

Eternal Sunshine #23

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All Eternal Sunshine readers are ***encouraged*** to join the free Eternal Sunshine Yahoo group at 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 think your name is magical.” (Joel in “Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind”)

Welcome to Eternal Sunshine, where I attempt (and fail miserably) to recapture the glory of the Diplomacy zine heyday. All the scanning and posting I’ve been doing of old zines lately has really helped me realize how pathetic my attempts truly are. I mean, HELLO, is anybody even reading this? I’m lucky to generate a letter or two each month, or a pair of responses to the hypothetical question of the month. That’s the extent of feedback I get. In some ways that doesn’t much matter, because at least I’m not spending a ton of money to photocopy and mail this thing like the old days. I leave that to Jim-Bob. I know there are a few of you who LOOK at this (sub)zine, if only because I continue to receive orders for Diplomacy and By Popular Demand. That is actually one aspect of the “free” zine which I a double-edged sword: I don’t have to mail this out to a bunch of people, but at the same time I never know if anybody reads it! Or, if they do glance at some of the pages, does anybody enjoy it? Could I be so fortunate that there are a small handful of readers who look forward to the latest issue being released?

Nahhhh....

Life in our household remains peaceful, despite Heather constantly hitting and slapping me. We all know I deserve it. And I don’t mean that in a battered husband rationalization sort of way...I mean it literally. Anybody who knows me well has no doubt what a handful I am to deal with at home. Between singing to the cats, my rude sarcastic commentary, and my “deliberately misunderstanding” what Heather says (which means I take everything she says literally, simply to watch her clench her teeth and to listen to her exasperated sigh), I am lucky nobody has killed me yet. Not to mention my sudden three-minute busts of fake fart noises, movie dialogue, or renditions of “John Jacob Jingleheimer Schmidt.” Those of you who read “The Knife” know how close I came in my first marriage, and I am sure I’m on track for another close call one of these days. Heather isn’t stupid; she’ll make it look like an accident. A trip down the stairs, a slip in the shower, a random stick of dynamite inserted in my rectum – “masturbatory sex play gone bad” the death certificate will likely read - and it will be all over. Nice knowing ya!

October 31st was our first wedding anniversary, so being the big party animals that we are, I took Heather out to get a steak at Texas Land and Cattle. Yes, we live a simple life, but that’s the way we like it. We also exchanged gifts (although mine are sort of combined as birthday/anniversary since the 29th is my birthday). Heather got me some nice stuff, like a handmade wooden stand for my laptop, some cologne, and a good sturdy Citizen watch (I’m very clumsy so I need one that can stand up to being banged into things constantly). She also got me a few fun t-shirts; one features the face from “The Scream” with a birthday cake in front of him that says “40”...yeah, that’s what an ancient old fogey I am now. 40 years old. What a shame...you’d think I would have DONE something with my life by now. Oh well, I do have a few dreams left (Heather fulfilled most of them just by marrying me); I hope to get some of my writing published, starting with my collection of prison stories. Later I want to collect material on my childhood and family for a second book, and also write one on my relationship with Mara (my first wife, for those of you who don’t know...also my first love). So there’s that goal. I’d also like us to get a small house someday, so Heather can decorate it in her magical, Heather-esque style: heavy on Paris and Halloween.

Actually my therapist Stephanie and I were discussing my writing goal during my most recent session, and narrowing down how I currently see the definition of failure. I don't want to suggest I am being unrealistic. Whether the books are every successfully published or not is not how I will determine my own success or failure. If I can write some more, be generally happy with my effort, collect enough material, and then actively attempt to get a publisher interested (either by myself or through a literary agent), I will see it as a personal success. If three or four publishers turn me down, fine...at least I will have written it and tried to publish it. That's good enough for me. And there are other writing projects I want to complete as well; a few screenplay ideas, collaboration with a friend I recently started corresponding with after 20+ years, and I am sure there are more ideas in my head I haven't defined yet. At one time there was a book I wanted to help Heather write, but that project has been discarded, simply because she does not want to relive the events we'd be writing about. If she ever changes her mind, that's fine, and if not I completely understand. When I write about prison, childhood, Mara, or anything else which is of a personal nature, I ***do*** really experience some of the emotion all over again. That's the only way I know how to write about personal stuff. Maybe if I don't feel the emotion, it makes the result less honest...I'm not sure.

So, back to the anniversary. Heather is easy to shop for...there are always a few movies or old TV shows she wants on DVD, and possibly a specific CD or two. She doesn't like to get a lot of CDs unless she asks for them..I guess it makes her anxious to have them sit around gathering dust. I also usually buy her some t-shirts with designs I know she'll love; this year my two favorites were a dominatrix Betty Boop shirt, and a David & Goliath brand shirt she's wanted for some time that says "Come to the Dark Side...We Have Cookies" and has a drawing of a goofy demon. And you can't go wrong with Halloween stuff! I also bought her a big black cat pitcher that I saw on eBay, which she really loved.

