

# *Eternal Sunshine #16*

May 2008

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On the web at <http://www.whiningkentpigs.com> – or go directly to the Diplomacy section at <http://www.whiningkentpigs.com/DW/>. Also be sure to visit the Diplomacy World website at <http://www.diplomacyworld.net>. Check out <http://www.helpfulkitty.com> for official Toby the Helpful Kitty news, blog, and links to all his available merchandise!

All Eternal Sunshine readers are **encouraged** to join the free Eternal Sunshine Yahoo group at [http://games.groups.yahoo.com/group/eternal\\_sunshine\\_diplomacy/](http://games.groups.yahoo.com/group/eternal_sunshine_diplomacy/) to stay up-to-date on any subzine news or errata.

**Quote Of The Month** – “I kinda sorta wrecked your car.” (Clementine in “Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind”)

Welcome to Eternal Sunshine. Your mission, if you decide to accept it, is to read this issue and suppress all urges towards self-mutilation. As always, if you are killed or captured, this editor will disavow any knowledge of your actions. This subzine will self-destruct in five seconds.

Geez, one day I think I'm way behind on this issue and it will be empty, and then I open my Word file and realize that I'm running too many pages as it is! There were a number of things I wanted to talk about, and a few others I had under consideration if space allowed...which obviously it won't. Oh well, let's run through the topics as quickly as possible.

The Texas Rangers. They are terrible. This has to be one of the worst baseball teams I have ever seen play, and that includes those miserable Mets teams of the 1970's. It isn't that they can't pitch. In fact, their starting pitching has been much better than expected. It's everything else. The bullpen is average at best, and has blown some leads that should have been more than enough to win. They can't hit with runners in scoring position to save their lives. And the fielding, the base-running, missing the cut-off man, ignoring the coaches, swinging at the first pitch when our pitcher just had a long inning...a mid-level college team can handle the fundamentals better than these guys. Like one of the local radio hosts said, this team plays so distracted it is as if there's a bunch of naked women running around the field which nobody but the Rangers can see. So what can you do? I don't know, but I think firing Ron Washington is a start. He over-manages, makes terrible pinch-hitting and bench decisions, and has no command of this team. Meanwhile, you watch people we traded away like Chris Young and John Danks succeed elsewhere. Very depressing. Josh Hamilton is the only bright spot...well him, and the success of Kevin Milwood and Vicente Padilla so far. If they keep it up, we need to trade both of them.

Be sure to take a moment and check the links in the Eternal Sunshine masthead. The one in particular I would like to call your attention to is the Eternal Sunshine Yahoo group. It's free to join, and you'll get occasional notices about game errata, new game openings, deadline reminders, and the release of new issues. You can set your membership to never get more than one email per day (the setting is called Daily Digest, where Yahoo combines any messages that day into a single email). Considering there aren't that many messages in there each month to begin with, the group is a simple way to stay up-to-date with Eternal Sunshine. So please go there and join.

While you're on the internet, stop by the Helpful Kitty merchandise store at [www.cafepress.com/helpfulkitty](http://www.cafepress.com/helpfulkitty). Not only will you find mugs, shirts, and other stuff featuring Toby the Helpful Kitty (and Sanka), but there are two special sections at the bottom of the store: one with Whining Kent Pig designs, and another with Diplomacy and Diplomacy World designs, perfect for your next Diplomacy convention or face-to-face game day. It isn't like I make any real money on them – they're set to be \$1 per item above cost – but I have fun designing them, and I'd love to know people out there found a few of them worthwhile. Any suggestions on future designs are welcome.

Finally, our wedding photos should be here any day. I will probably not put in any this issue, but I plan on posting a bunch of them to my website. So if you're interested, visit [www.whiningkentpigs.com](http://www.whiningkentpigs.com) and look for a Wedding Photo section in the navigation bar.

I'll close by mentioning that I plan on opening a new Dip game, 7x7 Gunboat Tourney, or some variant by next issue. So if you're interested sign up fast when the time comes. Some of these games take forever to fill (if ever) and others fill almost instantly. See you next month!

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### **My First Day – Part One**

Once I stepped from the ordinary parking lot into the cold, brick building which contained the "R&D" department, I was officially a Federal inmate. I believe R&D stands for Reception and Diagnostics, but in effect it is the department which handles the initial intake, release, and transfer of inmates. In some facilities this can be a very complicated process, including housing an inmate in a segregated facility for up to 30 days as a form of "quarantine". Fortunately for me, the process at Allenwood was generally much simpler.

The two R&D officers who were there to process me could have been brothers or cousins, based on looks and attitude. Each of them was terribly overweight, almost apple-shaped, with grey hair and moustaches. And they both carried a sarcastic, arrogant sense of humor which might have intimidated some people. I didn't find their attitude being a problem for myself, though, since my personal sense of humor was very similar. But that wasn't about to give me the idea that I could mouth off to either of them. On the contrary, my Dad's advice stayed in the back of my mind at all times: behave yourself. I was still pretty much numb to the entire experience anyway, so my mind wasn't quite as sharp as it would normally be.

In this room I learned my first lesson about the CO's I was going to be dealing with for the next few years: they size you up very quickly, and it takes some time to do anything to contradict that first impression. In my case, they saw I was nervous, compliant, respectful, but not in a patronizing way. I simply treated them the way I wanted to be treated, and it seemed to work.

As they had me filling out a few forms, one of them started in on me with an aggressive attitude, which I suspected was simply a front. "Why the hell are you here at noon? We don't normally like to process new arrivals until two. You're screwing our schedule up!"

I could have apologized, but instead I looked him in the eye and calmly told him the truth. "Well, when I called here for driving directions a few days ago, whoever I spoke to told me I had better show up early, because if I made them stay late they'd beat the shit out of me."

The other R&D CO laughed. "Yup, that sounds like something you'd say!"

He just laughed. "Yeah I think I remember that conversation. Okay, let's get through this, it's no big deal."

Surprisingly, he was right. The process was very simple. I filled out a few forms, gave them the cash I had on hand (about \$150, which was deposited in my inmate account for future use), and had fingerprints and a photo taken (the latter was for my inmate ID card). Then I stripped, and collected my clothes in a plastic bag. These were carried out to my Dad so he could take them home with him, along with my watch and my Driver's License. They checked for contraband, having me open my mouth, lift my legs one at a time to reveal the soles of my feet, and spread my ass cheeks. Finally they gave me some terribly worn clothes: a blue t-shirt, a pair of whitish socks, brown pants with a drawstring, worn white briefs, and a pair of slip-on blue sneakers. They also handed me a bedroll and a worn brown coat. That was basically it...the two CO's pointed me in the direction to go, told me to look for someone in charge, and sent me off with a simple statement: "We don't want to see you down here again until it's time for you to go home." I didn't have the experience to really understand what they meant, but I correctly surmised that if I got in any kind of serious trouble I'd be sent back to R&D someday. As I learned later, before being transferred to a higher-security facility or to the "hole" (the SHU – Special Housing Unit or Segregated House Unit) I'd have to be processed by these two gentlemen. So the vague warning they gave me was meant for my own good...and for theirs, since the fewer people they had to process the less work there was for them to do.

That last item turned out to be a very common motivating factor among the staff; if they could find a way to avoid work, they would. That wasn't necessarily a negative for the inmates either; it worked both ways, depending on what kind of work you might be dealing with at the time. One thing was for certain – if a CO was going to do a lot of work because of you, either you'd really pissed them off, or you were about to.

I wandered up a path to another building, where I found some inmates who directed me to the Unit Manager's office. The prison seemed to be rather laid-back compared to what I had expected. There were four or five inmates sitting at a metal picnic table, smoking cigarettes, and a few were off in the corner playing cards. The temperature was a bit chilly to me, especially as I'd just spent the last 9 years living in Texas; the worn clothing I'd been given wasn't helping matters either. So I hurried inside to warm up and find this Unit Manager's office.

The Unit Manager talked to me in his office for about two minutes. He was an ex-Marine type, but seemed pretty straightforward. His instructions were rather simple: follow the rules, stay the hell out of his way, behave myself, and if I had any questions I should direct them to his clerk (an inmate) first before I bothered him with anything.

"You'll be able to pick it up as you go along. The rules are rather simple. Follow the lead of the people around you, but be careful who you associate with until you figure out the lay of the land."

Apparently an orientation for new inmates had taken place a day or two earlier, and the next one wasn't scheduled for two weeks. But Mr. Faulkner, the Unit Manager, strongly suggested I take an abbreviated, ad-hoc version so I wouldn't have to sit in my bunk for two weeks and could instead be assigned work right away. Also, it seemed obvious that for me to refuse the "suggestion" would be causing him a minor headache, so of course I agreed. I didn't much want to spend my time sitting by myself doing nothing anyway; I had quickly realized that for me to make it through this sentence, the busier I could keep myself the better. I hadn't considered that I'd be assigned a job, so this was actually a pleasant surprise. I just needed to go through a few 5-minute orientation meetings and get medical clearance.

