off a slice of bone, which clattered to the floor.

I looked over the specimen. I took a few measurements. "Twenty-five million tugriks," the old man said, which was about \$18,000. I balked. The old man's



voice echoed in the shipping container. So we wanted something bigger? He said he had a contact in the Gobi for us, near the Flaming Cliffs.

Eric Prokopi is the reason the dinosaur-fossil black market in Mongolia had gone underground. A world away from Ulaanbaatar and the Gobi, two days after Christmas in 2012, Prokopi entered Magistrate Court 5A in the U.S. District Courthouse on Pearl Street in lower Manhattan. I watched him walk in that day. He had the deep tan of someone who lives in a tropical climate. He wore a black suit with a white shirt but no tie, as though the court didn't deserve his spending any extra time in front of the mirror. It had inconvenienced him enough already. On October 17 police had arrested Prokopi at his home in Gainesville, Florida. He now faced 17 years in prison.

Prokopi described himself as a "commercial paleontologist." He was not a scientist, and he had completed no formal training in the excavation and study of dinosaurs. Yet like others in what is occasionally called the dragon-bone trade, Prokopi traveled across the country and around the world, scouting for fossils that he could ship to his Florida home. There he would clean them, mount them on metal frames of his own construction and sell them on the growing fossil market, where the most attractive specimens could fetch millions of dollars.

That market is most vivid in Tucson, Arizona, 70 miles from the Mexican border, at the Tucson Gem and Mineral Show. The exhibition has been held every year since 1954. It assembles a comprehensive collection of diamonds, rocks and fossils, along with every manner of prospector, scavenger, scientist, smuggler and bone hunter ever to peek under a rock. Prokopi was a regular at the Tucson show. There he became acquainted with Mongolian fossils, mingling with those international bone hunters who openly displayed their Gobi prizes for scientists, dealers and the scouts who worked for auction houses. Soon Prokopi began to appear in Tucson with Mongolian bones of his own.

Early last year Prokopi consigned a largely intact *Tyrannosaurus bataar* skeleton to Heritage Auctions, a Dallas company that

claimed to be the largest collectibles auctioneer in the world. *Tyrannosaurus bataar*, also known as the tarbosaurus, thrived in the final epoch of the dinosaurs, some 70 million years ago, at the end of the Cretaceous period. Scientists consider the tarbosaurus the Asian cousin of *Tyrannosaurus rex*, nearly identical but for slight variations. Prokopi had connected with Heritage through David Herskowitz, a contact from the Tucson shows who was head of the auction house's natural history division.

The Gobi Desert is the only place *Tyrannosaurus bataar* has ever been found. Head to tail, an adult measured up to 40 feet. It had as many as 64 teeth, some more than three inches long. It was the Gobi's prime predator. A juvenile, Prokopi's tarbosaurus

community. Mark Norell, chairman of paleontology at the American Museum of Natural History, crafted an open letter denouncing the auction and e-mailed it to a lengthy list of influential contacts in science and the media.

In Ulaanbaatar, political leaders were taking steps of even greater import. An engaging academic with a Stanford degree, Oyungerel Tsedevdamba served as an advisor to the Mongolian president, Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj. When she learned of the proposed auction, Tsedevdamba phoned Elbegdorj. "Why are you calling me about dinosaurs?" the president asked. Tsedevdamba said it was a matter of Mongolian sovereignty. "Fossils are protected in the Mongolian constitution,"

she argued. "It's a piece of land, a piece of our territory. It belongs to us."

Parliamentary elections were being held in 2012 in Mongolia, and Prokopi's dinosaur could spark a debate on national identity, with Elbegdorj and his party at its center. Elbegdorj believed the time was right to take a symbolic, international stand.

The tarbosaurus sold at auction on May 20 in Manhattan for \$1.05 million, to a New York real estate developer named Coleman Burke. But Burke never received it. Agents from the Department of Homeland Security impounded the skeleton, while American and Mongolian investigators began unraveling the path the tarbosaurus had taken from the Gobi to Gainesville.

Mongolian border-control documents

confirmed that Prokopi had traveled to Mongolia in 2008, 2009 and 2011. The case's lead investigator in Mongolia, Narankhuu T., told me Prokopi's local partners had broken down the dinosaur into several boxes and trucked it to Ulaanbaatar, labeling the contents as minerals or salt. From there they likely shipped the boxes on commercial flights to Japan. A source in the U.S. Attorney's Office told me Prokopi had partnered with British and Japanese dealers. They sent the tarbosaurus from Japan to England and then to the U.S., obfuscating its origin in a web of falsified shipping documents that took months to untangle.

Prokopi spent almost two years at his Gainesville home, cleaning and assembling

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♥ **Dirk (FL)** "I taught college for 27 years. After I retired I took a job teaching high school. Just after I began using the 10X teaching at a high school--which had 36 women--I was called into the principal's office. She said, 'You are affecting the women teachers. There is something about you that affects them. Can you tone it down?' It also did not hurt the attention my wife gave me. She has become ravenous and I am enjoying it enormously."

♥ **Bob (IA)** "I dated a gal for 2 months and she never came on to me like that before. I need another vial of 10X. I was only in the house half an hour and she was inside my sweatshirt! We partied from 10 pm to 10 am. I never got to work that day. Thank you very much. It's great!"

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measured eight feet tall, yet it was big enough to cause a stir. Any paleontologist could have told Heritage where Prokopi's bones had come from; the company's idle research into provenance revealed the corner cutting that has dogged the auction business for years.

"Prokopi had been a dealer for more than a decade, and he had a good reputation," Greg Rohan, Heritage Auction's president, told me. "He warranted in writing that he had clear title. He lied to us colossally, and now he's paying for it."

Prokopi's tarbosaurus was set for auction in May 2012. Paleontologists have discovered only about 20 intact specimens of tarbosaurus, so its appearance in such a public sale woke the scientific



the tarbosaurus bones into a standing skeleton. Five months after the Heritage auction, federal agents arrived at his home.

They arrested Prokopi on charges of conspiring to illegally import fossils, making false statements to customs officials and transporting illegal goods. At the time of his arrest, the U.S. Attorney's Office characterized Prokopi as a "one-man black market in prehistoric fossils." Typically, the government had either misunderstood the subject matter or overstated its case. The truth was the market in illegal Mongolian fossils involved scores of individuals like Prokopi, enabled by online sales outlets, lax enforcement and the biggest auction houses in the world.

But it was Prokopi alone who was in jeopardy as the doors to Magistrate Court 5A opened. Lumbering toward the defen-

dant's table, he looked like he could use a drink. He looked like a fall guy.

I jumped on a quick flight from Ulaanbaatar to Dalanzadgad, the biggest settlement in the Gobi Desert. About 20,000 people live here, caked in the dust of mine shafts and sandstorms.

Hanging around the café at the Khan Uul Hotel, I eyed three men at the next table. Their boots were covered in grit, their table strewn with empty beer bottles. It was possible they had spent the day digging for bones, and I listened in on their conversation. Two were Australians, the other from England. The Englishman spoke up. "There are three things that are important in my life," he said. He was drunk. His accent was heavy. "English foo-bawl. The

law-a-ry. And smow-kin." Too loud to be poachers, I thought. They must be miners.

My phone rang. It was Chinzo. I laid a few tugriks on the table. On the way to the door, I heard one of the Aussies say, "What about masturbating?"

Outside, the town of Dalanzadgad stank of exhaust. A thousand pipes, residential and commercial, reached into the sky, coughing clouds of black coal powder. Desert threatened on all sides of the settlement. Motorcycles were scattered around town, goatskin pulled over the handlebars to protect hands during winter riding. Hundreds of trucks carried thousands of tons of coal from here to China every day. Police sources had told me that dinosaur bones were sometimes buried among the mass of black mineral. But where did the bones come from? And who could take us to find them?