Not surprisingly though, when you want to buy Heather a gift, the easiest thing to do is buy her a book. This is one woman who can **never** have too much to read. The only thing you need to accept is the possibility that she won't like the book...so it is generally a good idea not to buy expensive ones unless she's asked for it, or unless its part of a series she has enjoyed before. From reading her mini-reviews, anyone who has been paying attention realizes her favorite type of book is vampire fiction; in particular, either paranormal romance or young adult vampire stuff. It isn't that she doesn't appreciate other types of literature; it's just that she loves to escape into the book, and those stories allow her to do so more easily than any other type. A good funny book is also a safe bet, as she's shown quite an appetite for books by Laura Notaro and other female writers. So I took the easy way out and bought her some paperbacks and a couple of hard-covers, as well as a pile of Buffy the Vampire Slayer-related comic books and graphic novels which I won in a single lot on eBay. So far I think I've batted about 75% on which books she liked and which she didn't, which is a good percentage.

There was no doubt in my mind what Heather's favorite anniversary gift was going to be, despite my usual anxiety over disappointing her or completely missing the mark. It wasn't the pitcher, or the books, or even the cookie t-shirt...it was Olivia. Okay, I didn't actually GIVE Olivia to Heather, but she's ours now just the same as far as we are concerned.



Olivia is a blind cat, one of the many that has been rescued by the Blind Cat Rescue and Sanctuary in St. Pauls, North Carolina. You can visit their website at <http://blindcatrescue.com/>. It is amazing how these blind cats get around and do just about everything that cats with sight can do. I urge you all to visit the site, if only to watch some of the brief videos. Heather stumbled across the site a month or two back and I could see how moved she was by the tears in her eyes. So I bookmarked it and signed up to sponsor one of the cats...I chose Olivia because she is a black cat (like Toby and Sanka), and black cats have a much smaller chance of ever being adopted than other cats. In this case it is just a personal thing, because obviously the donations Blind Cat Rescue receives go to ALL of their cats, but it's very

satisfying to be able to personalize it and feel especially close to a particular cat. Blind Cat Rescue also sends photos of your sponsored cat on occasion, and provides a little personal update after each new month begins. That's how I "gave" Heather the gift: I put the thank-you letter and photo in an envelope and put that in a box for her to open. I made sure she opened it last, and not until after dinner, because I knew her makeup would be a mess by the time she finished looking at Olivia...especially as I specified that it was Toby the Helpful Kitty and Sanka who were sponsoring Olivia in Heather's honor, not me. Blind Cat Rescue also put up a special note on

Olivia's page, commemorating the sponsorship. As I type this, Heather is studying at her desk for an upcoming Vet Tech exam, and pinned to the wall in front of her are the photos of Olivia. She looks like a very sweet baby, although she is described as a bit skittish. I'm told Olivia likes to be held and petted, but it's the picking up and putting down part she isn't quite used to. So visit their site and check it out, regardless of if you have even the slightest interest in donating anything. You should simply see the cats play, and realize blind cats are worth saving too. Heather and I hope to visit them in person someday, so we can pet the cats and see how they react to new people.

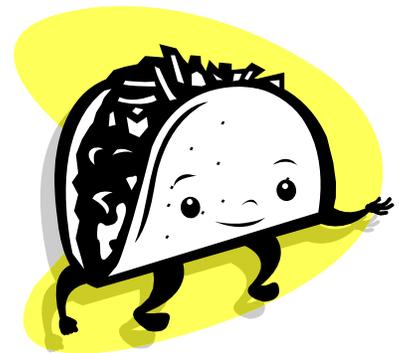
Okay, so if we are generally a boring couple of homebodies, you may be wondering what Heather and I do for excitement besides kinky sex? As you know from reading the reviews, we try to get out and see a movie at least a few times a month (despite not succeeding in that endeavor during October). And we watch plenty of DVDs, either those that we buy or those we get in the mail from Netflix. But our most regular "family" event is eating Mexican food on Friday nights (or Saturday for lunch if that simply doesn't work out).

At first we used to eat all those meals at El Chico's, which is a Texas chain down the street from us (I do not think it is national, but it may be regional in the south). That happens to be the restaurant where we had our first date and met face-to-face. Those of you who haven't heard *that* story may be treated to reading the play I wrote for Heather about it one of these days...it was my present to her on the first anniversary of when we met, and while a few names and events were changed for simplicity, the general content is highly accurate. I'm not sure how interesting it is to most people, but once I finish typing it in from the hand-written copy I might be willing to share it – either privately or, who knows, I might reprint it in pieces here in the zine?