The medical clearance part was my first hurdle, as I was quickly summoned to the medical department so I could meet Dr. Walker, the head Mental Health professional (and, as I learned soon after, the guy who ran the Residential Drug and Alcohol Program – RDAP for short). Dr. Walker was troubled by two of the answers I had given on my forms in the R&D paperwork. First, I'd answered "Yes" to whether I felt depressed, and second I'd marked "Yes" to whether I had ever experienced suicidal thoughts.

I couldn't understand why the first answer was such a surprise to anyone, as I explained to Dr. Walker. "Of course I'm depressed. This is my first day in prison, and I've got a 46-month sentence!" But he was quickly able to determine I was not a danger to myself or others, and that the suicidal thoughts were from years ago. It was at this point, however, that I first learned of the complete disconnect between the outside world of criminal justice and true life under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Prisons.

Let me go back a few months in the story. After I had pled guilty in court, I had to undergo what is known as a Pre-Sentence Interview (PSI) with an appoint court official. This interview, in conjunction with other material gathered from my Pre-Trial officer, my lawyer, my family, my prosecutor, and forms filled out when I was first arraigned, would be used to write up my PSI Report. That report (barring any objections by my lawyer or the government) would be used to determine how long of a sentence I received, what security level facility I should be designated to (if space was available), and any other important information relevant to my time as an inmate.

When I went to have this PSI, my lawyer (a public defender) went with me in case they asked questions he didn't think I should answer. He told me the woman who would be conducting the interview was very professional and understanding, and that he'd worked with her on prior cases with no problem.

"Before we go in there," he told me, "I need to explain something to you. There is a Drug and Alcohol Program available in some Federal prisons, and it is entirely voluntary. If you successfully complete the program, you are eligible to get some time off your sentence, from a few months to almost a year. But here's the deal: if you want to be eligible for this program, you need to tell this woman about your alcohol and drug use **today**. Evidence of your problems needs to go into the PSI for you to be eligible. The BOP doesn't want inmates trying to qualify for the program after they get to prison and find out they might be able to get a few months off their sentence. So you need to decide now whether you are interested. There's no answer you need to give today about whether to want to actually sign up, but if you want to be eligible at all, you need to go in there and be open about your past. She won't mention the RDAP program to you, but anything you say may affect your ability to qualify when the time comes. Speak now or speak never, basically."

So we went inside, and I figured, what the hell...I may as well tell her my whole life story. And I did, at least in an abbreviated form, and as directed by the questions she asked. I talked about my parents' alcohol use, how I started drinking when I was ten, my drug use, my mother's mental disorders, Mara and all the problems she'd been through (and the ones we went through together), my divorce, my depression, and anything else that came to mind. I cried a bit, but that was to be expected, as I hadn't talked to anyone about a lot of these things in years (if ever).

As we left the interview, my lawyer looked sort of pale. "Did you make any of that up?" he asked me. I told him that not only was it all true, but that there were plenty of details and stories I didn't bring up wither because she didn't ask or there wasn't enough time. "Wow," he said. "I had no idea."

The next morning I got a call from my Pre-Trial Officer, asking me to come in for a meeting. I arrived the next day, and he explained to me that the woman I had interviewed with was very concerned about my mental state and my overall well-being, and that she had requested that I be put into some kind of therapy or counseling immediately.

"Look," the officer told me, "you're going to be in prison in six weeks anyway. By the time we get the paperwork done, find you some program to go to, and get the judge to approve it, you'll have time for maybe one appointment. Are you doing okay? I think it's best if we just wait until you get to whatever facility you are assigned to, and you can get counseling and treatment there. Just tell them what you need; they have all kinds of programs for that. Are you okay with that plan?"

It was all find with me, since I wasn't feeling any worse than usual anyway. The urgency was coming from the woman who gave me the PSI, not me. So I waited.

Now jump back to my first day in prison. After Dr. Walker was convinced that I was okay to join the general population, I briefly told him about my experience with the PSI, and how I had been told to make it a point to ask for counseling appointments or whatever other mental health support might be available for me.

All I got in return was a blank stare for a moment, and then a confused reply. "We don't have counseling or therapy or anything like that here. There's nothing we can do for you. You can go back to the Unit now."

I just shrugged my shoulders and left. Welcome to the BOP!

## The Dining Dead - The Eternal Sunshine Movie Reviews

A combination of Heather's school schedule, the lack of attractive new releases, and a late-month virus which knocked me down hard resulted in us once again not making it to the movies this month. We did watch plenty of DVDs though! I was surprised at how few movies we wanted to see this month in the theater, but really with school and my illness weekends (our normal movie time) have been times of recuperation and homework. The one weekend we really could have gone to see a movie was the one where I took heather to see the "Dracula" ballet at Bass Hall in Fort Worth.

**Seen on DVD – Maxed Out** (B-, not a bad piece when it comes to the predatory practices of credit card companies, but when it made attempts to tie that with Katrina and the "need" for socialism, or when it ignored the fact that the U.S. Congress is not the branch with has legislative power to spend money, it lost me and got me yelling at the screen). **Jindabyne** (B-, very slow but not awful movie about a group of Irishmen living in Australia who find a body on a fishing trip). **Halloween III – Season of the Witch** (B-, always fun to watch despite how stupid it is. Silver Shamrock!). **Child's Play** (B+, another one Heather had never seen, great fun, dark sense of humor, I can do without the sequels but the original is a riot). **The Notorious Bettie Page** (C+, kinda quirky but left most of the interesting questions unanswered). **Klimt** (D, story was random and uninteresting, and the camera work was irritating). **La Vie en Rose** (C, she did a great job playing the role at so many ages, but I simply didn't give a crap about any of the characters. I felt no pain in their miseries and no joy in their triumph). **Lady Jane** (B-, a bit lightweight but I did enjoy this 1986 romanticized version of Lady Jane Grey's nine days as Queen. Too bad a good part of it is inaccurate, but that's doesn't ruin it too much).

## Books in Boxers Eternal Sunshine Book Reviews

**A Book of Curious Advice** – Ruth Pepper Summers – With a subtitle of “Most Unusual Manners – Morals – Medicine from Days of Yore” you shouldn’t be surprised that this is a collection of short notices for the public at large about how to maintain good health, attract a spouse, prepare food, and other necessary advice...all from the 1800’s. It is actually interesting to see how positive some people were about the dangers of eating fresh fruit, or how others felt that putting arsenic in your hair was a wonderful way to induce follicle growth. Some of the odd recipes (pigeon pie, or the massive “To Dress a Turtle of a Hundred Weight”) remind us that in those days nothing was wasted. I just wonder why they always cooked their vegetables for four hours or more. Give it a B+. Good fun in short doses.



## Heather's Tricks and Treats

**All My Patients are Under the Bed – Memoirs of a Cat Doctor** by Dr. Louis J. Camuti – I loved this book. Musing from a wonderfully cantankerous cat doctor, a terrific combination of stories about him and his patients.

Mostly I liked it because he was crusty (in a good way). 4 pumpkins.



**The Vampire Queen’s Servant** by Joey W. Hill – Hot<sup>3</sup>! Vampires, sex, and male submission, what more do you want? Definitely need to take a cold shower after this one. 4 ½ pumpkins.



**The Mark of the Vampire Queen** by Joey W. Hill – I cannot believe it, but it’s even better than the first one! Hotter with more erotic sex, more vampires, and male submission with a tiny bit of female submission thrown in for good measure. Best of all, love and vulnerability are mixed in, and some awesome revenge. 4 ½ pumpkins.



## Meet Me In Montauk

## The Eternal Sunshine Letter Column

**Jim Burgess:** Care to expand on that cat pill product you mention, what is it again?

*They're called Pill Pockets, they carry them at Petco and PetSmart (and online just about anywhere). The product is sold in bags of 40 I think. They are cylindrically-shaped soft cat treats, chicken or salmon flavor. One end of the cylinder is open, so you put the pill in there and close it up. Most cats will swallow the treat whole since it is soft and cats generally don't chew soft food. Even with Tigger's missing teeth, 4 times out of 5 she took the Pill Pocket easily. I find it works much better than trying to hide the pill in Cheez Whiz or something.*

**Kevin Wilson:** I’m trying to locate a quote. I’ve tried googling for it and some quote sites but I’ve not had any success so far. I thought the readers of ES might help me out. I believe the quote was by a sci fi author like Heinlein, Clarke, Asimov or some other but it could have been a scientist as well. The quote was making the point of the importance of space flight and space research. It went something like, if the human race wanted to be around more than just an instant in the time of the universe, then for the majority of our existence the word “ship” will mean “spaceship.” Maybe someone will recognize it and point me to it.

*I don't know that particular quote offhand, although for some reason I link it in my mind with Harlan Ellison. For some wonderful space quotes, however, try this site:*

<http://research.lifeboat.com/space.quotes.htm>

**John Colledge:** So, which did you mean? ‘English’ monarch, in which case only 9 of us got it right and the rest got it wrong, or ‘British’ monarch in which case we got it wrong!