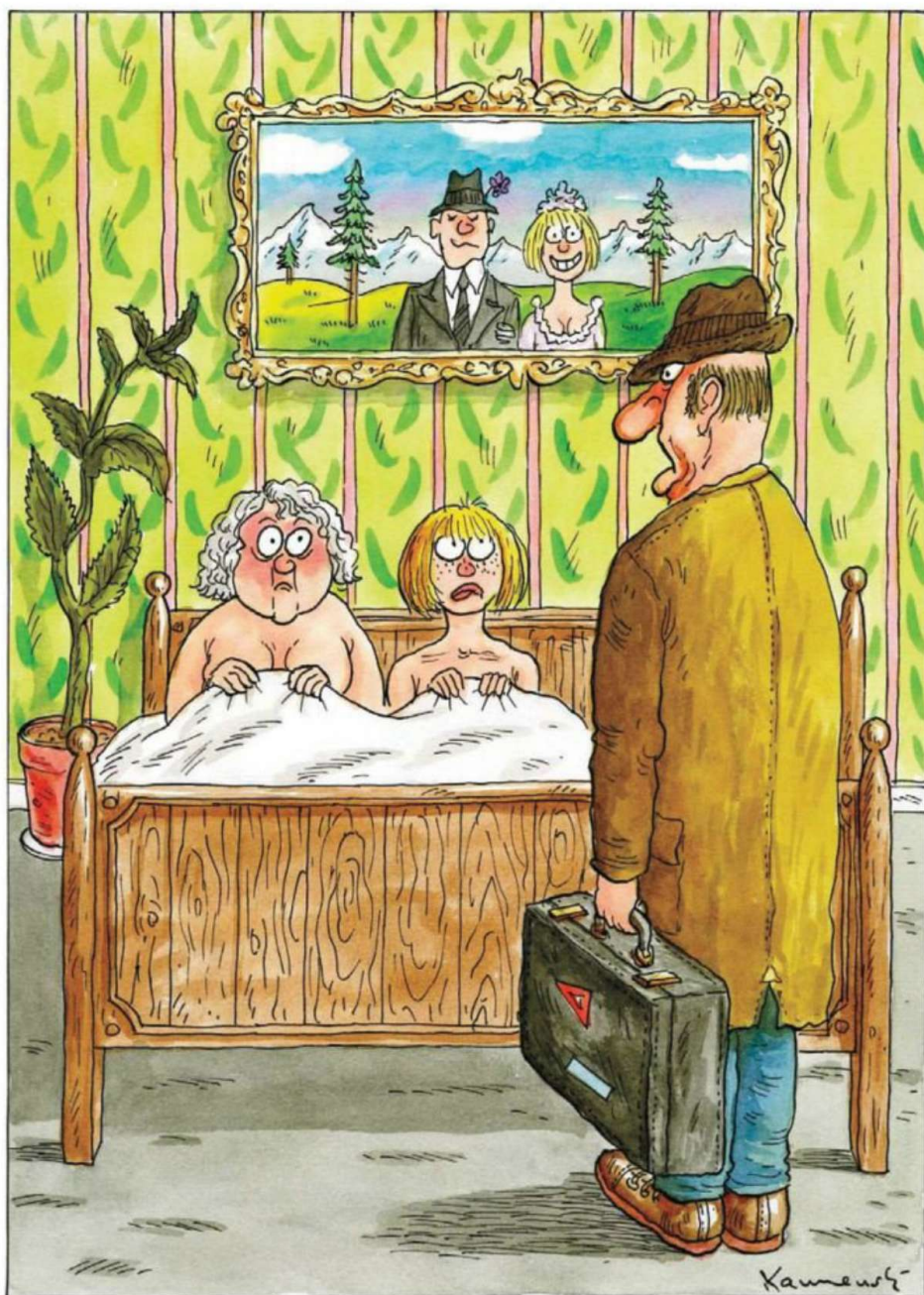
Chinzo had arranged a ride out of the settlement and into the desert. The car was a UAZ 2206, a Russian approximation of the VW Microbus. The driver, Bold, was a chubby local guy in his 20s. An old woman joined us for the ride, along with a young married couple, the wife clutching a baby. Bold had difficulty starting the engine, but eventually we got moving. Through the back window, Dalanzadgad disappeared in the dust cloud kicked up by our tires.

Bold told us he had grown up in the Gobi, in a family of nomadic herders. "I see these guys looking for bones all the time," he said. "There are local guys like me. But we don't know how to get a really big dinosaur out of the ground." He mentioned a local family. He said this family would phone people in Ulaanbaatar, former paleontologists or museum workers, people who possessed the expertise that would enable them to excavate a substantial fossil. "This family is very dangerous," Bold said. "They're organized crime. They have their hands in everything."

There were no roads across the Gobi. There was nothing around us, only the open space of desert in winter. We passed between two cow skulls on the sand, the heads marking the way. The young mother unleashed her right breast and her baby began sucking from it. We drove for three hours.

At last we reached a *ger*, a traditional Mongolian tent, circular and made of felt. We entered through a small door. The family that lived here would put us up for the night. We sat down on the floor, near the camel-racing trophies on the dresser. It was getting late, time for bed. In the flickering candlelight the man of the house brought out a bedroll. He unrolled the fabric. Inside were several thick, heavy dinosaur fossils, the bones of a tall vertebrate.

We were looking for something bigger, Chinzo told the man. "A carnivore." The man shook his head. He couldn't help us. I lay down beneath a camel blanket and blew out the candle, hoping for better luck tomorrow.



"Mother!"

In the southeastern turret of the American Museum of Natural History, on New York's Upper West Side, Mark Norell began his workday. The chairman of paleontology at the museum and one of the most important figures in the field, Norell was



instrumental in reopening Mongolia for study in 1990. In the Gobi he found the first theropod embryo and has contributed to the discovery of feathered dinosaurs. Norell gives the impression that he is constantly on the move, whether to lecture in Shanghai or to drain a pint at the dive around the corner. Dignified and lettered, he resides at the far end of the dinosaur-hunter scale from Eric Prokopi, and he regards the Gobi as a special dominion.

"We used to find skulls sticking out of the ground there," he told me in his office, not long before I departed for the Gobi. "Not anymore. Nearly every fragment has been picked up off the ground. It's been hammered by looters the past six, seven years. I've seen holes crudely dug into mountains. I've seen sites that have been dynamited. We've found detonators and wires on the ground."

Skeptical, I asked Norell why any of this mattered—why paleontologists should have exclusive rights to bones that belong to Earth's prehistory. This kind of poaching didn't harm anyone. It didn't even harm the animals; they were long dead. What did we lose when a poacher ripped a fossil from the ground?

Norell catalogued the many pieces of data that a paleontologist collects at a site, including soil samples, geological info, geochemical analyses, pollen data. "These rogues destroy the site and its context," he said. "They're not interested in scientific value. They're interested only in aesthetic value." Lost is information about the evolutionary tract of a fossil, an understanding of pathology and disease, a snapshot of the life of an animal. You are left with a curiosity, a wall hanging, an amulet.

Norell had been instrumental in bringing Prokopi's activities to light. I was surprised, then, when he pulled out several drawers in his office and told me the origin of the fossils lying there. "These are Mongolian," he said. "Some of them have been here since Roy Chapman Andrews."

The line between paleontology and poaching is visible only to the expert. To the rest of us it all looks like the same bunch of bones. According to Norell, poaching is so widely accepted and policing so lax that even serious collectors are often unaware of what they're buying. "A guy came in and wanted to donate his collection," he said. "He had spent hundreds of thousands on it. I looked at it and told him, 'It's illegal. I can't even have it on the premises.' He said, 'But I bought it at Tucson.'"

Norell walked me down the back hallways of the museum, a musty warren of interlocking corridors. We passed into his lab, the inner workings of the world's largest collection of dinosaur fossils. Several assistants hovered over a delicate collection of fossils encased in plaster. It looked like a jumble of bones extracted from a clothes drier. "This was an entire group taken out by a collapsing sand dune," Norell said. "I've seen fossils from this find in Tucson."

He led me through a doorway and into the public section of the museum. We walked behind a man leading two small children into the Hall of Saurischian Dinosaurs.

The kids stopped and gaped, as did I, at the *Tyrannosaurus rex* in the middle of the room, a massive beast. Norell pointed out a nest of oviraptor eggs in a nearby display case. It is one of the first dinosaur nests ever discovered, found by Andrews in the Gobi in 1923.

"Many of these are Mongolian," Norell said, gesturing around the room at various specimens. "Roy Chapman Andrews collected these back in the 1920s. They formed the basis of the museum's collection." I thought of the Flaming Cliffs and what the deposit must have looked like before poachers picked it clean.

It was daylight when Bold picked us up at the ger. A friend of his, Jamyan, was sitting in the car. Fifteen minutes into our drive, the car's engine stalled. We rolled to a stop. Bold said we were close enough to walk the rest of the way.

We walked for a while across the Gobi's red-brown sands, Bold and Jamyan leading the way. It was a clear, sunny, cold day. We stopped in front of a pile of stones. Jamyan carefully moved each rock. I noticed a white object protruding from the surface. It was a skull, cracked and somewhat crumpled. The body, if there was one, lay buried beneath the surface.

Bold knelt by the skull. He picked up what looked like a bone fragment and placed it on his tongue. Jamyan explained that this was a test. If the bone stuck to your tongue, that meant it was a dinosaur fossil. If the bone did not stick to your tongue, that meant it was the bone of an animal that still roamed the land. The fragment stuck to Bold's tongue.