Anyway, about a year ago (maybe more) the service at El Chico's had become so terrible that we no longer could go there, not even for nostalgia's sake. Fortunately, this being Dallas, there's a Mexican restaurant on every block (just as there is a Starbucks, a dry cleaner, and a dollar store on almost every block). So we simply moved those dinners to a new location, which has worked out pretty well for us. At first the service at the new restaurant was up and down too, but after a few visits we started discovering who the good waitresses were, and if you request a table or booth in their section they will always accommodate you (even if that means waiting a bit longer to be seated). Our original "regular" waitress was Serena, who was very personable, fast, and had a very good sense of humor. But she moved to Texarkana with her boyfriend, and we were back playing the field. I think we had to actually complain about the service one time, which is something we don't do unless things are simply intolerable (and even then we don't complain until later...there's simply no reason to make a scene at the restaurant, and in most cases we by the time we are ready to complain we don't want the management trying to resolve the problem at that moment, as our main goal is to get the heck out of there before our mood gets worse).

Pretty soon we found our new "regular," a very funny girl who is nicknamed Little Turbo (you'll notice I haven't revealed the name of the restaurant, or the waitress' name...that's just because I don't want all of our fans tracking us down and trying to buy us dinner. Besides, I know all you single guys would hit on Heather, and I have to work hard enough already to keep her from trading me in). Little Turbo is a blast, and I can usually get some kicks saying my typical oddball things to both her and Heather, watching one or the other (or both) turn red and get embarrassed. If I don't bring up sensitive personal issues of theirs (real or imagined), I can do the same thing by discussing my passion for shaving my public hair into holiday-themed shapes, or braiding by butt-hair with colorful beads. Then there's always bathroom talk, which is perfect for mealtime conversation. I think so, anyway. Really, I've discovered that if you are blunt and honest and open about all topics, that's enough to make people blush and run away. Then again, I've always had the "running away" effect on women even before I started being so open and honest. So maybe it's just my repulsive appearance, or an overwhelming odor I am not yet aware of. I need to ask Heather, maybe she can clue me in.



Finally, in zine news, be sure to read the whole thing...there's some new game openings, a gamestart for Diplomacy, Bourse (attention Tom Swider), and the new By Popular Demand game, and the latest addition to the stable of subsubzines: Jack McHugh's "Brain Farts." And, as usual, a bunch of crap from me. You know, the stuff nobody ever comments on or sends me letters about. THAT stuff! Happy Thanksgiving (if you celebrate that holiday) and I'll see you in December!

Playlist: "Believe It" – Tony Williams Lifetime; "Greatest Hits" – Steely Dan; "Platinum Collection" – Genesis (especially disc 3); "Jumping Jive" – Joe Jackson; "Living in Oblivion Volume 2 and 3" – Various Artists;

"Matching Tie and Handkerchief" – Monty Python; "Hair" – Original Broadway Soundtrack; "Once" – Soundtrack; "Rubberneck" – The Toadies; "Babydoll" and "Weaponize" – Kay Hanley; "Caught in the Act" – Grand Funk Railroad; "Drama" – Yes; "Greatest Hits" – Blondie. Yeah, it's been a strange month...and a long one.

Christmas in Prison

Prison is a very lonely place in general, as you might imagine. Those inmates who are lucky enough to get visits every week or so seem to handle it a little bit better, but the trade-off is they also psychologically feel as if they should have more input and control into the lives of their family. The rest of us are so cut off from those we care about, it is easier to accept that we have absolutely zero control over anything in the outside world. So you lose either way, although most would prefer the visits I imagine.

For me, I think the thing I missed most was physical contact. No hug, no kiss goodnight, no hand to hold, nobody to gently touch the back of your neck or rub your back. Nobody I *wanted* to have touch me, anyway. There were those who, regardless of their expressed sexual preference, would take comfort in other men secretly. And there were others who did so and advertised the fact, albeit the rendezvous were still clandestine; sexual contact of any nature was a violation of prison rules. But I wasn't a part of any of that...so I was simply lonely.

As miserable as the general inmate population is generally, the Christmas holidays are twice as bad. To begin with, there is the problem of holiday cards. The prison chapel has a very small supply, from which a few inmates can get one or two cards each. The rest of the population is left with the option of buying cards at the commissary. However, there are two problems with that idea. First, the only cards they sell are Christmas cards, so if you happen to be of a different religious persuasion you're shit out of luck. More importantly, the available quantity is rather small, so by the second or third day after they are out on sale they're completely sold out...and since each inmate has a specified day of the week to shop at commissary, there is always a large segment of the population which is left with no cards to send (forgetting the fact that some inmates may not be able to afford the cards, or the stamps to mail them, or by the time they can afford them it's too late). Inevitably this causes a great deal of stress among the inmates. There's resentment towards inmates who managed to buy some (or who bought more than one); there's also the fact that many inmates have multiple children by multiple women (or simply have a wife and a girlfriend) so they need more than one card. In a few cases, these women know about each other, so even if an inmate CAN acquire enough cards, there's a problem if the women realize they each received the *same card*. I guess some of these women think the inmates get to shop at a prison Hallmark store, choosing the best card available, but that's more than a little unrealistic. Some inmates with artistic ability would make their own cards, or cards to sell to other inmates for a few cents each. But limits on their supplies and their time kept that a small market indeed. At my first prison I ordered a few cards for Heather months in advance, especially Halloween cards. And at McKean I paid an inmate to draw Heather a one-page Happy Halloween poster. But it was only because my requests were off-season that I was able to do that. You can add to that the issue of inmates wanting to display the cards they received, which could cause arguments from their own bunk mates about space usage, or resentment from others who hadn't gotten any in the mail.