***I meant whatever people wanted me to mean...that's the fun part, I can mean anything or nothing, but to win you need to base your answers on what you think other people will decide I mean!***

I once caused a minor international incident in the Chicago Art Institute when I asked which museum would be the best to visit if I wanted to see Native American exhibits. The young lady on reception didn't know, but asked her supervisor. I happened to hear her say, 'There's an English gentleman....' When she returned I thought I was being very amusing by my way of it by suggesting that calling a Scotsman English, was just like calling an American a Canadian. I thought the cheeky smile on my face would make her realize I was just kidding, but she was soooooo apologetic. It took me a full ten minutes to calm her down and make her realize I was only pulling her leg. It does make me wonder just what some Americans have against Canadians though! ☺

***Welcome to the land of political correctness...apparently one of the clauses in the U.S. Bill of Rights is the right to never be offended by anyone.***

I was so sorry to hear about poor old Tigger. We become very attached to our little furry friends, don't we? We have never actually owned a cat of our own, but we have always been fortunate enough to have neighbours who did. That way we have the best of both worlds. They give us their love and affection, but we don't have to pay the vets' bills... for the cats that is, not the neighbours!

***When you consider how few people I've known for as long as I knew Tigger, it isn't hard to understand why I grew so fond of her!***

**Kevin Wilson**: A couple of other comments from BPD last time. The family group discussed last time was the DeFranco family. Doug was right, the song was "Heartbeat, It's a Love Beat." That song was BIG some time during my early school days and I can still remember some of the lyrics: Heartbeat, it's a love beat and a love beat is a good vibration... Why do useless things like that stick in our brains and important things like my daughter's social security number refuses to find a home on my memory? For the food last time, I didn't think of lobster. That was an excellent answer. I eat it now and then out and have never eaten or prepared it at home.

**W. Andrew York**: You are correct, it was "Heartbeat, It's a Love Beat" - great memory!

***Now if only I could use that for good instead of evil.***

**Kevin Wilson**: I was sad to hear about losing your cat Tigger. I can relate a bit to how you feel. A few years ago we lost our dog Baron. He was a weimaraner and, like many large dogs, had hip problems and in his final days couldn't get around without one of us holding his back end up for him. We found ourselves with little choice but to do as you did with Tigger and let him go. I cried knowing what was coming. I cried as it happened. And I cried every now and then for a few days after. We held off on a new pet for a couple years and had just begun thinking of a new dog when our two cats entered our lives. Since I've enjoyed hearing of the stories of the feline members of your family I thought I'd share a bit about ours.



The first to come to the family was Missy. She apparently got caught in our neighbor's garage one cool fall evening. They found her the next morning. They had two basset hounds in the house so couldn't bring a kitten into the house so they came to us next door. She was clean, didn't look malnourished and was very friendly so we figured she had just gotten out of someone's house nearby. We searched the neighborhoods for signs about a missy kitty. We took her to our vet to make sure she was OK and to check to see if she was chipped. We checked with the humane shelter and animal control but couldn't find out where she came from so we adopted her. The vet estimated her age at 9 months +/- . She was small but very friendly and just about the softest cat I had ever held or touched. She was pretty needy in those early days but that was to change. She is a black and white and like many black and whites she had a calm disposition and never seemed to get too frazzled regardless of what was going on. She took to the house and us quickly, settling right in. It only took her a few nights and she was sleeping on the bed with us.

We had Missy about two months when we decided she needed a playmate. We went to the humane shelter to see if we could find another young female to provide company and came home with Gracie. Gracie is a yellow tabby and about the same age as Missy. Where Missy was cool, calm and graceful from the beginning; Gracie was noisy, underfoot and a bit clumsy in her need for attention, hence the name Gracie being somewhat "graceless" at the start. It took about two weeks before Missy would have much to do with Gracie but soon they seemed to be getting along fine and after a while were even sleeping together. I'm sure it helped they were both females, of similar ages and sizes.

They are very different cats. Missy is now a bit aloof. She likes to be in rooms separate from the action. She rarely climbs up on things, other than beds and the occasional chair back. She prefers sleeping on anything cotton. She likes attention in the morning but not much at other times. She's a dainty eater, almost never runs through the house unless the two of them are playing. She has a soft quiet purr that you don't hear much. Sometimes she will sit still for a long time, allowing you to comb her. Her coat is thick, she sheds all the time so I suspect the comb feels very good. She rarely sits in your lap but will occasionally jump up on your chest while you're in bed.



Gracie is not aloof. She's always underfoot, in the room with the action. She's the climber. She likes window sills, tops of shelves, chairs, countertops, tabletops, anything above floor level. She likes paper and cardboard boxes. Give her any occasion where gifts are being opened so there are boxes and paper everywhere and she's in kitty heaven. She likes attention all the time, but especially at night. She eats like a dog, her nose in the bowl, not coming up until the bowl is empty. She runs and comes when called. She purrs constantly and can be heard across the room. She can't sit still, unless she's asleep. About the only thing in common with Missy, other than age and sex, is she too sheds all the time. She just won't sit still for the comb. Gracie too likes to sit on your chest but you don't have to be in bed. Any prone body will do.

Gracie and Missy were with us before Rachel (3 ½) and Grant (1). Both adapted well to kids in the house. Gracie tolerates them, even getting down in the floor with them. Missy just goes to the other room. Hopefully they'll be with us long enough for the kids to get older. I think it will be fun for all of us.

Keep the stories of our two coming and if ours should do anything interesting, I'll pass it along.

***It's funny the way most cats know "little feet and hands" (children) = potential danger. Toby and Sanka are getting along great now. They clean each other, they like to sleep next to each other, and they roughhouse all the time. I am happy to see they've learned to do so without using their claws, so there isn't any screaming anymore and only a small amount of fur flying. Actually that's one thing I don't miss much: medium or long hair cats gets matted and need to much extra brushing, while with these two we can simply pet the loose hair off of them. Toby loves having a new playmate. The only negative for him, aside from Sanka trying to eat all the food, is she simply tires him out sometimes. He has taken to finding new hiding spots (inside the box spring, using the lining as a hammock, as an example) in order to sleep peacefully. Half the time she wants to curl up with him or clean him, and the other half its PLAY TIME! And, as it turns out, Sanka is almost as "helpful" as Toby...it actually seems like she watches her "older brother" and learns from him.***

**Dane Maslen**: Sorry to hear about Tigger. Some friends of mine recently lost one of their cats (in my opinion the most affectionate one) to renal failure. They're now down to a mere 7 cats. At one time they had 10. Yes, that's right, they're completely mad! They might, however, be slightly saner than my cousin and her husband. They have three dogs (all quite large), a cat, two rabbits and two gerbils.

The most I ever had at once was five cats, when Mara and I were still married. That would be Biff the Persian, Tigger, Whisper the little Calico (who Sanka reminds me of in many ways), Bibby the HUGE Tuxedo cat (who Toby takes after in size, but not in manner), and Footy the giant black stray (who turned into a balloon as soon as we had her fixed, and who wouldn't keep her fur clean so she always smelled of urine...she also wouldn't use the litter box consistently). Now being down to two seems perfect, although I am not 100% sure whether two or three is the best number for us.