Using small twigs, the two men began to dig around the skull, blowing away the sand as they progressed. "I heard you can sell one for 20 million tugriks," Bold said. That was about \$14,000. "I want to buy a car." The two worked at the skull, removing dirt with the twigs and their fingernails. Dust flew into my eye, and I stepped aside to blink it away. When my vision cleared, I noticed we were enclosed in a U-shaped collection of cliffs. We stood in the undulating valley below them. I had been so engrossed with the fossil in the ground I hadn't realized where we were. It dawned on me only then that we were standing at the Flaming Cliffs.

I looked back at the fossil. It was evident that Bold and Jamyan didn't possess the tools or the knowledge to remove it from the earth. Without assistance they would end up only destroying the fossil. Bold knew it too. Frustrated, he gave up. He rolled over onto his back.

He yelled up at the sky, "I want a new car!"

I took in my surroundings, where Andrews had been, where Norell had been and where Prokopi had also been. I realized my focus had been narrow. Now I could see the Flaming Cliffs, what they must have been for Andrews and for *Tyrannosaurus bataar*. I realized then that my search was over. It had led me to this place, where it was the time of dinosaurs in the time of man, the Flaming Cliffs witness to it all.



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# THE BADASS

(continued from page 77)

this encouragement, and they roar happily as Church and his five-piece band play “Drink in My Hand,” a raucous celebration of alcohol’s relaxing properties.

Church’s third album, *Chief*, was his breakthrough. It included two songs that hit number one on the country charts (“Drink in My Hand” and “Springsteen”), sold more than a million copies and was named 2012’s best album by the Country Music Association, an award voted on by the same Nashville industry that not long ago thought he was an asshole. Church, now 36, deserved the award: *Chief* wasn’t just the best country album of the year; it was the best rock album too.

How is that possible? Since the 1980s country has been, well, “expanded” if you like the change—“ruined” if you don’t—by influences outside its own traditions. Garth Brooks, who has sold more albums than anyone else in the past 20 years, was an avowed fan of James Taylor, Dan Fogelberg and Billy Joel, not to mention Kiss, Boston and Styx. A decade earlier, Waylon Jennings sang “Are You Sure Hank Done It This Way,” in which he wonders why country should stay unchanged. That battle has long been lost.

Country has evolved because the South has evolved. The family henhouse has been supplanted by Walmart, whose ubiquitous stores add to the homogenization of the region. Family-owned general stores have been replaced by Cracker Barrel, which has fake-rural and faux-retro restaurants at highway exits in 42 states, grossing \$2.6 billion last year by simulating a rustic down-home experience.

Similarly, the country music industry in Nashville creates a packaged and polished product out of an authentic culture that once existed only on porches and at barn dances. This is wonderful, but it’s also problematic. Fans constantly (sometimes viciously) argue about who is or isn’t *real* country. The debate is idiotic, because country now has many different traditions, some represented by singers who, in their day, were viewed as untraditional (Patsy Cline, Waylon Jennings, Willie Nelson, Johnny Cash).

The fight about whether a singer is or isn’t real country illustrates what writer Tracy Thompson describes as “the Southern genius for living in an imagined past.” In her book *The New Mind of the South*, Thompson—a Georgia native and Pulitzer Prize finalist—notes that historians have been “lamenting the death of Southern identity for 50 or 60 years now.” Symbols that once defined the region—tar-paper shacks, muscadine vines—have vanished. And the once predominantly Republican states of Virginia and North Carolina voted for Barack Obama in 2008, though voters there were “just doing what the South has always done,” Thompson writes, “which is to morph into something else.” (Virginia continued to morph, voting for Obama again in 2012.) In other words, the South’s many traditions include a tradition of change. Confusing and contradictory, right?

Authenticity is a phantom, even in country, seemingly the most genuine of genres.

George D. Hay, the announcer and guiding force of country’s venerable Grand Ole Opry radio show, was a PR genius who created a hillbilly image for the music, even when it was fraudulent. He rechristened Dr. Bate’s Augmented String Orchestra as the Possum Hunters, instructed musicians to wear overalls rather than the tailored business suits they usually wore and posed them in cornfields and pigpens for promotional photos—even though they weren’t farmers. (Humphrey Bate, leader of the Possum Hunters, was a physician.) None of this has anything to do with the quality of the music, any more than Dolly Parton’s “Jolene” is less of a great song because the singer has breast implants and wears a wig.

As late as the mid-1950s, drums were officially banned from performances at the Grand Ole Opry because they weren’t traditional country instruments. But lately country has entered its heavy metal phase. Here’s small-town Georgia boy Luke Bryan onstage, wearing a Mötley Crüe T-shirt, covering Metallica and (as Church did years ago) “Crazy Train.” There’s Jason Aldean, recently called “a country singer with a hair metal heart” by a *Houston Chronicle* writer, singing Guns N’ Roses songs in concert.

No one in Nashville leans as close to rock as he does, Church declares. “Not even close. A lot of people are trying to now, because it’s working for us. They do a Guns N’ Roses or an AC/DC song because they want to look like they love rock and roll.”

There are two guitar players in the Eric Church Band. One was in the Black Crowes for four years. The other, who’s husky and tattooed, came from a Tennessee thrash-metal band called Bush Hog. If a crowd seems a little bored, Church slaps them with a cover of Pantera’s “Walk.” His lyrics mention Jennings, Hank Williams Sr., Johnny Cash and Merle Haggard while using gobs of distortion, drum loops and other digital tricks.

“I don’t believe country singers should make the same fucking music over and over. Some people hate me. We’ve been polarizing, and that’s okay,” Church says. (“We” is the pronoun country singers use instead of “I.” It’s a way to acknowledge that others have helped you become successful and to declare a humility that might or might not actually be there.)

“I love the heavy backbeat in his music, and he’s got a lot of attitude,” says Seger. “His records sound hairy and strong. And God, his band is really good. It’s heavy country-rock, as close to rock and roll as you can get.”

Church’s new live album, *Caught in the Act*, is ornery and rough, and it smells like beer.

“We’re further into rock and roll than anyone else, and that’s why a lot of traditionalists have a major problem with me,” he says. “I don’t have a fiddle player or steel guitar or the things purists think country is supposed to sound like. I have a banjo—and we distort it through two distortion pedals. I didn’t grow up listening to Hank Williams Sr. or Ernest Tubb. Well, I did a little bit, but mostly I grew up with rock and roll, from the Band and Little Feat to Seger and Metallica.”

It’s not just that Church likes Metallica; Metallica likes Church too. When the metal band organized the first Orion music festival last year, his was the only country act out of 37 bands. (Church and Metallica are managed by the same company.) When they’re unhappy, Metallica fans express their feelings by throwing bottles, coins and other injurious objects. Before their Orion set, Church gave his band a curt instruction: “Put the hammer down.” Metallica singer James Hetfield introduced Church as “a rebel,” and when the show was over, he said Church “fit right in.”

“I’ll maybe break out that old rock and roll, / Drink a little drink, smoke a little smoke.”

At the close of the Orion set, Church’s band added the riff from Black Sabbath’s “Sweet Leaf,” an ode to marijuana, at the end of “Smoke a Little Smoke,” his own pro-pot song that had pretty much salvaged his career.

Church’s first album, *Sinners Like Me*, was not a big success. One of the singles, “Two Pink Lines,” was about a pregnancy scare. In a typical country song, pregnancy would be celebrated as a blessing. But in “Two Pink Lines” (based partially on an experience he had at the age of 19), Church and his girlfriend express delight when her pregnancy test is negative.

“Radio didn’t like the song,” he says.

For his second album, Church wrote a song he knew was dumb. It’s in the same mold as other predictable rural-pride songs that work well on radio because they celebrate the consumer goods that are iconic in Southern life—call it a Country Checklist song. In this subpar effort, Church lays it on heavy: He mentions beer, barbecue, Jack Daniel’s, college football, fishing, trucks, chewing tobacco, NASCAR and cowboy boots. The only thing missing is something about hunting or tractors.

Church wrote it “almost out of anger or spite,” says his manager, John Peets. Church had seen similar songs amass a lot of airplay, according to Peets, “and he said, ‘If this is the shit that works, let’s just write one.’”

“That was my Hail Mary,” Church says. “And the sad truth is, it works.” Although “Love Your Love the Most” became Church’s first top 10 single, it didn’t boost his career, because it was so generic. Radio play was up, but record and ticket sales were flat. He felt he was his record label’s redheaded stepchild because it was focused on more popular acts, including Dierks Bentley, a friendly and gregarious singer who could have a fine career in politics.