Back to artistic ability, there was also the problem of gifts. Unless you had people on the outside who could send your loved ones holiday gifts (unless you thought a box of q-tips or some used paperbacks would be appreciated), the only gifts available in prison were those you made yourself in ceramics. First you had to be approved to participate...then you had to be able to afford the expensive supplies (and the postage to mail the project to the intended recipient)...and then you needed the time to make whatever project you were interested in. Again, some inmates would supplement their cost by making and selling extra projects, but that strategy was complicated by the fact that you were not allowed to ship packages with ceramics in them if you were not registered in the ceramics program...and some overzealous CO in the mail room might realize that inmate A was shipping to inmate B's home address. So the process had to be a circuitous route, from the prison to a neutral third party, who would then ship it for you to the final recipient. What a pain. If there was room in the program an inmate could join ceramics to eliminate this problem, but then if he hadn't purchased any supplies it was too obvious he hadn't made the item in question himself. Since prison rules dictate it is illegal for you to receive ANYTHING from ANY inmate (which eliminates the whole argument of "he gave that to me" when accused of stealing or gambling), the origin of any project was always important.

So cards are a pain, gifts are impossible...at least you can call on the phone. But the phone is and always will be a major source of tension. The lines are horrendous year-round, but more so during the holiday season. Part of this is because of the extra hour of phone time the BOP allots you for December. They allow those extra minutes because they know how many phone calls inmates need to make, especially those with multiple families.

The problem is this means the lines are eternal all month long; each call can last up to 15 minutes, and it isn't uncommon to find 8 or 10 inmates on line in front of you. Fights about who was where in line, who missed their turn, and who suddenly "remembered" that their friend was behind them happen all too frequently.

Being prison, the phone system is rather unstable. You come up to the phone area and ask "Who is last?" If anybody knows who is last in line, you find that person and confirm there is nobody behind them, and then announce you are now last. In theory that's all it takes. But in practice it can be much more complicated. By prison rule, you don't need to be there in person on line when you're waiting, you just need to be nearby and make an appearance. You can't lay in your bunk, but if you need to use the bathroom or get something from your locker or make some coffee, that's fine. So the confusion arises when somebody somewhere in front of you disappears. Let's say it's the guy who was immediately before you. Now, do you know who was before HIM? If not, your turn may come up and you'll never know it. And since a lot of inmates don't know every body, you could be told you're after "the tall guy who coughs a lot and lives on B-range." Who the hell is that? You'd better figure it out.

Of course, the worst situation is to be told "Branch is last," but you can't find him. So you announce you're after him, and you stand there waiting. Three guys get behind you. Finally Branch appears, but when you tell him "hey, I'm after you" he tells you "no, because Demond is after me, and Lashawn is after him, and I think somebody is after him" When or where this happened is always in question. But if you think you're pissed off, what about the guys behind you who now discover they may be four more places back in line, when there's only an hour to count time...at which point the phones get turned off for the night. Or maybe it's an earlier count, which means the phone line is likely to start reforming all over again when we are cleared to move (populated by those who live closest to the phones). On a normal month the phone situation is only really bad during the first few days (when everyone is allotted new minutes), or just after payday (when broke inmates can make a few calls without inflicting their relatives with the insane collect-call charges). But in December, it is one non-stop cluster fuck.

Adding to the fun we have inmates who wait two hours for their turn, get up to the phone, and find nobody home. Or the line is busy. Or their party misunderstands the electronic instructions and instead of accepting the call by pressing one, they press 2 to deny it, or press whatever the code is to block all future calls (my father used to panic and just hang up, so he could get Barbara to answer and push the buttons). If you call once or twice that's fine, but after you've dialed the phone unsuccessfully five or six times, if there is a long line behind you the rumbling starts. "She ain't home man, give it up. Move along." Now the inmate is faced with a choice: move to the end of the line, or "fake talk" as if someone was there, and hope nobody notices that he starts redialing a few minutes later. But if they do notice, there will be hell to pay.

So if the call never goes through, you often have a VERY pissed-off inmate, especially if he is calling at a semi-pre-arranged time. Of course, there cannot be any true time arrangements, because you never know when your turn is going to come up, how long the line is, when the phones will be turned on, or if they are working at all! If this is a rocky relationship to begin with, you get someone on the outside world all irritated because they were expecting the call an hour ago...or you get an inmate who thinks his girlfriend is cheating or has abandoned him because she's not home when he thought he would be.