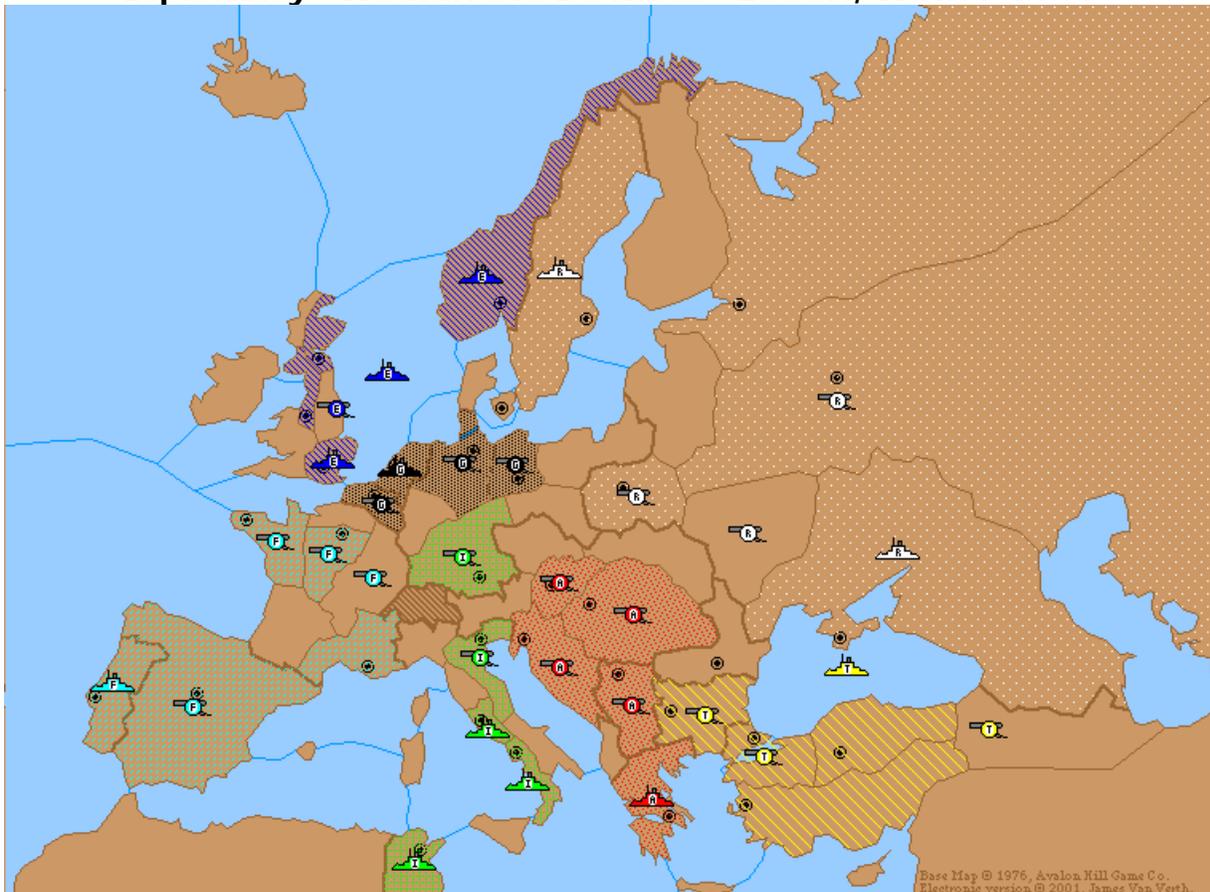
# Game Openings

**Balkan Wars VI (Black Press):** Signed up: Jack McHugh, Graham Wilson, Brad Wilson, Brendan Whyte, needs two more. Rules and map on request. If nobody signs up for this by next issue I'm closing this opening down, **so SIGN UP!**

I may offer a new game of Diplomacy or another Gunboat 7x7 soon, so keep your eyes open. Other options are a game of Youngstown or some other map variant.

## Eternal Sunshine Game Section

### Diplomacy "Wouldn't It Be Nice?" 2008A, Winter 1901



Austria (Kevin Wilson): Build A Budapest, Build A Trieste.  
England (Jeremie LeFrancois): Build F London.  
France (Alexander Levinson): Build A Brest, Build A Paris.  
Germany (Graham Wilson): Build A Berlin.  
Italy (Don Williams): Build F Rome, Build F Naples.  
Russia (Melinda Holley): Build A Warsaw.  
Turkey (Brad Wilson): Build A Constantinople.

**Spring 1902 Deadline is May 27<sup>th</sup> 2008 at 7:00am**

#### Unit locations:

Austria: A Budapest, F Greece, A Serbia, A Trieste, A Vienna.  
England: F London, F North Sea, F Norway, A Yorkshire.  
France: A Brest, A Burgundy, A Paris, F Portugal, A Spain.  
Germany: A Belgium, A Berlin, F Holland, A Kiel.  
Italy: A Munich, F Naples, F Rome, F Tunis, A Venice.  
Russia: A Moscow, F Sevastopol, F Sweden, A Ukraine, A Warsaw.  
Turkey: A Armenia, F Black Sea, A Bulgaria, A Constantinople.

#### Ownership of supply centers:

Austria: Budapest, Greece, Serbia, Trieste, Vienna.  
England: Edinburgh, Liverpool, London, Norway.  
France: Brest, Marseilles, Paris, Portugal, Spain.  
Germany: Belgium, Berlin, Holland, Kiel.  
Italy: Munich, Naples, Rome, Tunis, Venice.  
Russia: Moscow, Sevastopol, St Petersburg, Sweden, Warsaw.  
Turkey: Ankara, Bulgaria, Constantinople, Smyrna.  
Unowned: Denmark, Rumania.

### PRESS

**ROME to VIENNA:** Clever. You know, I'd feel a lot better about the border if we built a nice, long fence. With a moat. And maybe a force-field or something equally science-fictiony from the '60s. I liked the move away to A TRI-VIE move, but building in Trieste sort of starts things up all over again.

**THE PALE WRITER – Part 2** - He'd spent the better part of the night with his head on his saddlebags, his ears alert for coyotes, his eyes searching the stars of the open western sky, his hand on his Colt. He'd slept only fitfully, his dreams stirred and swirling with strange dreams and wisps of long ago times. Memories stirred, like the dregs at the bottom of an old wine bottle that had long settled, then been jolted back into suspension. He didn't like it much, this feeling of déjà vu. It felt like an old stale story line that had come again to life. He didn't know what it was, but he knew it somehow had to do with her. Muffins. And a banker? Lots of clichés. An old joke with a prospector? Where the hell had all that come from? He wiped the anxiety from his eyes as he broke camp, ready for a long day's ride into the town of Darkness. Back to her. She was at the heart of everything. He used the last embers of his campfire to light the stub of cigar, then clenched it in his teeth. He kicked the fire apart, then mounted his horse for the final leg of the ride into the story. His horse, Flash, whinnied in the pre-dawn cold as he started down the arroyo. (Or was it a gulch? He could never quite figure the difference.) He rode slowly as the sun's rays breached the horizon, his poncho flapping slightly in the morning breeze that blew away the cool night air and replaced it with the heated wind of the coming day. Something was in the aim, something he could feel more with his mind than his senses. And she, no doubt, was at the heart of it.

**Somewhere West of the Hobby...Queen of the West** - Wouldn't it be Nice if they could just get it right? Only hours before opening and the rehearsal was going so, so...badly.

"Girls, girls! Ooooh, I need a sherry," he squealed, pulling the beret from his head and twisting it in his little fat fingers. "You really must concentrate...it's kick, kick, stab, turn around, bend over...then thrust, " he yelled shrilly at the line of petticoats that swirled above his head, he clapped his hands in time with his words, "remember...thrust with your tush...not with your tits!"

"That's right girls," drawled Miss Kitty from the staircase, "save the tits for the ones buying drinks." The line of girls giggled at that and reformed to their starting positions.

One of the girls had to turn another girl a little to the left, as she wasn't facing the chairs and tables of the saloon. Slightly off kilter and her eyes unfocused.

"You should just wear you're glasses," whispered Ashley, "don't be so vain."

Elana stubbornly shook her head, "the frames don't go with this green dress."

Ashley looked her up and down, "that's a blue dress."

"Well, they don't go with the blue one either!"

Patrice pushed Synda in the middle of the line, who then bumped into Caroline.

"Girls, girls, stop fidgeting," he shrilled at them, "the clock is ticking...tick, tock. Beth step forward, no one can see you back there. Don't hide your light under a bushel basket!"

One of the girls stepped forward.

"No! No! The other Beth," shrieked the instructor.

"Yeah, the one wearin' the bushel basket," drawled Gabby. All the girls started giggling again. The other Beth shyly stepped forward, and the first Beth retreated.

He wasn't doing half bad, thought Miss Kitty, in fact, he was making quite a bit of progress. The girls, who had come in farm girls and milk maids were now professional dance hall girls. If he could teach them to dance and she could teach them to sling a little beer and ass, things were going to go well. They were shaping up fine...especially Helen. She would have to keep her eye on her.

When the little fat man had first answered her ad, showing up at the saloon in his beret and pencil thin mustache wearing his shiny suit with its wide, pointed lapels, she had been unsure. He had presented his calling card; "Herr Gunther von Bader...Maestro of the Danse", but she couldn't believe that his short portly form was one familiar with the ballet, the can-can, or the famed electric slide. She had him pegged for a charlatan, a quacksalver, here to run some scam on her. Probably here to garner "ass or assets" as she always warned her girls. She had insisted on a demonstration, figuring he would be unable to perform (something she had seen a time or two). But when he had put down the petite satchel he carried, and carefully withdrew from it the pink toe shoes and the one white glove, his whole persona had changed. An eerie calm had settled into his pudgy cheeks and he had looked straight (momentarily) into Bruno's eyes and said firmly, "Let's do this thing."

Bruno gave a half smile, stretched his neck, and popped his knuckles. He ran his hands through his slightly receding hairline and then poised them above the keyboard. "What do ya' want to do it to?"

The Maestro snapped the last toe shoe into place, "do you know 'Put Some Sugar on Me'?"

The strong beat exploded from the piano and pulsed through the Heart of Darkness. The candle flames flickered in the chandelier and the sconces as if in time to the music. The glasses and mugs rattled and shimmered along the bar, the dog laying by the fireplace, whimpered and scampered out the wing doors of the saloon. The Maestro was up and strutting away from Miss Kitty, then dramatically stopped and tossed his head, looking back over one shoulder, he wailed;

"Step inside! Walk this way!  
You and me babe. Hey! Hey!"