Church sensed his record company was on the verge of dropping him. His first seven singles hadn’t done much. If he was going to fail, he wanted to go down with a song he liked: “Smoke a Little Smoke.”

“Everyone said, ‘You’re crazy. It’s an openly pro-pot song. Radio’s not gonna play it,’” says Church. There have been plenty of weed anthems in country—by artists including Waylon Jennings, Hank Williams Jr., Randy Houser and Toby Keith—but they are rarely released as



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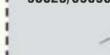
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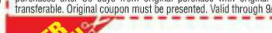
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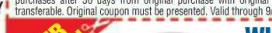
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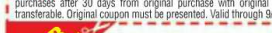
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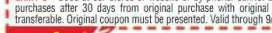
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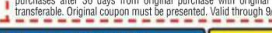
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singles, and they certainly aren't expected to save a singer's career.

Church would not be dissuaded. "I remember the label saying to me, 'Okay, it's your funeral,'" he says. The label sent "Smoke a Little Smoke" to radio. It didn't chart as high as "Love Your Love the Most," but it had a much bigger effect.

"It immediately moved records," says Church. He had finally distinguished himself from the other male singers in Nashville: He was the guy with the pro-pot song.

*"I've thrown a punch or two and gave a few black eyes, / But Jack Daniel's kicked my ass again last night."*

"There are some drunk motherfuckers out there," says Marshall Alexander, Church's cheerful production manager.

Church is on his tour bus, wearing sweatpants, a cigar in his mouth. His wife, Katherine Blasingame Church, and son, Boone, who was born in late 2011, are back home. They regularly tour with him, and Church says Boone keeps rock-star hours: "We've trained my son to sleep until noon and go to bed at midnight, after my show."

He is still an hour away from his set preparations, which involve the same rituals every night, including a substantial plastic cup of Jack Daniel's and Coke. Church proved his devotion to JD by writing "Jack Daniels," an ambivalent love song, and Jack Daniel's gave him a barrel of 94-proof Tennessee whiskey. Every barrel produces about 250 bottles. Church is on his sixth barrel.

The *Chief* emblem, a shadowy image of Church in sunglasses, looks like a police sketch of a mugger who targets old women, or a guy you'd see loitering at one A.M. in a convenience store parking lot. It's a caricature of Church, who's a sturdy six-foot-three with a confident oval face, a quick wit and stylishly messy hair.

The sunglasses weren't originally a fashion statement: While playing four-hour sets in bars, Church's contact lenses dried up because of the smoke and stage lights. Someone suggested sunglasses to block the light. It worked and had the added benefit of making him look like a badass.

Without the glasses and hat, fans don't recognize him. This afternoon he put on a T-shirt and shorts and ran a few miles near the beachfront venue while the parking lot filled with partiers playing his music in their trucks. No one spotted him.

"When it's showtime, I better be the baddest motherfucker on the planet. And a lot of it, honestly, has to do with the hat and sunglasses. They put me in a different mode mentally. Take them off, and I'm not in that mode," Church says. "Now, if people say that's crazy, fair enough. I know that probably sounds like I need medication. Maybe I do."

He bought the Von Dutch cap about five years ago for \$6 at a truck stop in Mississippi and has worn it at every show since. He's tried to find an identical replacement cap, but it doesn't exist. He searched on the internet. He contacted Von Dutch, which has no record of manufacturing the cap. It's ei-

ther a cheap knockoff or a magical talisman right out of *The Twilight Zone: Mississippi*.

Church says he fought with his record company about his look. "You have good hair," they told him, "and good-looking eyes. The girls want to see them!" But since he was wearing the cap and sunglasses onstage, he wanted to wear them in photos and videos for consistency. So Church ignored the label.

He has even tried to duplicate the hat. "We had a designer come in—I can't believe I'm telling you this. We had a designer try to duplicate the hat," Church says.

"Do you wash the hat?" I ask.

"No, I do not. Katherine, my wife, has tried. No, no, no, I—I can't," Church stammers. "I mean, if something happened to the hat..." His voice trails off as he ponders the hypothetical tragedy.

"When you're not onstage, where's the hat?"

"I'm afraid to tell you." He laughs. "There's a place on the bus. We made a little cubby for the hat."

I have to ask: "Can I put the hat on?"

"No. Hell no. It's locked up. It's in bed. It's asleep."

During tonight's show, which I watch

---

*"Everyone said, 'You're crazy. It's an openly pro-pot song,'" Church says. But he had finally distinguished himself from the other male singers in Nashville.*

---

from the soundboard, the manager of one of the opening acts says he's seen an average of three or four fights per night. A large part of Church's success has come from filling a niche in the country market for a rugged, masculine singer. Among Garth Brooks's other achievements, he converted a lot of women to country music, and by 1997 radio programmers referred to country as a "female format."

Because women were listening to country radio, the stations played a lot of songs they thought women would like. Because the stations were playing songs they thought women would like, record companies signed singers they thought women would like. In the old days, a photo of the 10 top country singers would look like a convict lineup. These days it might look like an Abercrombie & Fitch catalog shot.

Among hardcore traditionalists, this change hasn't been popular. One highly trafficked country website routinely erupts in insults aimed at handsome singer Luke Bryan, who's apparently perceived as too feminine. The blogger who runs the site has referred to Bryan as a woman, claimed the singer has a vagina and alluded to Bryan as gay.

"When we started," Church explains,

"male country fans were being ignored. I hunt. I fish. I drink beer and watch football. I love NASCAR. I'm a guy's guy."

His concerts are loud and heavy on pyro and go well with alcohol. Kip Moore, one of Church's opening acts, says, "I drank a whole lot more than usual during that tour. Watching Eric made me want to drink. You're not gonna see a lot of alcohol at a Carrie Underwood concert. But an Eric Church show creates rowdiness. I don't think there's a deep science to that: Testosterone and alcohol don't mix, and that causes fights."

In the middle of his second encore, Church sings "These Boots" (another song that mentions weed), and fans hold up their boots in celebration. One fan near the stage gets a little carried away, tosses a boot onstage, then climbs up to retrieve it. "We've got a climber," a crew member shouts into a walkie-talkie. The one-booted climber isn't arrested, but he is tossed out of the arena.

While watching Church's set that night, Moore saw a couple screwing in the audience. "A guy pulled a girl's skirt up, and the dirty deed was going on," Moore reports. "That was a first for me."

It's not a first for Church. He recounts a show last year in Battle Creek, Michigan where "half the crowd was fighting. And I saw guys who had girls bent over the rail, screwing." His lighting designer—a guy who'd toured with nearly every major metal band, including Van Halen, Metallica and Guns N' Roses—was shocked. "He said to me, 'You should call this the Fucking and Fighting Tour.'"

Compared with Battle Creek's, tonight's audience doesn't impress Church much. "There wasn't mass bedlam, which is what I usually see." Tomorrow will be wilder, he predicts.

*"These boots have counted off many a band, / Playing one-night roadhouse stands for tips in empty rooms."*

When he wasn't auditioning for the school play by singing a Garth Brooks song, Church played basketball at South Caldwell High School in North Carolina, and he's studied the state's greatest hoops player, Michael Jordan. In particular he likes Jordan's 2009 Hall of Fame induction speech, a smirking 20-minute tirade in which Jordan taunted everyone who ever doubted him, including his two brothers.

"I've never seen a person hold grudges like that. And I like that, because I carry a hell of a chip on my shoulder." Like Jordan, Church has memorized a list of those who stood in his way. "I carry that list onstage with me. If you don't have a chip on your shoulder, you're just happy to be there, and I fucking hate that."

And then he starts to tell the story of what happened when he moved to Nashville.