Then what if the call DOES go through? Well, the phones are in a very active part of the housing units, so there is plenty of noise...not to mention the ten or more inmates standing there waiting for their turn. So it's hard to hear. And so many inmate relationships are strained, more so around the holidays than any other time, the odds of an argument on the phone rises dramatically. If it gets too vulgar, the CO monitoring the phone call (they are ALL monitored and recorded, but you never know if someone is listening as they switch from one line to another) can disconnect it. If the inmate or the person they are talking to makes a threat, or says something illegal, the call can be terminated and the inmate can be called to the front, possibly even thrown in the hole. I remember one inmate had his six-year-old son say something about "I wish I could come there and bust you out, Daddy" and it was only the inmates quick, forceful reprimand of the child (and the luck to have a semi-understanding CO on duty) which kept him from getting locked up.

On the other hand, if the call goes well, the inmate is just as likely to be sad or depressed or crying. Given the fact that most of these inmates are terrible at expressing emotion, and feel tears are a sign of weakness, all sorts of trouble can brew, depending on who is around, who says anything, and how self-conscious or insecure the inmate is. I never had problems with that; I was willing to cry whenever I felt like it, and since I was regarded as some kind of nut-job-oddball-freak by most inmates that was tolerated. And if an inmate tried to give me a hard time about it, my complete lack of anger at their ribbing killed the enjoyment for them. Surprisingly though (to me anyway) my fair, honest, friendly, and respectful treatment of most of the population gave me some rather powerful friends, in all groups. And the knowledge of those associations kept me from having too much trouble.

Guys knew I wouldn't screw them over in the phone line or the laundry line, and that I didn't let people cut behind me in chow line (and I didn't cut myself)...so I wasn't often a target for these holiday explosions.

The other thing which made holidays so depressing was the fact that you couldn't receive any gifts either. Aside from money being deposited to your account (which you couldn't do much with except buy some food or make phone calls without calling collect), the only thing people could send you were books. Paperbacks could be sent from anywhere, but hardcover books had to come directly from the seller (such as Amazon). Space limitations in your living area made receiving books a problem for some inmates, as they had no place to put them (or already had more than five, which was supposed to be the limit). And a lot of inmates didn't like to read anyway. Magazine subscriptions made good gifts too for many inmates. But that was about it. Nothing else was possible.

The prison system had one small solution to this problem. On an afternoon a day or two before Christmas, there would be the "holiday bag" distribution. All the inmates would be called back to the housing units for a special count, and then we'd be released to move towards the chow hall. You'd stand in a long line, and move slowly. Eventually you'd make it to the normal food area, where you'd get a couple of homemade cookies that the Cooking Class had baked the night before, and a sealed plastic "gift bag" which contained a few Hershey's Kisses of single candies, a bag of Famous Amos cookies, some crackers, and other miscellaneous treats. This would be followed by a handshake from the Warden or Assistant Warden, and a "Happy holidays" greeting, with a look on their face as if they wished they could use hand sanitizer as soon as possible. You then retreated back to your bunk, where inmates traded whatever they didn't want or hoarded for later enjoyment (I was a hoarder; in particular I liked to hoard the cans of soda we'd get with our boxed meal on holidays...six months later I'd be the only guy with a can of root beer or grape soda in the entire prison). That was it. Happy holidays: a bag of expired cookies, candy, and chips.

And the worst part was you were actually happy to get it. I mean, as shitty a gift as it was, it was still *a gift*, and it still commemorated the holidays in some fashion. In a small way, it made you feel like a human being for about 60 seconds. And when that wore off, it could hurt just as badly as a punch in the stomach.

Hypothetical of the Month

Last month, I posed the following: You have an addiction (other than sex). You can freely indulge in your addiction forever without unwanted side effects; if it is food, you don't gain weight. Alcohol or drugs? You can enjoy the effect you want, but not suffer physical repercussions or damage afterward. But, the trade off is, you can never again achieve an orgasm. Not during sex, not a nocturnal emission, and not during masturbation. Would you make that trade?

Melinda Holley - Hands down, I'll take being able to eat all the chocolate candy & banana ice cream that I want without bad things happening to my weight and sugar levels! At my age *ahem*, this one isn't even a close race.

Tom Swider – I wouldn't make the trade. I'm a pretty middle-of-the-road type of guy who doesn't experience dizzying heights or dark lows, but stays at a pretty constant room temperature.

My answer is flatulence. How could you sleep with shrimp wriggling around on your chest? Besides, you can try to blame the farts on other people...or else there MUST be a few women in the world with fart fetishes. You just search around until you find one!