"Pour some sugar on me..." He flounced across the saloon floor, kicking the straw aside and grabbed a chair from the poker table. He spun it around between his hand and the floor, reversed it and suddenly sat, straddling it, legs emphatically, wide, apart. He ran one finger over his mustache and cocked his head to the side,

"Listen! Red light, yellow light, green light...go!  
Crazy little woman in a one man show.  
Mirror queen, mannequin..."

He was up again, prancing to the bar. S'ym, the big blue bartender, was a stunned frozen tableau, one unmoving hand holding a cloth inside a mug, held in his other unmoving hand. Not polishing the glass. The Maestro grabbed the carved wooden column that supported the ceiling next to the bar, he leaned back...far, far back and arched so that his inverted head, beret still in place, was looking directly into the bartender's frozen face. He winked.

"I'm hot! Sticky sweet!  
From my head, to my feet..."

Then he was up, spinning on the pole so that his feet almost touched the ceiling and hanging upside down, his stomach sagging now to his chest, his pudgy legs wrapped around the pole holding him in place. He flung his hands wide apart.

"You've got the peaches, I've the got the cream..."

Miss Kitty leaned toward Bruno at the piano, "It certainly looks like the little Maestro Bader has the beat."

Bruno nodded, "It certainly does."

"Pour some sugar on me...  
Get it, come and get it.  
Pour your sugar on me...."

He came off the pole, in the finale of the last stanza, in a spinning move that landed in an arabesque penchee, from there en pointe and a bow toward Miss Kitty and Bruno at the piano.

"Impressive," enthused Miss Kitty, "absolutely fabulous!"

"I thought the thong was a bit much," said S'ym, in a low voice from behind the bar. He had returned to polishing the mugs.

"So," asked the Maestro, as he walked up to the piano, mopping at the sweat on his brow with a dainty perfumed handkerchief he had withdrawn from his breast pocket, "do I get to help you put on the Revue?"

Miss Kitty sniffed, looked at the handkerchief and sniffed again, "Is that *Chateau le Bimbeaux*?"

"Why, yes it is," nodded the Maestro, "I find the scent intoxicating...especially under the right circumstances." He clicked his teeth together, as if biting at something.

Miss Kitty chuckled in her throat, "Honey, I know exactly what you mean. I think we have the beginning of a fabulous relationship."

They walked back to one of the tables to work out the details, Miss Kitty sashaying in her billowing, silken dress and the Maestro walking alongside her, hitching his step and tugging with one hand as he tried to work the thong out from between his cheeks.

And now here they were, after a half page flashback with just a few hours before the Revue opened. The show was shaping up, but the Maestro was a nag on the details. The Maestro pulled his short fat form up onto the stage, "Girls, now pay attention. Here follow me. Okay, Bruno! From the top..."

Bruno hit the keys on the piano and as the quick time music filled the saloon the Maestro kicked first one short, stocky leg high above his head, then repeated it..."and smile, the boys love to see you smile." He dimpled one cheek with his finger and smiled toward the empty chairs and his imaginary audience, "now stab," he pumped his hand, "pivot!" He did a perfect pirouette, his rotund form belying his surprising agility, "bend over and...thrust!" He snapped forward at the waist and pushed his posterior toward the chairs, up and out, in an energetic, inviting and...seemingly well-practiced maneuver.

He straightened up and looked at the dancers, "and *that* is how you do the ***Diplomacy Stab & Thrust.***" He snapped his fingers twice emphatically and spun to face the bar, "S'ym. Where is my Sherry?"

"Maestro, I'm Sherry," said the petite blonde on the left end of the line.

He spun back to face the dancer, "Wrong bottle, sweetie."

S'ym reached under the counter for his placards, and flipped through them...Stroh's, Miller, Budweiser...he didn't think he had one for Sherry. He picked up a marker, flipped over the Stroh's placard and wrote Sherry on the back. He then hung it on the single spigot in the saloon wall and pulled a nice big mug of...Sherry.

"Nice head on it," he mused, "I might have to try a Sherry myself some time."

"Ahem...Ex...Excuse me..." a deep drawl came from the right end of the line.

"Yes?"

"I don't understand why you need me up here," the voice was gruff, perfectly matching the scarred and roughly shaven face of the cowboy.

"Astoria called in sick," answered the Maestro, "Doc Jenkins says she has a case of the accolades."

S'ym looked at Miss Kitty and raised one blue furry eyebrow.

"The Clap," she answered the unspoken question.

"So, we have to fill out the line for the rehearsal...I need everybody to know their marks," continued the Maestro.

"Well, yeah," answered the cowboy, nodding, "but why do I have wear this here frilly petticoat to do that?" He pulled his wide brim hat from his head and scratched his scalp. The hat contrasted against the red silk gown with the poofed out crinoline petticoat that showed just below the hem, the plunging neckline revealed a mass of hairy, well muscled chest, and just the hint of an old bullet wound.

"Ooooh, you didn't have to. I just thought you looked absolutely *divine* in that red," the Maestro answered, one hand pressed against his face, "the way it brings out the blood in your cheeks...like how it is now." The girls all giggled.

The cowboy stepped out of the chorus line and headed for the dance coach. "Why I'm gonna bring out the blood in your cheeks."

"Logan!" Miss Kitty called from the bar, "don't you break something I'll be needing later." The cowboy stopped, took another halting step, stopped again. Simmering, he returned to the end of the line.

"Actually, you're *very* good at this," said the Maestro, he emphasized his remarks by flailing his hand at the wrist, "your kicks were the *best* of all the girls." The girls in the line all looked toward Logan and nodded agreement, a synchronized line of bobble heads in multi-colored chiffons.

"Wull... I have had a little practice kicking..." muttered Logan.

"And the way you *stabbed*," gushed the Maestro, "you really sold it! You had me believing...I could practically see the stiletto in your hand."

"Gosh," stammered Logan, he scuffed one dusty boot on the stage floor, "I have had a little practice stabbin'..."

"And the way you *thrust!*", effused the Maestro.

"You kin just stop right there," said Logan, suddenly grim.

The Maestro had a sip of his Sherry that S'ym had brought him, "ooh, nice head. I've always loved good head," he twirled his finger musingly in the foam for a brief second. "Okay, break's over. Girls..."

"Ahem, hmmm," from the right side.

"...and gentleman. From the top!"

**REBEL to TURKEY:** Oh pooh! That, Brad Darling, was a terrible mistake. I'll have your head on a plate or my name isn't Melinda "Rebel Yell" Holley! You are going down.

**REBEL to KEVIN-BOOS:** Sweetie, you wouldn't mind helping me crush Brad Darling like an insect, now would you?

**REBEL to DUCKY:** Hey, Featherhead, how 'bout you make good on that promise of F NAP and sail it over this way for a visit? I hear Brad Darling likes Pasta a la Bayonet. Oh, and be a Dear and bring a plate? We're going to need it before the party is over.

**"The German Empire" (Sung to the tune of "America Pie"):**

Long before Fall 1901  
I can still remember when  
Germany's future looked so bright  
And I knew I could have the prize  
Of in the first year, doubling in size  
And doing so without having to fight  
But Italy had a plot cooking  
And took Munich while I wasn't looking

I lied to England, and he paid me back  
By stopping my Danish attack  
I think I may have hit the floor  
When my center count was only four  
I thought I really deserved more  
I might just lose this war  
So bye bye to my German Empire  
As my neighbours and my allies all around me conspire  
If England, France and Russia want a piece of the pie  
Then this will be the year that I die  
This will be the year that I die...

(Humble apologies to Don Mclean)

**Con to Lon:** Well, are you? Or what?

**HEART OF DARKNESS SALOON** - Kitty stomped into her pride and joy. Wrathfully looking around, she spied S'ym ducking behind the bar. "There'd better be beer on ice by the time I get back down here!" Skirts swishing around her trim (yet firm) ankles, she proceeded up the stairs then stopped when she saw the man sitting at the back table playing a mean game of solitaire.

Leaning over the railing, Kitty batted her lashes (courtesy of Maybelline). "Hello, Ducky...I mean Dukey." Flushing at the lazy smile given in return, she sayshayed back down the steps. "Guess you heard there's gonna be a rumble in the jungle." Turning to the bar, she squealed at S'ym. "Get all those jungle decorations up from the cellar!" Fanning herself, she smiled. "Yeah, that was one hell of a Halloween party!"

Turning back to the smiling man, she reached forward to take his glass. Sniffing, she smiled. "Ah! Vodka Marguerita with a shot of Cap'n's Jack and Morgan." Sipping, she coughed then wheezed, "And a lemon twist." After a full-body shiver, she patted the man's cheek. "You'd best be deciding where you're gonna stand, Ducky...I mean Dukey." She raised the glass in a salute. "Otherwise, you might get Byrned."

**IL DUCKY to GOOD OL' KAISER WILSON:** It was an accident. We'll clean up the mess, have the housekeeper come by, and you'll never know we were near the place.