*"I come from a long line of sinners like me."*

"Sinners Like Me," about coming from a family of badasses, is the Church song

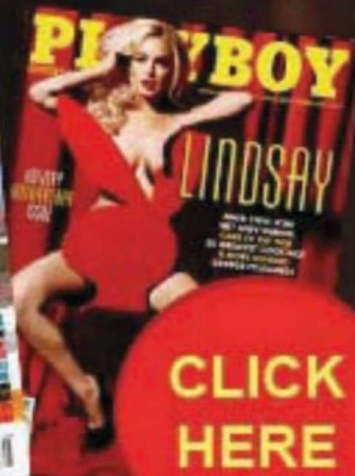
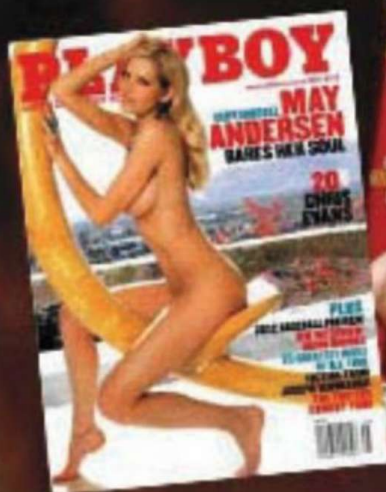




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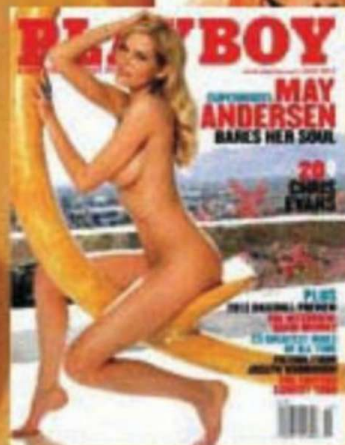
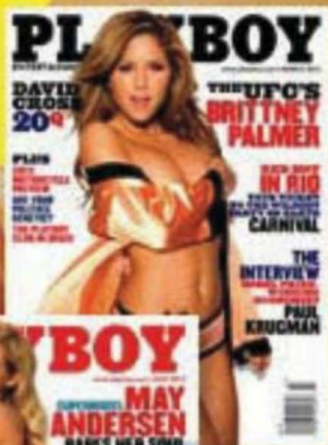


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that's closest to autobiography. One of the singer's grandfathers was chief of police in Granite Falls for 28 years. Everyone called him Chief, which is also Church's nickname. "But he was the kind of chief of police that partied. He was a good old boy."

Chief came from a family of moonshiners who brewed white lightning and sold it in nearby counties. On the other side of Church's family were the Stillwells, who "are notorious where I'm from," he says. "They were rough and did a lot of fighting—drunk fighting. The Stillwells were big, like six-foot-six and six-foot-seven. They would get drunk and beat up everybody in a bar."

But Chief had been in the Navy. "And he was the only guy who could whip the Stillwells' asses." So one side of his family regularly fought with, and arrested, the other side. "He'd beat up the Stillwells, get them in cuffs, put them in jail, and when they sobered up, he'd let them go. So yeah, I am from a long line of sinners."

After high school Church wanted to move to Nashville and become a professional songwriter. His dad, a disciplined businessman, promised to fund Church's first six months there if he graduated from college first. So Church went to Appalachian State and formed a cover band, the Mountain Boys, with his brother and a few friends. His first semester, his grade point average was 0.7. He was kicked out of school a few times, "but when I had to get an A in calculus, I got an A." It took him six and a half years to get a degree in marketing while playing clubs six nights a week. As he tells the story, it's unclear what this has to do with the chip on his shoulder.

Church spent a lot of late nights in brown-bag clubs, where patrons bring their own liquor. One night a girl was flirting with his brother during a song, which was fine until her husband noticed and charged the stage. Eric told his brother, who'd been a football lineman, "Go take care of it. Take him outside. Just be back by the next song." His brother came back, a little disheveled, but in time. Years of experiences like that, Church says, turned him from a good kid into a troublemaker.

"When you have to whip their ass during a song, that's fucking weird," he says.

He'd been the best songwriter in Granite

Falls, so after he moved to Nashville, he assumed he'd step into an open-mike night and quickly be discovered and showered with garlands. "I was so fucking naive," he says. "I got my head handed to me. It was rough." His best song at the time was "Sitting in the Middle of Love."

"Fucking terrible. Don't laugh," he says. "It was about a town called Love, Texas."

He worked at the Shop at Home network, taking phone orders on the night shift at a call center. One night when the network was peddling a \$49.99 set of knives, "a guy called me, drunker than hell, at three A.M.," Church remembers. "He says, 'I've just got to have those knives.' I said, 'Why don't you go to bed. If you wake up in the morning and still want them, I'll take your credit card.' They monitor the calls, so after he hung up, I got fired. That was the lowest point." It's still not clear what a set of knives has to do with the chip on Church's shoulder.

A good Nashville song combines structure, a series of hooks, narrative shifts and small twists on familiar phrases. It seems easy but requires a high level of cleverness, which is one reason Bon Jovi's country album was laughable. Church was learning the craft, but he was broke and discouraged. Even when people in Nashville liked his songs, they told him no one would record them. His engagement to a girl back in North Carolina had fallen apart. His hometown friends had careers and wives and fully formed adult lives. Church had an acoustic guitar and a rented apartment.

"It was like, Fuck this. I was ready to go home. There was one publishing company that had been courting me, and I'd had meeting after meeting with the second in command. I finally got to meet the guy in charge, and I played him four songs. During my last song, he stopped me. I thought, This is it; this is the moment I get a deal. And he said, 'I don't know where you're from, but I'd go back there. I don't ever see these songs working in Nashville.'"

Church walked to his car, listened to Kris Kristofferson's "To Beat the Devil"—about a broke and busted songwriter who's been spurned by Nashville—and decided it was time to go back to North Carolina. He thought about leaving that night, but his

brother had moved to Nashville, so the two went out and got drunk. The next morning, Church got a call from Sony Tree Publishing, which signed him to a songwriting contract and launched his career.

Church would have missed that call if he had listened to the expert who told him to go back home. And now Church comes to the point of his story: "I mean, you talk about the list? That guy is on the fucking list."

After he got a record deal, other obstacles blocked his way for five years, from indifferent crowds to club owners who refused to pay what they owed the band. (One night in Idaho, Church took revenge by spray-painting the venue's brand-new fence.)

"Most sane people would have said, 'This is stupid. This is no way to live.' We ain't bathed, we're eating Doritos, and we're in El Paso on a Wednesday night." He laughs. "The coveted Wednesday night show in El Paso. But it beats the shit out of Shop at Home, I'm telling you. And it puts gravel in your gut." Church says he was a well-behaved kid when he left North Carolina; people back home "are shocked what I turned into."

After they did about 50 shows together, Kip Moore realized Church was performing every night with a chip on his shoulder.

"He never talked to me about it, but you can tell it's there," Moore says. "You think about the years of frustration, the shit-hole gigs you played, the people who shot you down. All that stuff festers inside you until you're out to prove something. 'I told all you motherfuckers what I was gonna do. And now I'm gonna show you.' I don't blame him one bit."

*"You sing about Johnny Cash; / The Man in Black would've whipped your ass."*

It's a Saturday night in Birmingham, and 11,000 people are filing into the local arena. Fans are eight deep at the merchandise tables, choosing among different tour T-shirts. Some have human skulls, many feature pot leaves, and one says ERIC FUCKING CHURCH. The guy who designs Church's merchandise came up with the idea after seeing him in concert, thinking, That's the gist of the show—Eric fucking





Church. At first the idea was rejected as too profane. Now it's his top-selling shirt.

Wearing his sunglasses and Von Dutch cap, chewing gum and carrying a cup of JD and Coke, Church strides briskly into a small conference room and plays two acoustic songs for about 100 people who paid \$200 each for a VIP package. "You're so hot!" a woman yells. He encourages the fans to drink a lot and sing loud tonight. After six minutes, he's done, his drink back in his hand. He proceeds quickly to a room with a private bar and snacks, and schmoozes with local radio DJs. When that's over, he washes his hands thoroughly.

Last year Church created a stir by denouncing reality-TV singing competitions as fraudulent. This prompted angry tweets from Blake Shelton, a judge on *The Voice*, and his wife, Miranda Lambert, who was a contestant on *Nashville Star*. Church's argument has some validity—Lambert writes and sings great songs, but Shelton is better as comic relief than as an artist—but he'd broken a cardinal rule of Nashville: If you talk shit about people, do it behind their backs, not in public. One country radio personality accused him of trying to be "the Kanye West of country music." As a result, my meeting with Church was postponed several months until the uproar passed.

"Everybody flipped the fuck out because I said it the wrong way," Church says. "But I don't have anything to apologize for. I've been kind of a lone wolf, and I'm okay with not having a lot of friends in the community." His point was this: A TV show that offers a shortcut is a sham; artists have to tour, endure, learn and get tough and angry. And if he sees Shelton or Lambert at an awards show? Church shrugs. "I'll probably say hello. Or not."

Of the 11,000 people inside the Birmingham arena tonight, 10,500 seem drunk. The other 500 are security. Some people are fighting, some are celebrating, and it's hard to tell which is which. The last song in Church's set is "Springsteen," an unusual song (it doesn't really have a chorus) that ties music to memory and romanticizes the idea of a superstar songwriter and performer. In his shows, Church—a huge Bruce Springsteen fan—adds a bit of "Born to Run" at the song's end. Again, the admiration is mutual: Bruce Springsteen wrote a fan letter to Church on the back of an old set list. It ends, "I hope we cross paths along the way." Church keeps the letter in a locked drawer at home.