Response to this section has been rather weak, but I suppose I can attribute some of that apathy to how odd the hypothetical questions have been. Maybe I'll try running some less-dramatic questions. If things don't pick up into the beginning of 2009, I may drop the Hypothetical altogether...but then again, maybe I won't! Anyway, let's try something more normal:

This month, a question submitted by Tom Swider (and all of you can feel free to suggest future questions): In the HR field, something that has actually happened a few times (including my boss) is this, believe it or not: recent college grads that go for job interviews who don't get the job or new hires that get their

first performance reviews don't get all "1's" (highest possible score). The boss gets a call from the parents wanting an explanation as to why their son/daughter didn't get the job, or didn't get the highest possible performance rating. What would you do as the boss?

The Dining Dead - The Eternal Sunshine Movie Reviews

Synecdoche, New York – Those of you who follow movies at all probably realize that this subzine is named after the Charlie Kaufman film **Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind**. His film **Adaptation** is also on my favorites list. I have been a fan of Charlie Kaufman ever since I laughed my way through **Being John Malkovich**. So when I first heard about this film moving into production, I was immediately interested. My only trepidation was caused when I learned that Spike Jonze, who directed *Adaptation*, was not going to be associated with this film after all because he had signed on to direct *Where the Wild Things Are* instead. Charlie Kaufman made the decision to step behind the camera and direct **Synecdoche, New York** himself – his first attempt. And therein lie the problems with the film, as far as I can tell.

In a somewhat David Lynchian feel, the film follows the character of Caden Cotard (played by Philip Seymour Hoffman), a theater director who is finding his work unimportant and his marriage failing. His wife (Catherine Keener) takes their daughter and goes to Germany for an exhibition of her microscopic paintings, leaving their relationship in question. At the same time, after directing an uninspired adaptation of *Death of a Salesman*, Caden finds he has been the recipient of a generous grant to produce honest work. With that grant, he hopes to achieve something lasting and true, but has no clear vision of what that work will be; it is a work in progress.

In many ways portions of the film also remind of the Daniel Clowes comic book *Eightball*. Caden is stricken with an odd nervous condition, removing his ability to salivate or cry. Sores break out on his legs and face, but we see other repulsive sores on characters such as his therapist. Time moves to and fro; Caden thinks that a week has passed, while we're told a year has. He hits it off with the box office girl (Samantha Morton) but after a guilt-covered failure in bed, the relationship dies. Eventually he marries the female lead in *Salesman* (Michelle Williams) and begins work on this tremendous project: building the entire city of Schenectady within a warehouse, with every person within its walls part of his play.

From here, the film begins taking dizzying turns and jumps. Everyone has an actor playing them, including Caden (although in some cases the actor and the subject are one in the same). Conversations jump from character to actor to everywhere in between. Rooms, walls, and buildings rise and fall. Caden's condition gets worse, and better, as he and the actors spend years on this project. Caden also longs to see his daughter Olive again, who he refers to as his "Real daughter" (despite having one with his second wife). Through it all, there are some tremendous laughs, a lot of head scratching, and plenty of room to consider the vast themes Kaufman is touching on.

Unfortunately, in the hands of an experienced director, I believe the film would have found a much more profound focus. I think 20 minutes should have been cut from the final print, defining and limiting some of the subject matter. Without that, the film begins to drag badly two-thirds of the way through...which, perhaps, it is meant to do. Because clearly a large part of the film is a metaphor for life itself: life is always a work in progress. We look for meaning, but often find none. We wish for a director to tell us what to say and what to do. Even emotional moments can seem fake and contrived; being ourselves (and being true to ourselves) can be the most difficult task we will ever encounter. So we put on the character we think we are supposed to play, and say and do the things we think we are meant to do. We suffer terrible regret, and feel great pain when we believe we have disappointed those we care most about. And then, just when we think we've figured something meaningful out, we die.

If you're a bit unobservant, as I was, you won't realize until after the film that the title is *NOT* **Schenectady, New York**. Kaufman purposely uses synecdoche, which is a word that means using a part of something to refer to the whole (such as "a new set of wheels" to refer to a car), or the opposite, the whole of something to refer to a part ("use your head" instead of "brain")...among other meanings. Life is a stage, and each of us must play his part. But despite what we may think, we are not special...this is not our movie or our play, it is a stage crowded by billions of actors, all playing the lead in their own production. Too bad none of us really know what we're doing, and only a few more understand the character they are playing.

Seen on DVD – **Charlie Bartlett (D+)**, emotionless, terrible merger of Pump Up the Volume, Breakfast Club, Parenthood, and cold cream of mushroom soup). **UHF (B)**, despite Weird Al being a terrible actor, I still get a lot of chuckles out of this very juvenile movie). **Over the Edge (B+)**, Matt Dillon's first film, a teen movie that really hits the aimlessness of the time it portrays). **Heavy Metal (B)**, not as amazing as when I was younger, but some of the dialogue remains classic). **Trading Places (A-)**, hold up so well, and when watching the movie you realize that without the great direction, and the performances from the entire cast, this script could have been a piece of garbage).