**"Wouldn't it be Nice to get to there already!"** They were moving slowly through the desert, the horses ploddingly pulling the giant contraption of a wagon up the grade of the hill. Cactus and small syllables littered the landscape as far as you could see.

"Thoon, Mathter," soothed the hunchback, from the seat next to the speaker, "thoon."

"Are you trying to thooth me?"

"Jutht a little."

"Do you even know where we are?," he asked, irritation in the tone of his voice.

The hunchback squinted one eye and furrowed his brow in concentration. Needing more brain power he scrunched down in his seat, and stuck the tip of his tongue between his teeth. A low humming sound emanated from him, and he tapped the fingertips of one hand against the fingertips of the other hand.

"Let'th thee," he calculated, "we've been croththing this dethert for pageth and pageth."

"Yes, I know," snapped the other. "It's past EPISODE Five and we're not *even* in the story yet!!"

"We left the Hobby, moving weth at thix mileth per hour. We paththed the prothpector with the athth moving eath at theven mileth per hour..."

"Athth?"

"Mule," answered the hunchback, "I think hith name wath Jathper." He continued calculating, "tho, theven divided by the Eternal Thunshine page count, leth the header, carry the thix and multiply by...how many people chothe armpit as the uglyth body part?"

"Three."

"Multiply by three, in which cathe that means we're *exactly*...

**WILSON to WILSON & WILSON:** Which of us is the "good" Wilson and which of us is the "bad" Wilson?

**WILSONS to WILLIAMS:** If there's only one of you, shouldn't it just be William?

**BE NICE to WILSONS:** As I see it, there's a good one, a bad one, and an ugly one ...

**Thomewhere Weth of the Hobby...** "That is the most idiotic, moronic, hare-brained ..." he halted in mid-tirade as the wagon crested the hill and they came into sight of the town. It's buildings played out across the pages below them in a panorama of a simple western hamlet getting by on the edges of civilization. "...AB-SO-lutely brilliant calculation!"

"Thank you, Mathter."

The man reached down next to his seat and came back up with an extremely long brass telescope. He extended it and peered at the town, "dust and hovels," he muttered. His gaze fell on the sign naming the town at the outskirts, but it had fallen into disrepair. Literally, it was a bare post and a pile of planks.

"Time to make our GRAND entrance," he said to the hunchback. He pulled his tall stovepipe hat off his head and beat the dust off of it, brushed more dust from his short cape, appearances were important. He pulled on the curls of his mustache and instructed the hunchback, "I'll settle the wagon. Simon, you help the old girl GET dressed."

"Yeth, Mathter," the hunchback scrambled from the seat, up the short ladder to the roof and hopped along the gangplank that ran between the gleaming brass sets of the calliope pipes to the back of the wagon. At the rear, atop the piled baggage, sat a large red crown...too large for a man to wear. Simon hefted it with a grunt and turned to face the elephant that was chained to the rear of the wagon.

"Hello, Thumbelina."

Meanwhile, the tall thin man in the stovepipe hat swung down from the seat and walked around to the side of the wagon. He used his cane to reach up and flip a latch at the top of the wagon that held a roll of fabric. Released, it unfurled down the side of the wagon, and he stepped back to admire the gold lettering on the red velvet. He smiled, and pulled on the curls of his mustache.

### ***"Professor Alexander's Medicine Show"***

*Limited Availability of the Hobby's **Most Modern** Patent Medicine*

Secrets of the Orient **COMBINED** with Science

Electro Magnetic Bathing Fluid derived from SNAKES, radiated with Galvanic Electricity

Blood, Liver & Stomach Renovator – Cures Female Complaints - Good for What Ails You

*(Used Exclusively in the Sultan's Harem- Odalisque tested and approved)*

In smaller print; Bottled exclusively by Flat Evil Enterprises. *Cheater's Whiskey*<sup>TM</sup>

In much smaller print; Not liable for effects not solicited by imbibee<sup>c</sup> Guarantee not valid outside of the Hobby.

Unseen on the back; side effects may include partial paralysis, incontinence and in some cases death.

He scratched his chin thoughtfully, "I wonder if I could add an endorsement from THE QUEEN?" He decided to decide later and went on with the preparations. He attached the calliope bellows to the crank on the rear wagon wheel, went around the wagon to drop the banner on the far side. As he rounded the wagon he banged on the window, "Get a MOVE on in there!" A muffled inaudible response came through the wood siding.

Soon they were ready. They had put the blue silk drapes and the blue feathered head-bands on the horses. They had raised the flagpole on the wagon that was topped with the anemometer, it didn't do anything, but it looked 'scientific'. Thumbelina, the elephant, was dressed and Chowder, their shill, had already left. They were ready, he just had to decide on the tact he would take, which approach fit the town. The Professor was using his telescope to size up the motley assortment of buildings that lay below.

'The approach' was the matter of penultimate importance. Only outranked by 'The escape'. He panned the telescope back and forth across the buildings below, looking for schools, churches...houses with paint on them; indicators of the intelligence, moral fiber and work ethic of their occupants. He didn't see any. He was encouraged.

It wasn't always the same; each town was different. Some towns were "smarter" than others, for them you played dumb. Others were good, for them you played better. The ones that were poor, you played rich...but if they were rich, you didn't play poor. It was a complicated algorithmic formulae he had worked out through playing a myriad of Diplomacy games. It was a math based on human natures; greed over gluttony, multiplied by lust, divided by envy, subtract out sloth, and of course multiply for wrath and pride. He called it Levinson's Axiom of Acts and Actions.

Of course, you also had to roll a twenty sided die and two D6 and check against the Critical Modifier Table. You take all that, quantified by the happenstance of current conditions. Measuring the quotient of how much the people wanted to move the status quo, or if they didn't, you had to provide that impetus. It was all rather simple really.

Some towns were just begging to be took, this one.... Hmmmm. He could see that it had been around awhile, it had issues and issues of detritus laying about, but it didn't appear as prosperous as it had once been. Some of the plots hadn't been finished and he could see a few sagging storylines, but many of the buildings showed activity; others appeared empty, like a narrative not yet filled in. A town fallen on hard times, he mused...a town without hope.

He smiled; what do you give a town without hope?

But. Where to start? He could make out the smattering of buildings that played out across the page, there the laundry, there the bank, there, aha! He twisted on a curl of his mustache.

"That has to be a SALOON," said the Professor to Simon, "Lot's of horses tied up out front, half naked women in the upstairs windows, SMOKE from the CHIMNEY and people going in and out...one laying in the mud next to a HALF filled water trough. THAT'S where we'll head," he made out the sign. "HEART of Darkness." He smiled, "Already a crowd, AND they've been drinking." He collapsed the spyglass decisively and put it down. Simon reached for the brass telescope.

The Professor's gaze had also fallen on a lone figure, off in the distance, entering the town on foot, with sure and measured steps. There had been something familiar about him.

The hunchback had fumbled open the ridiculously long telescope and was unsteadily scanning the town. "Did you thay half-naked women, which half? Topthies or bottomthies?"

**GYPSIES IN THE PALACE, SPECIAL COMMENTATORS ON UNFOLDING EUROPEAN EVENTS:** How can you keep them down on the farm after they've seen Munich? Crisis? What crisis? While the rest of Europe manfully swept aside the small independent (formerly) neutral nations of the continent (notably, only Rumania and Denmark retained sovereignty, and that only through the luck of the bounce of bombastic belligerents) those impetuous Italians traipsed merrily across the Austria Alps – apparently with Vienna's blessing – and attacked previously friendly Germany. By this event, Italy earns the early sobriquet of "The Fighting Fool" and wins the hardly coveted "What Were They Thinking?" Award for 1901 by being the only Great Power to invade another Great Power. And not just once, but twice. The response from Austria and Germany is awaited.

**Somewhere West of the Hobby...Let Sleeping dogs lie, cheat and steal** - "Wouldn't it be Nice to be a land baron," asked Marlow out loud. He was on the boardwalk, in front of the Chacol Noire First Trust, washing the dust off the windows.

"Yep, yep, yep," replied Cyril (an as yet unintroduced minor character inserted here to spur the dialog. Spur...get it? Western pun. Fine, back to our story)

"I reckon I could change careening paths agin'," continued Marlow. "After all, I used to clean up at the saloon...lookit me now. Now I'm cleaning up at the bank."

"Yep. I knew a guy cleaned up at the bank afore," interjected Cyril. "Hark, spoit," he spat tobacco juice into the dust of the street. "Course now he's doin' 3 to 10 in Yuma."

Cyril looked over at Marlow cleaning the part of the window with the bank's name and logo on it. It was an image of a big black dog with the number one across it, and the words 'First Trust' above it.

"Why a dawg?"

"Well, hmmm, hark, spoit," this time Marlow spit into the street, "I always figured the dog, being man's best friend and canine companion and all, denotated the trust and loyalty the bank would have for its patrons. Y'know, like a retriever. Ya give him something, like a bone, or the bank yer money, and then when you come back in, we goes into the vault and retrieves it fer you."