When the concert is over and the fans are back home and the roadies are loading out the stage, Church is inside his tour bus. It's two A.M., and he switches from whiskey to water so he doesn't ruin his voice. He was happy with tonight's crowd, but he's brooding about a show he did about four years earlier, when he was scuffling and headed for failure, at a Birmingham club called WorkPlay.

"It probably held 200 people, and I couldn't even fill it." He remembers the exact number of people who showed up: 126. Church doesn't forget these things.



## SMITH AND MEWES

(continued from page 90)

SMITH: [Laughs] You're still defensive about it. You're old, dude.

MEWES: Fuck that.

### Q6

PLAYBOY: Jason, there have been more death rumors about you than about Paul McCartney. Is the sixth time someone reports you're dead as scary as the first?

SMITH: The first was definitely the scariest, I think for both of us. *People* magazine called, I think it was during the Bennifer era, when I was shooting *Jersey Girl*, and asked "Do you have a statement on the death of your friend Jason Mewes?" I hadn't seen Jason in months at that point. He was MIA, and I was like, "Oh God!" I gave a statement and hung up, and seconds later the phone rang again and it was fucking Mewes. He was like, "People are saying that I'm dead. But I'm not dead!" MEWES: I had left California and was driving to Jersey to turn myself in.

SMITH: He had an outstanding warrant in New Jersey.

MEWES: It took me almost four months to drive across the country, because I kept stopping and partying. My sister called to tell me people were saying I was dead. My cousin passed away and I guess people thought it was me. They found him OD'd on the beach.

### Q7

PLAYBOY: In your podcast and live shows, you both share intimate details about your sex life. How do your wives feel about that?

SMITH: My wife learned early on that our life was fodder for conversation. She heard me tell a story about the first time we had sex—I cut my dick on her jeans zipper and it started bleeding and we had sex anyway—and she was like, "What the fuck is your problem? You told people we had unprotected sex and you had an open wound on your dick." I was like, "Yeah, but it's sweet. We fall in love, we wind up together. It's a good story." It was baptism by fire for her.

MEWES: I told a story the other night about how my lady was doing hot yoga at the gym and she queefed and it was so loud the person next to her heard it. Afterward she was like, "I didn't say you could share that story!" She was embarrassed and a little upset.

### Q8

PLAYBOY: You've worked with Ben Affleck and Matt Damon in *Dogma*, *Chasing Amy* and other films. Which one has the filthiest sense of humor?

MEWES: Ben.

SMITH: Absolutely Ben! I've kept e-mails from him from back in the day, just because they're so hysterical and filthy and wrong. Ben is one of the dirtiest people I've ever met, dirtier than Redd Foxx. He's probably cleaned up substantially now that he's married. I don't think his wife, Jennifer Garner, likes me very much. I worked with her on *Catch and Release*, and you could just tell she did not dig me or my sense of humor at all.

MEWES: Did you ever say anything to Ben? SMITH: I talked to him about it at one point. I was like, "I don't get it. I say the same fuckin' shit you do." And he goes, "You don't

think I say that kind of shit to my wife, do you? Kev, you have to know your audience."

### Q9

PLAYBOY: A regular part of your live show is "Let Us Fuck," when you act out strange sexual positions with audience members. Has life ever imitated art?

SMITH: Have we tried any of those positions at home? I haven't. None of them look comfortable. There's never been one where I'm like, "Honey, tonight we're trying the Ewok Cock Block and the Donald Duck Mouth Fuck."

MEWES: The Ewok Cock Block would be the one to try.

### Q10

PLAYBOY: Kevin, you once claimed that Jason had sex with Nicole Richie in a public bathroom. The tabloids reported it and caused a minor controversy. Jason, did that discourage you from having sex in public restrooms?

MEWES: I can't do stuff like that anymore. My lady is definitely not into it, even in my bathroom at home. I try, and she says, "I don't want to fuck in the bathroom."

SMITH: These are married women with beds. "Why should we do this?"

MEWES: Nothing against beds, but if I was still single, I'd be trying to do some bathroom situations. I can't remember the last time I had sex in public.

SMITH: What about on the beach in Australia?

MEWES: Oh yeah, right.

SMITH: The sad thing is, he did it more for the story. We were in Australia, and he said, "I'm going to try to have sex with my lady on the beach." I asked why, and he said, "Just so I can tell the story on a podcast."

### Q11

PLAYBOY: You both worked at a Quick Stop in New Jersey, which became the setting for *Clerks*. Were the high jinks as outrageous as in the movie? Did anybody ever have unwitting sex with a corpse?

SMITH: Never. Working at Quick Stop was like working at a fucking library. It was quiet. People would come in, buy their cigarettes and fucking go. The closest thing to reality in the movie was the motherfuckers who were always just leaning outside the building, smoking dope. Jay and Silent Bob came from those people.

### Q12

PLAYBOY: Jason, you apparently had a difficult time with the Jay character in *Clerks* even though it was based on you. What was the problem?

MEWES: It was just weird to say that dialogue. I'd look at the script and read a line like "Snooch to the nooch." Even though I'd said those things a thousand times before, it was weird to say it when it's lines in a script.

SMITH: He froze up like Cindy Brady on camera.

MEWES: When I was just being me, I didn't think about what I was going to say. It wasn't like I was thinking, Okay, I'm going to say this crazy thing and blow this guy's mind.

SMITH: The character is a cartoonish version of who he was, and he was pretty cartoonish to begin with. He looked at it and was like, "Why would" (concluded on page 153)





# PLAYM

# WS

TV HOST

NIKKI LEIGH

## SMALL-SCREEN SIREN

When Miss May 2012 Nikki Leigh interrupts your program, it's a welcome distraction. Nikki recently became the newest host for independent TV station KDOC (channel 56 in Los Angeles), where she will cover stories that focus on the L.A. area. "It's funny," she says. "I was more nervous the first time I taped with KDOC than when I posed nude." Nikki's segments will be about everything from Anaheim Ducks hockey games to the San Diego Zoo's new animals. "I grew up here, so there's a lot of culture I hope to share," she says. "I also want to give viewers new experiences when they explore SoCal with me." Who doesn't like new experiences?





# PLAYMATE NEWS

## PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST

Before becoming Miss October 2012, Pamela Horton wanted to be an art therapist. Now that we have anointed her the Gamer Next Door, she has her sights set on video game design. Here's a Bunny Pamela drew with concept artist Katie De Sousa. See more of Pamela's artwork for sale at [misspamelahorton.com](http://misspamelahorton.com).



### Social Shutterfly

@MissKassieLyn  
Miss May 2010  
Kassie Lyn Logsdon has some good clean fun steaming up her mirror.

## girlTALK

1. Miss April 2006 **Holley Ann Dorrough** enchants at Hollywood's AV Nightclub for the launch of Viva Glam Magazine's April issue.

2. Playmates **Valerie Mason, Rainy Day Jordan, Kelley Thompson** and **Leola Bell** hosted a St. Patrick's Day party at the MGM Grand's Tabú Ultra Lounge in Vegas.

3. Congratulations are in order for Miss December 1979 **Candace Collins**, who won a Telly Award for her show *Candid Candace Chicago*.



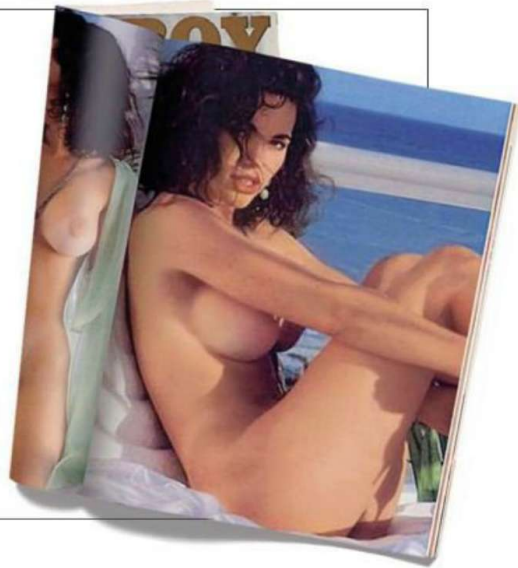
### Bunny for Hire

You can book a Playmate? Yes, you can live up your next party or photo shoot with the sexiest girls next door, including Miss October 2011 **Amanda Cerny**, who recently hosted a night at Aura in the Bahamas. For details, visit [playboyevents.com](http://playboyevents.com).



## PLAYMATE\* FLASHBACK

Twenty years ago this month Miss June 1993 **ALESHA ORESKOVICH** posed for our Centerfold, saying, "Clothes are a pain." The Tampa native preferred to allow the Florida sun to shine where it often doesn't. Alesha continues to bask in the Florida rays, as well as model on TV and in print for fashion and beauty clients.