Books in Boxers

Eternal Sunshine Book Reviews

Shoggirl – Steve Martin – This novelette is a generally interesting character study of a mid-twenties woman living on her own in Los Angeles, trying to find acceptance within herself and within a relationship. A somewhat older (and much wealthier) man enters her life, and the two of them begin a romance. Overall I found the book enjoyable, but the only character which felt true to me was Mirabelle, the protagonist. The men she encounters, and the other women, never felt especially developed. They were described and explained, but to me they just never felt like people...just characters.

Hippo Eats Dwarf: A Field Guide to Hoaxes and Other B.S. – Alex Boese – A bit more enjoyable than his book Elephants on Acid, and much better than A Museum of Hoaxes. Hippo Eats Dwarf is a collection of various hoaxes, most dealing with modern media. The internet is rife with lies and hoaxes, and in this book Boese does his best to explain some of the better-known ones, and to clue you in on very interesting stories you might have missed. In particular, the book helps remind you that modern media outlets will run with stories they pick up from the flimsiest of sources, without the slightest bit of fact-checking (the recent "Palin Didn't Know Africa is a Continent" article being a perfect example, as it came from a fake professor of a fake university who was a fake campaign insider). Sometimes these hoaxes are meant as pranks, but other times they are simply lies...and, on occasion, they are clever marketing gimmicks to create publicity for products, movies, web sites, or other merchandise. Boese even gives some minor history lessons into hoaxes which have become truth because of how often they are repeated, explaining the origins of "50% of marriages end in divorce" and the 1950's subliminal advertising panic. Worth reading, and a great bathroom book because of the brief entries.



Heather's Tricks and Treats

The Host by **Stephanie Meyer** – I really liked this book. She made a very successful transition from the Twilight series to this more mature novel (her first novel for adults). However, since it was a novel for adults, I expected some kind of sex. It didn't have to be graphic, but some sex would have been nice! The author does a very good job of making you believe there are two distinct people within the body, without being annoying. 4 ½ pumpkins. 

My Horizontal Life by **Chelsea Handler** – This was filled with cute, light-hearted stories. Brought back memories of my single life; some good, some bad. Lots of laughs. 4 pumpkins. 

The Secret Circle: The Initiation and The Captive Part 1 by **LJ Smith** – As soon as I finished this book I asked Doug to check and see if the next one in the series had been released yet. It's a typical young-adult guilty pleasure kind of book...with high school, witches, secret love, not fitting in, and the snotty bitches you always hated. 4 pumpkins. 4 pumpkins. 

The Summoning by **Kelley Armstrong** – Yes, another young adult book, and once again I asked Doug to check about the next in the series. I love to read books like this when I want to take a break from intense

studying for an upcoming exam. This one is about a group of kids that get sent to a home for the mentally disturbed...but they are really there because of their supernatural powers. 3 ½ pumpkins. 

Evernight by Claudia Gray – A decent book, and a good easy read. I needed this after frying my brain studying for a big test. It had some unexpected twists, which I enjoyed. I'm just not sure whether those twists were unexpected because of my brain being fried, or because of the writing (most likely it was the former). 3

pumpkins. 

Meet Me In Montauk

The Eternal Sunshine Letter Column

Tom Swider: I hated shoveling snow. Growing up in upstate New York, we always got hit. We also didn't have a snowblower for many years, and our driveway was about the length of 5 cars, double-wide.

[[In prison I didn't mind it, but besides that it was always complete beating. And how many times did I hear stories of people having heart attacks while shoveling?]]

Now there's a movie: Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf. Perfect Pig Board material ... get drunk, then invite business colleagues over, air your dirty laundry, and play mind games with your guests. Play it as part of a double-feature with Whatever Happened to Baby Jane.

[[That's on our Netflix list as well. I still shudder when we watch these classic films, because deep in the back of my mind I know that Hollywood is going to try and "update" them someday, destroying the genius of the original for a new generation.]]

Half-Price Books can be an addiction. Spent a lot of time in them while I was on the road. Always could find something interesting. None around here, though the last one I went to was in Pittsburgh (got myself a copy of Nancy Noonan's Reagan biography).

[[I like to try and get to the various locations, since they all have different stuff on the shelves. We just went to the big one near us on Saturday, selling some books we'd finished with. Funny...I bought myself two books for \$1 each, but we left with two bags of books, one gift card lighter, and only \$1.82 in change from the books we'd sold. I wonder where the rest of the money went. Heather my love, do you have any idea?]]