"Yep, yep, yep," said Cyril, "I kin see that. You being a dog and all. It just don't look like a friendly dog. All teathy with those choppers and that snarled up nose."

"Wull, that's easy," answered Marlow, "would you want a friendly dawg guardin' yer worldly goods. Right this way, Mister Robber, wag, wag, let me show you where the bone is buried...oh, and don't forget the good silver. And the one," continued Marlow, "wull, because they's the First Trust here in town..."

"Should be called the Only Trust then," retorted Cyril.

"Reckon it could at that, but there ain't no number 'Only' " nodded Marlow and cleaned at the bottom of the logo, "and here at the bottom, where it says 'Alors Coup"...I reckon that's Frenchie for in-cor-POE-rated."

"Well, that number 'one' looks more like a knife to me," said Cyril, "All pointy at the bottom and all."

"Probably just a fancy Frenchie one," responded Marlow, "all fleur-day-sissy like."

\*ching\* ching \* ching\*

The two looked into the street as the gunslinger walked back into town from the previous chapter, his steps, sure and measured. He strode with purpose, but unhurried, he knew he had time to kill. They were only in the second game year, no one was close to dying yet.

"Itn't that, that Duck of Death fella," Marlow asked Cyril.

"Yep, yep, yep."

"Y'know, that tain't his real name. It's just a nom de queer."

"Yep, yep, yep. But I don't like getting' all into anyone's sexual proclivities," said Cyril, "after all, this *is* the **wild** west. I've been known to drop my longjohns a time or two."

"Probably the Heart of Darkness," said Marlow.

"Yep, yep, yep. It was at the Heart of Darkness at that, now that you mention it," said Cyril, "back in the old days when Loose Lips held sway. Not that she held it much...it swayed and swayed." The two chuckled together about the old days.

"Actually, I meant that it looked like that there gunslinger feller wuz headin' to the Heart of Darkness."

"Oh, so he is," nodded Cyril, "things should start to get interesting around here."

"It's about time. Hark, spoit," spit Marlow. "These long preambles wear me out."

Hark, spoit, spat Cyril, and looked back at Marlow, "Land baron, huh?"

"Yeah. I heard His Bankership talking about the Whining Pig spread outside of town buying up everythin' heresabouts," said Marlow. "So's I says, that fella must be loaded, deep pockets, throwing cash everywhere like a cow pissing on a flat rock, but His Bankership says nope, it's just all on paper."

"Yep, yep, yep."

"Well, I figure hell. Everything's just paper around here. Pages and pages of it. "

"Yep, yep, yep."

"Wouldn't it be Nice to be a land baron?"

**Somewhere West of the Hobby...One night in Bangkok** Wouldn't it be Nice to...hic...wouldn't it...hic...be Nice...to...hic...aw' ta hell with it.

So Mosey had found that the gold coin would go further than a cold beer and a fat steak. He had eaten his fill and drunk some dang Sherry beer the big blue bartender had pulled for him and now he found himself in an inebriated state. There were a line of shots in a row in front of him that he had been assured was twenty year old Scotch, but he didn't think he could drink that much. He closed one eye and the number of shots halved; that was more like it. He had begun to feel that perhaps female companionship might be in order.

"Well then darling," said Miss Kitty, sidling up next to him, "you are in the right place."

"Did Ah say that out loud," asked Mosey?

"No hon, I just keep an eye on the press lines," smiled Miss Kitty, "when I read that you have gold and that you're horn...uh...yearn for female companionship I just do my best to provide excellent customer service."

"You cuss to me for service? Hic."

"No, sweetie, unless of course, you like that sort of thing. Here have another drink," Miss Kitty helped him elevate the glass to his lips. "So, what is it you like in a woman? I'm assuming it is a woman. Though I have recently come into the services of a very talented gentleman."

"Heehawh," interjected Jasper from the hitching rail in the front of the saloon.

Miss Kitty's head swiveled, "what was that?" She looked for the source of the bray but saw nothing.

"Don't mind him, he's jes' lookin' out after my interests," answered Mosey. "Ears like a dang rabbit."

"Heehawh!"

"Ah'm just sayin'," yelled Mosey, apparently to no one. "Nah, Miss Kitty, I wuz lookin' for a piece of strange tonight...jes' not that strange."

"Well, what did you have in mind?"

"You got any of them slanty eyed whoors?"

"The Heart of Darkness is a top of the line brothel, and we'll have none of that discrimination against race, creed or color here!" stated Miss Kitty. "So yes, we have poontang in every color of the rainbow. When they tried to put that railroad through here in the old days," she stopped briefly, almost imperceptibly, recalling a certain flashy young Captain that had headed up the survey..."they used some Chinese labor. Some of them stayed over." She waved her hand to a young buxom woman at the back of the room.

The woman came over; her long green silk dress tight against her body, it was emblazoned with a golden dragon that draped across the fabric and her fabulously pendulous breasts. The dress was so tight it left little to the imagination, less to the leering eye, and made her take short mincing steps. It took her longer to get there and everything that could jiggle, did jiggle, in the sojourn. Her head was slightly bowed so that her silky long black hair fell over her face, obscuring it in an almost teasing fashion. Mosey could barely make out her oriental features, and met the stare of one deep green eye peering out from the hair. She met his gaze with an insouciance that stirred his deep insides. Deep, and prevalently south.

"Mosey, Mai Ling," introduced Miss Kitty.

"She's cute as a tic," said Mosey. Miss Kitty assumed that was a good thing. He continued on, "and you say she's from China?"

"Bang cock," said Mai Ling.

"Damn, straight to the point, ain't she?" said Mosey, "So what is it that ya'll like to do there in Chinaland?"

"Bang cock," said Mai Ling.

"Wull, that could explain why you got about a million little yeller brothers and sisters," said Mosey. "So how long have you been here since you came over from the Chinaland?"

"Bang cock," said Mai Ling.

"Damn, Miss Kitty," whistled Mosey, "she's got a one track mind, a natural at this. I kin see why ya got her on yer staff."

"The question is whether you want her on your staff," answered Miss Kitty.

"I've always wanted to have one o' them girls from China land...hic".

"Stupid round eye," said Mai Ling. Miss Kitty shot her a stern look.

"Whuh..what wazzat?"

"Bang cock," said Mai Ling.

"Shore then, let's saddle up. Show me them stairs, take me to Chinaland heaven...hic. The Forbidden City, the land that time forgot, things that go bump-ugly in the dark...and some such...hic."

The couple, trollop and prospector, moved unsteadily toward the stairs to the upstairs rooms; the ones you could rent by the hour. Mai Ling navigating the drunken prospector in a circuitous and staggering route through the crowded saloon and around tables...sometimes just around. As they came by the cowboys playing roulette at the Bourse table they jostled into a small group; one mean looking cowboy swung around, his hand immediately on his gun butt, a toothpick aggressively clenched in his teeth and a set of hard, cold, killing eyes glaring at the drunken prospector. The crowd suddenly hushed, Bruno's hands were stopped, poised in mid tune above the piano keyboard. Even the deer head above the bar seemed stiller.

"Ya want a piece o' me?" asked the glaring, angry cowboy. Spit flew from his lips as he spoke and his fingers twitched and curled above his pistol.

Mosey closed one eye, so that he could tell which of the two cowboys were talking to him. "Hmmm, where'd the other one go?"

Whispers could be heard among the people watching, whispers of "whisp, whisp, whisp, Wilson boys, whisp, whisp, whisp, Deadeye Wilson, whisp, whisp, whisp."

"Wull, what are you gonna do now?" groused the cowboy, he leaned toward the prospector. The tension rose, a deafening crescendo of silence filled the air.

Mai Ling stepped between Mosey and Wilson, smiled brightly, "Bang cock."

The crowd laughed, the tension broke, and a smile spread slowly over Wilson's face, "Hell, I'd be in a hurry too then, if'n I was fixin ta' wet my rope...y'know, brand me a filly, plow the field. Tie one on, then down and then the ol hee-haw! If'n your little yeller ears kin unnerstan' what ah'm saying," he guffawed.

"Yeah, like you're real subtle," answered Mai Ling.

"Huh? Wazzat?"

"Bang cock," smiled Mai Ling brightly.

"Ha, ha. Well off ta' work with you then, ya' little yeller devil," he tipped his hat and turned back to the Bourse table. Mai Ling half hoisted Mosey and they continued to the stairs.

"Stupid round eye," she muttered. They got to the bottom of the stairs and she looked up the steep incline and over at Mosey, she had gone from half carrying him to three quarters carrying. Oh, well, she hefted, cantilevered him over one shoulder and started slowly trodding up the stairs, one sure and measured step after the next.

"They all stupid round eyes, who put whore house on second floor," Mai Ling muttered, "hell, should be in basement with damn slide down to it."

"Whuh...what wazzat," asked the befuddled Mosey.

"Bang cock."