# SMITH AND MEWES

(continued from page 150)

I say 'Snooch to the nooch?'" And I'm like, "That's a good question. Why do you say 'Snooch to the nooch?'"

## Q13

PLAYBOY: Kevin, the hockey movie *Hit Somebody* was supposed to be your final film. Now you're turning it into a TV miniseries and *Clerks III* will be your final film. Why are you so eager to retire? What's the rush?

SMITH: The only reason we're having this conversation, the only reason I got here, is because I fell in love—desperately, head over heels in love—with cinema. But one day, around the time I was doing *Cop Out*, I started to realize I'd taken my first love, Lady Cinema, and cheated on it by turning it into an ATM. It was what I did because I needed to pay bills. Film had been a passion, and then it became a job. It became a right and not a privilege.

## Q14

PLAYBOY: You've told stories about you and Bruce Willis almost coming to blows on the set of *Cop Out*. Now that a few years have passed, do you have more insight into what happened? Was it his fault or yours?

SMITH: He's called me a whiner for talking about it, but fuck him. He whined on set every day. "You want me to shoot before noon?" So if I'm a whiner, fuck you, you're a bigger whiner. It was the first time I worked with somebody who was a paycheck player: Me, Tracy Morgan, Marc Platt the producer—all of us took massive pay cuts to make the movie because we wanted to work with Bruce Willis. Bruce took what he said was a massive pay cut and let us know repeatedly throughout the shoot that he wasn't getting paid nearly enough for "this shit." We really got into it at one point and I thought he was going to deck me. He was like, "You want to take a swing at me?" I was like, "I've worked with children who don't behave like this."

## Q15

PLAYBOY: Can we point out the irony of a guy making a miniseries called *Hit Somebody* declining the chance to hit somebody?

SMITH: Yeah, that's true. I might not have punched Bruce Willis, but I punched an owl, man. That happened.

## Q16

PLAYBOY: You punched an owl? Please let there be an explanation.

SMITH: I was out on my deck one morning, everybody else was asleep, and I see this fucking owl coming at me. It looked like something out of an old Ridley Scott movie. And he wasn't flapping, he was gliding in. It was fucking spooky. I put the math together and I was like, "It's going after my dog!" I did the bravest thing I've ever done or will ever do in my life. If Bruce Willis was going for my dachshund, I would have punched Bruce Willis like I punched that owl.

## Q17

PLAYBOY: Jason, you were struggling to beat an addiction to heroin and painkillers around the time Kevin discovered he really

enjoyed smoking weed. Did that put a strain on your friendship?

MEWES: Weed is awesome, but it's not tempting to me because I never craved it.

SMITH: It would be like me being on a diet and somebody bringing in a flourless cake. Technically it's sweet and it's got sugar, but I don't like flourless cake.

MEWES: If he'd started doing coke around me, that would've been different. Heroin, coke, speed—those were the drugs I craved and chased and woke up every day wondering how I was going to get more.

SMITH: I thought it was fair. You know what, motherfucker? I had to deal with you on fucking drugs all those years. Now it's my turn.

## Q18

PLAYBOY: Kevin, it's been three years since you were kicked off a Southwest flight for being, in your words, "too fat to fly." Has anything changed? Have the airline's seats gotten bigger or your butt smaller?

SMITH: There were real-world repercussions. I couldn't go near an airport because I didn't want my picture taken. But shortly after it happened, I had these Q&A gigs coming up in Texas and I had to get to them. So I rented a bus. I talked to the bus place and they were like, "How many people in the band?" I'm like, "It's just me." There was a long pause, and then they said, "Are you that 'too fat to fly' guy?" The bus was a revelation. I realized I could go anywhere. I could tour little clubs all over the country. I could bring my friends. Because I can't get on a plane, I take a bus. Because I take a bus, hey, I'll take a bus with my friends and do this. It changed my life for the better. Not that I'm thankful or appreciative to Southwest. They're still fucking awful. But things worked out.

## Q19

PLAYBOY: Kevin, no offense, but you're too fat to fly, and yet you landed a hot wife. Share your secrets.

SMITH: It's all about the sense of humor. Also, when I met Jen [Schwalbach], I'd just come off an all-liquid diet I'd been doing for four months. Mewes was kicking heroin and I was on Optifast. But I looked good. If I was ever going to land a fucking wife, that was the window. She was working for *USA Today* and she interviewed me. And after the interview we sat around talking for two more hours. I did everything I could to be interesting and funny and human. I was in a zone. I asked her to be my date to the Independent Spirit Awards. I was nominated for *Chasing Amy*. She said yes, and then I remembered later I'd already asked Salma Hayek. I was working with her on *Dogma*, and she was going to come with me as a friend. So I literally had to go to Salma Hayek and tell her I wasn't taking her to the Spirit Awards. She was stunned. I think it was the first time somebody ever canceled a date on her.

## Q20

PLAYBOY: You once got into a Twitter feud with Neil Patrick Harris. Was that just a publicity stunt, or were you really pissed at him?

SMITH: He did some interview for that *Harold & Kumar* movie, and he was like, "The guys in our flick are real actors, not like that Jay character from the Kevin Smith movies." He called Jason a drugged-out mess who just got stoned and did crazy shit and then we filmed him. It was offensive. This is a guy who hosts the Tonys and shit, criticizing another actor's performance. I know for a fact that Jason is a good actor. I know who he is, I know what he does onscreen, and I know what it takes to do that. I threw some tweets out, calling Neil on it. And to his credit, he said, "Yeah, you're right. In retrospect I was wrong," blah blah blah. Regardless, you don't go after another actor like that, because what you're quietly saying is "I'm a better actor."



"I admire a man who can cry, Marvin. But not when he gets the check."





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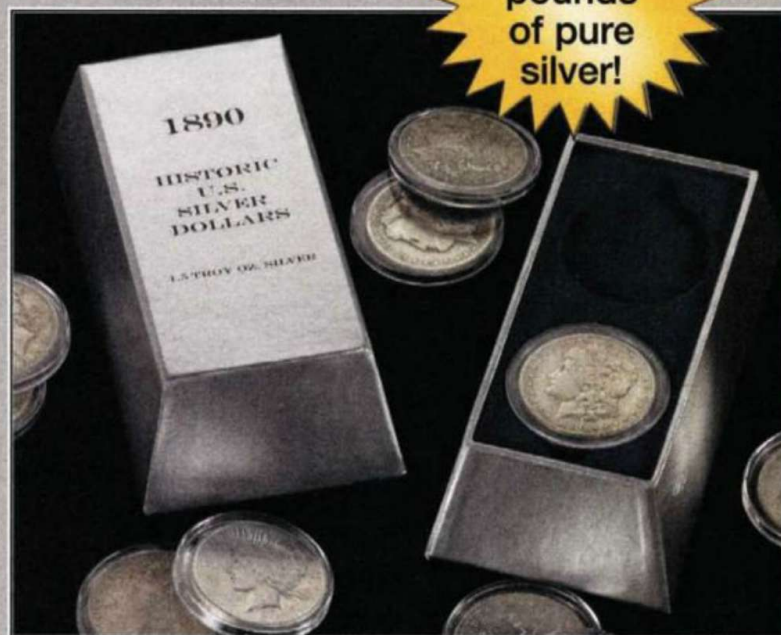
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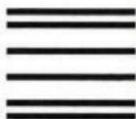
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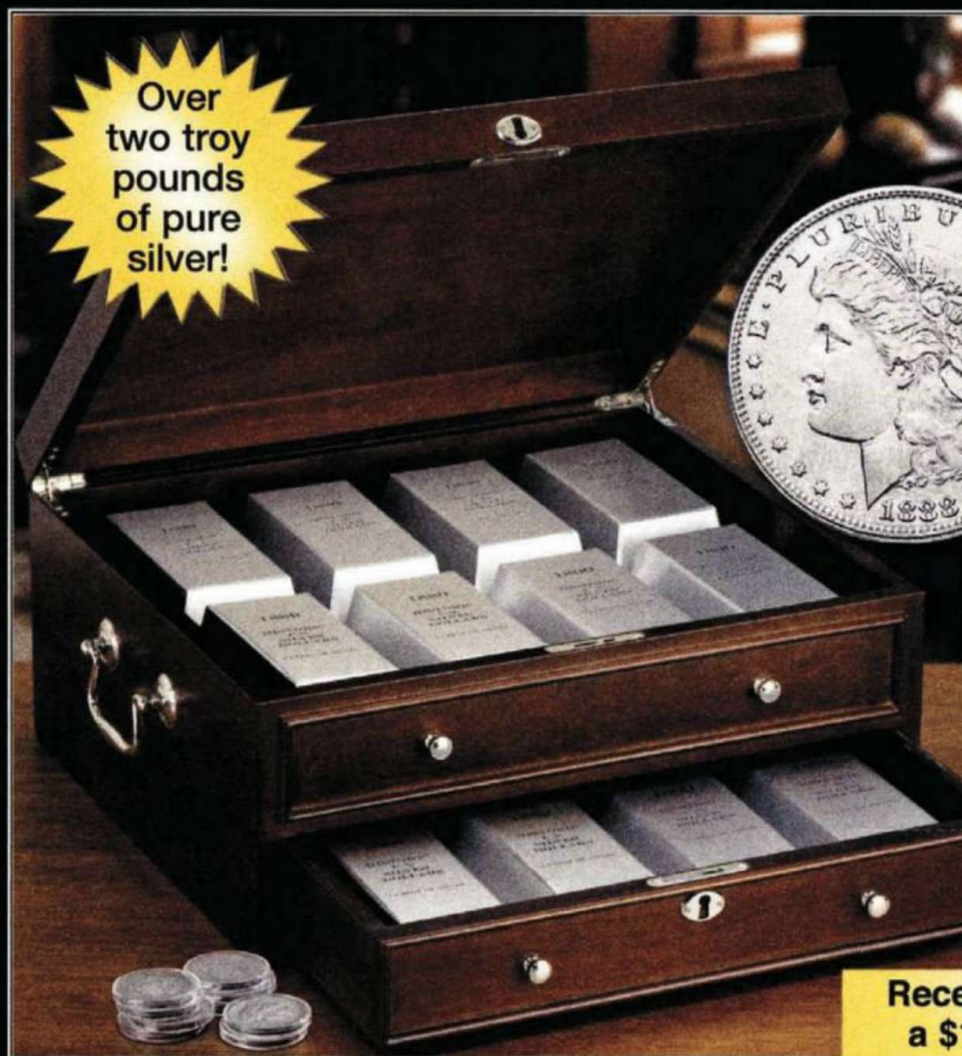


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**INFORMATION ON FUTURE CASES:** I understand that every three months I will be notified about the next 4 Seasons selection and will automatically receive it unless I request otherwise. I will be charged the appropriate amount for each shipment, currently \$139.99 (plus shipping & tax). Once eligible, each year I will be offered two extra-special cases—one in summer and one for the holidays. Again, I will be notified about these in advance. There is no commitment whatsoever and I may cancel my membership at any time. PLEASE NOTE: Voucher not redeemable for cash. Offer available to first-time 4 Seasons customers only and limited to one case per household. In the unlikely event of a wine becoming unavailable, a substitute of similar style and equal/greater value will be supplied. Licensed retailers only accept orders from adults at least 21 years old and have the right to refuse orders. All orders are processed and fulfilled by licensed entities and applicable taxes are paid. Delivery available to AZ, CA (offer may vary for CA residents), CO, CT, FL, IA, ID, IL, IN, LA, MA, MI, MN, MO, NC, ND, NE, NH, NJ, NM, NV, NY, OH, OR (not eligible for gift), SC, TN, TX, VA, WA, WI, WV, WY and DC. Void where prohibited by law.



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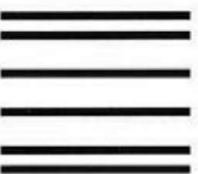
If you are disappointed with any bottle, for any reason, you will be refunded in full. It's that simple.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading 'Tony Laithwaite'.

Tony Laithwaite  
Founder, Laithwaites Wine



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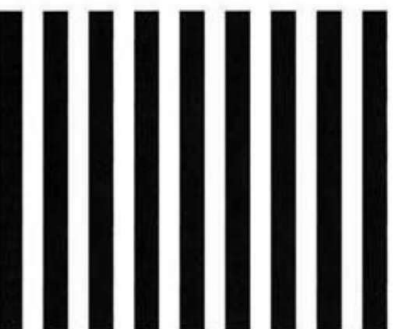
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**Enjoy a dozen world-class reds for only \$69.99. You save \$100.**

Take a look. There's gold-medal Bordeaux, rich Argentine Malbec and more. All are from small, quality-obsessed estates and all are under \$6 a bottle with the attached \$100 Wine Voucher.

Why the huge savings? Because I think you'll love the wines and want to try more. This is our *4 Seasons Wine Club* and it's totally flexible.

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If you like what you taste, we'll tell you about a delicious new dozen every three months. If ever you're not ready, just say no thanks. You can change wines too. Or cancel anytime. Each future case is just \$139.99 (you always save at least 20%) and comes with full tasting notes and our 100% money-back guarantee.

If you enjoy opening even just one good bottle a week, give *4 Seasons* a try today. Cheers!

  
Tony Laithwaite



Our special gift to you — 3 FREE bottles of this top-estate treat from famous Tuscan winemaker, Paolo Masi.

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## Plus These Free Gifts

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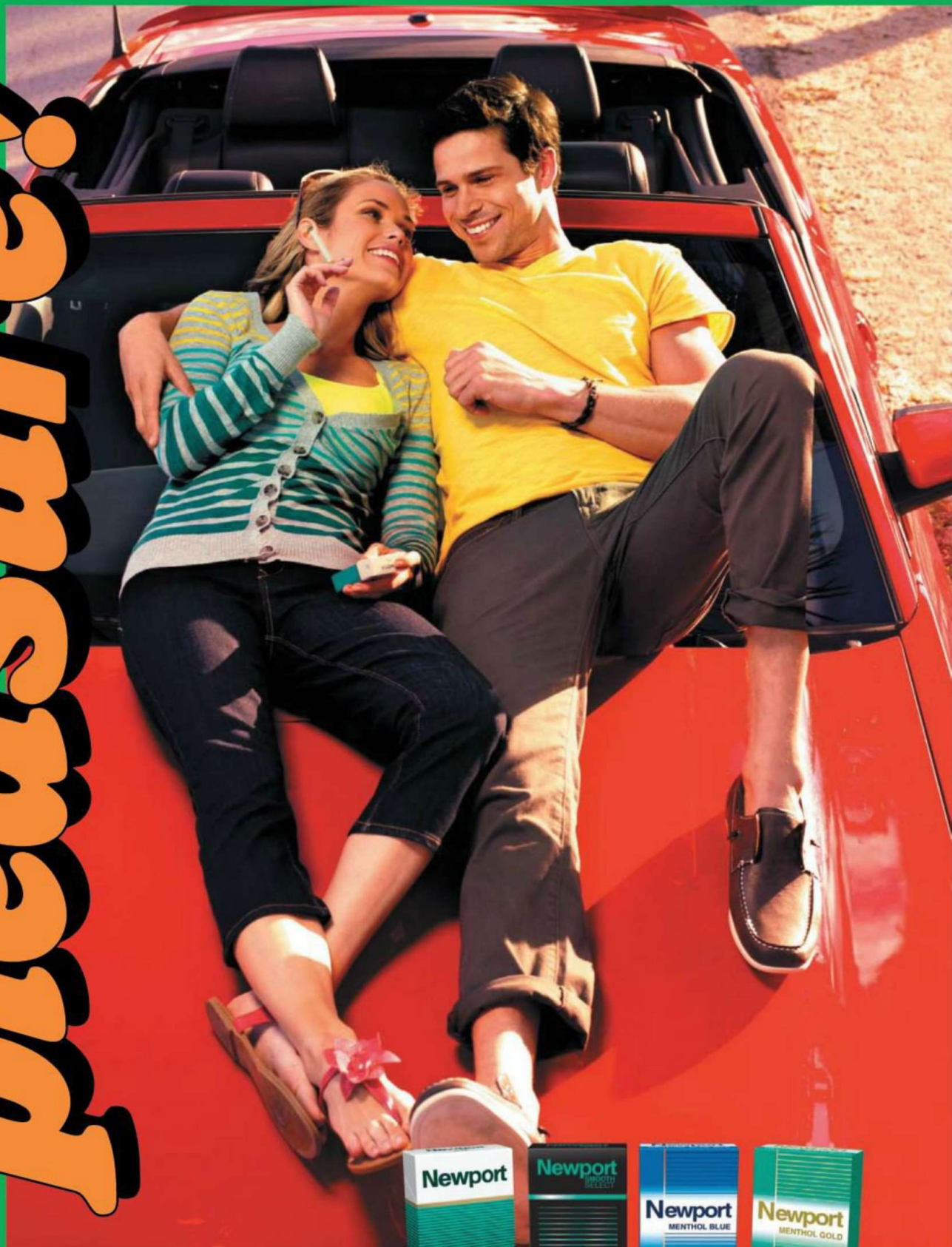
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