## By Popular Demand

Credit goes to Ryk Downes, I believe, for inventing this game (although his original version had the GM supply the starting letter as well). The goal is to pick something that fits the category and will be the "most popular" answer. You score points based on the number of entries that match yours. For example, if the category is "Cats" and the responses were 7 for Persian, 3 for Calico and 1 for Siamese, everyone who said Persian would get 7 points, Calico 3 and the lone Siamese would score 1 point. The cumulative total over 10 rounds will determine the overall winner. Anyone may enter at any point, starting with an equivalent point total of the lowest cumulative score from the previous round. If a person misses a round, they'll receive the minimum score from the round added to their cumulative total. And, if you want to submit some commentary with your answers, feel free to. The game will consist of 10 rounds. A prize will be awarded to the winner.

### Round 3 Categories

1. A city in Idaho besides Boise.
2. A commodity.
3. A chess piece.
4. An acronym.
5. A mountain range.

<u>Player</u>	<u>Idaho</u>	<u>Commodity</u>	<u>Chess</u>	<u>Acronym</u>	<u>Mountain</u>	<u>Turn</u>	<u>Total</u>
Berend Renken	Pocatello	Oil	King	USA	Himalayas	36	100
Brendan Whyte	Twin Falls	Oil	King	NMR	Himalayas	28	98
Tom Swider	Pocatello	Oil	King	NMR	Rockies	37	97
Jamie McQuinn	Pocatello	Oil	Pawn	BPD	Rockies	33	96
Kevin Wilson	Pocatello	Oil	Queen	OPEC	Alps	29	94
Bill Brown	Pocatello	Gold	Pawn	USA	Rockies	30	89
Dane Maslen	Nampa	Gold	King	TLA	Rockies	22	84
David Burgess	Pocatello	Oil	Queen	NASDAQ	Himalayas	34	82
Brad Martin	Bismarck	Oil	Pawn	UN	Himalayas	24	79
Brad Wilson	Pocatello	Gold	Pawn	NFL	Rockies	28	78
John Colledge	Nampa	Gold	Queen	USA	Himalayas	24	73
Gina .Teh	Nampa	Wheat	Queen	LOL	Himalayas	21	71
David Partridge	Idaho City	Corn	Queen	AIDS	Alps	13	68
Melinda Holley	Pocatello	Wheat	Queen	UNCLE	Rockies	28	68
W. Andrew York	Pocatello	Wheat	King	NATO	Rockies	28	67
Jeremie Lefrancois	Idaho City	Oil	Knight	NATO	Himalayas	23	66
Allison Kent	Pocatello	Gasoline	Pawn	ASAP	Alps	20	59
Martin Burgdorf	Idaho Falls	Silver	King	EG	Himalayas	17	58
Joakim Spangberg	NMR	NMR	NMR	NMR	NMR	13	51
Jack McHugh	Sun Valley	Oil	Knight	NMR	Rockies	24	48

### Selected Comments By Category:

**Idaho** - Tom Swider "Hope the Rail Baron fans out there pick Pocatello." Andy York "The one city from the Rail Baron map that I recall." Kevin Wilson "A few choices but not many. I was tempted to go with Idaho Falls since it included Idaho in the name but Pocatello sounded more interesting and a company I used to work for had a JV with an operation in Pocatello. I never had a chance to go there but I hear it is nice. Cold in the winter but a nice part of the country. " Dane Maslen "I've opted for the state's second largest city, though Idaho Falls might well have been a better bet. Idaho City would have tempting had its population not been a mere 500. Moscow was also tempting."

**Commodity** – Kevin Wilson "With all the coverage currently and with oil topping \$100/bbl I think this should be the most popular choice."

**Chess Piece** – Andy York "The King of course! Without it, the game's over." Kevin Wilson "Lots of choices again but let's go with the most powerful piece." Dane Maslen "I suspect this will split between pawn, king and queen, but I've no idea which is the right one to pick." Allison Kent "I figure if I pick the one that there are the most of, maybe it will be the most popular answer?"

**Acronym** – Tom Swider "NMR is an obvious choice; people who miss the turn will give me points!" Andy York "I guess, with the recent news reports about Georgia and Ukraine trying to join the group, NATO is as good a choice as any." Kevin Wilson "Probably the toughest category this go round as there are so many. But, since I think oil will be popular in #2, I'll go with OPEC here and see if anyone else puts the two together. I guess NATO and Benelux and UN could get a few too." Allison Kent "Since I am not part of the text messaging generation, my answer would be ASAP. If I were, it would be LOL or LMAO."

**Mountain** – Andy York "I know, an Amerocentric answer. But, I couldn't decide between the Alps and the Himalayas and with the Idaho entry above, it might make the cut." Kevin Wilson "I noticed last time that the responses seemed to follow geography a bit. For example, the Americans went for Snickers and the Europeans for the Mars bar. And there were a few more folks from Europe playing. Since I think the biggest responses are likely to the Alps or Rockies or Himalayas, I'll go with the European crowd this time and try the Alps. "

### **Round 4 Categories – Deadline is May 27<sup>th</sup> 2008 at 7:00am**

1. A swimming stroke.
2. A color of paper other than white.
3. A type of cloud.
4. A liquid other than water.
5. A famous cat.

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### ***By Popular Opinion***

In this By Popular Demand variant invented by Allan Stagg, the questions are subjective, e.g. "Who is or was the best rock guitarist of all time?" The goal is to pick something that fits the category and will be the "most popular" answer. You score points based on the number of entries that match yours. For example, if the category is "What breed of cats are the friendliest?" and the responses were 7 for Persian, 3 for Calico and 1 for Siamese, everyone who said Persian would get 7 points, Calico 3 and the lone Siamese would score 1 point. The cumulative total over 10 rounds will determine the overall winner. Anyone may enter at any point, starting with an equivalent point total of the lowest cumulative score from the previous round. If a person misses a round, they'll receive the minimum score from the round added to their cumulative total. And, if you want to submit some commentary with your answers, feel free to; players are encouraged to submit press justifying their choices. The game will consist of 10 rounds. A prize will be awarded to the winner.

### **Round 7 Categories**

1. Worst "musical" movie ever.
2. Most important sense.
3. Best color for an automobile.
4. Worst-smelling food.
5. Most fun amusement park ride.

<u>Player</u>	<u>Musical</u>	<u>Sense</u>	<u>Auto Color</u>	<u>Food</u>	<u>Ride</u>	<u>Turn</u>	<u>Total</u>
Jamie McQuinn	Xanadu	Sight	Red	Limburger Cheese	Roller Coaster	30	143
W. Andrew York	Rocky Horror Picture Show	Sight	Grey	Limburger Cheese	Roller Coaster	27	138
David Burgess	Newsies	Sight	Black	Liverwurst	Roller Coaster	23	132
Martin Burgdorf	Rocky Horror Picture Show	Sight	Red	Limburger Cheese	Roller Coaster	30	131
Gina Teh.	From Juston to Kelly	Sight	Black	Durian	Roller Coaster	26	118
Tom Swider	High School Musical	Sight	Blue	Cabbage	Roller Coaster	22	117
Brad Wilson	Grease	Sight	Silver	Limburger Cheese	Roller Coaster	25	107
Brad Martin	White Christmas	Sight	Red	Roquefort Cheese	Merry Go Round	18	97
Melinda Holley	Xanadu	Sight	Red	Seafood	Roller Coaster	27	97
Chris Babcock	NMR	NMR	NMR	NMR	NMR	6	86
John Colledge	From Juston to Kelly	Hearing	Red	Tripe	Dodgems	10	83
Jeremie Lefrancois	Singing in the Rain	Sight	Grey	Corsican Cheese	Roller Coaster	24	83
Brendan Whyte	Cannibal the Musical	Touch	White	Durian	Log Flume	6	76
Joakim Spangberg	NMR	NMR	NMR	NMR	NMR	6	68

Selected Comments By Category:

**Sense** – John Colledge “I would kill myself if I couldn’t hear music.”

**Color** – John Colledge “ ‘Best’ from what point of view? Red is easiest to see. Worst is blue as more people have accidents in blue cars. Than again, most people buy blue cars so I guess that figures! Silver doesn’t show the dirt” Andy York “I’ll only get that color as a bit of dirt is just part of the color and still is almost as good in deflecting the heat of the summer.”

**Food** – Brendan Whyte “Durian. hands down. Most hotels, taxis and other enclosed public spaces in SE Asia ban them.” John Colledge “Tripe would give you the ‘dry boak’ as some Scots would say. Treacle jelly comes a close second.” Gina Teh “Personally I love Durian. I find stinky Tofu to be the worst smelling.”

**Ride** – Brendan Whyte “Though I always liked the spinning tea cups at Disneyland.”

**Round 8 Categories – Deadline is May 27th, 2008 at 7:00am**

1. Worst Beatles song.
2. Best outside temperature (in Fahrenheit).
3. Least-important nation in South America.
4. The luckiest number other than 7.
5. The best year of the 1990’s.

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**Deadline For The Next Issue of Eternal Sunshine:  
May 27th, 2008 at 7:00am – See You Then!**