Lisa Murillo: Hey Doug...I actually got around to reading this issue...it's lots of fun. And happy birthday (and Halloween, and first wedding anniversary)! You and Heather rented some interesting movies...Evan & I actually saw "Soylent Green" recently and though it was campy we enjoyed it. We even also rented a very good Paul Newman film, "Hud," this past weekend as well, and if you like Vincent Price (I know most of his flicks were crap but just love him!), check out "Theater of Blood" (he plays a has-been actor who kills critics), "Conqueror Worm" (as a 15th-century English witch hunter) or for lighter fare, "House of Wax" (1953 version) and "the Monster Club." It's true that there isn't much out in the movie theaters right now...however, you should definitely see "Religulous" (hilarious and scathing) and Evan wants to see "W" but despite the fact that he's been keeping a low profile lately, I'm so sick of the real thing (thank God it's almost over--go Obama!) that I don't know if I could sit through a film about him even if it's critical....we've enjoyed Angelina Jolie in the past too and would see "The Changeling" but the story seems boring. We intend to go to the King Tut exhibit as well; Evan's really into ancient Egypt and I was extremely impressed by the "Ramses the Great" one in Dallas nearly twenty years ago.

[[I think one reason "W" did not do better is exactly what you mention: people are too sick of the real thing. Even Bush supporters are tired of him after 8 years. I couldn't possibly make it through "Religulous" though, because Bill Maher is like fingernails on a chalkboard to me. I've never found him funny, something about his voice, his manner, something...and the idea of calling his show "Politically Incorrect" was the biggest joke of them all, as I never heard the guests on there say anything which didn't fall within the boundaries of political correctness...or maybe my dislike of Maher clouded my viewing that way. Next on the Paul Newman list for Heather are "The Sting" and "Cool Hand Luke." And I've just learned that she's never seen "All the President's Men," so I believe another visit to our Netflix queue is in order.]]



*Brain Farts: The Only Subsubzine With It's Own Fragrance
By Jack "Flapjack" McHugh - jwmchughjr "of" gmail.com
(or just email Doug and he'll send it to me)*

That bastard Doug kept bugging me to collect some of my thoughts into a column, since only the old-timers in the hobby had ever been forced to read my pointless BS. So, here it is. Each month you'll find random comments and complaints. It's sort of like watching Seinfeld except my voice doesn't go up and down three octaves in every sentence.

I don't know who will have a coronary first: Andy Reid, from dragging that fat body of his around the gridiron, or me from suffering through another terrible season of Eagles football. If I'm lucky it will be me.

I'm changing my football predictions. Now I'm thinking Arizona versus Pittsburgh in the Super Bowl. Should be a good game.

I just hate working for liars. You can't resolve anything because their word is meaningless. I hate that...I like to be able to resolve things....especially things that are difficult to resolve...

Women do nothing but yap yap yap. Always asking you what are you thinking..what are you doing...why you love them.....never important stuff like when are the Eagles going to get a running game or the Sixers some free throw shooters.....always about them and their feelings...it's so selfish.

If I find out who took my bag of Corn Nuts, they're going to be sorry they were ever born.

Women never give u a real choice...don't u know that? It's always "Do what I want or I'll make u miserable....your `choice`."

My wife won't even let me pee when she is showering. Pee once in the shower and you are marked for life. I hardly touched her with it. And she's in the shower anyway so what's the diff?

I work at night, and I'm usually alone. Sometimes at work I'll pee in the water fountain if I am too lazy to go all the way to the bathroom.

I like cornflakes. And I like ice cream. But I don't like cornflake-flavored ice cream. Go figure.

I wish there were some good radio stations around here. One that plays The Thompson Twins, one-hit wonders from the 80's, good stuff like that. But all I get is the 24-hour Celine Dion station, country music, Mexican Radio, or rap that you are only allowed to listen to if you wear your pants around your ankles. I tried that look for a couple of days, but since I don't wear boxers or briefs I got a sunburn one day and a citation the next. And what's the deal with baseball caps? These rappers wear them in every direction but forwards, and for some unknown reason they leave the tag on. I'd ask someone to explain it to me but I'm terrified of anybody who doesn't look like they fell out of an episode of Happy Days. I still have nightmares about the episode with "Sticks" the drummer in it.

Okay, that's it for my first issue. Seeing as I've NMR'd out of more games than most of you have ever played in, there's no guarantee that I'll be back next time. But with Doug bitching at me worse than my wife when I forget to flush, I think the odds are pretty good. Let me hear from you!

Out of the WAY #2

by W. Andrew York
(wandrew88 of gmail.com)

Commentary

Back again for another issue. Some font disconnects last time made the issue “jump” right at you. I’ve worked with Doug and hopefully that situation has been resolved. Let me know if something needs to be adjusted or if you’re having problems with the revised look of the sub-sub-zine.

Facts in Five has started with four players. More are VERY welcome, so jump and send your entries in. Commentary from the players and the readership following the game is also welcome and encouraged. Also, as this is the first run of this game under me, if there are questions or suggestions to improve it, please let me know.

The Poll Question didn’t get any takers. The question was probably a bit of a “hot” topic and could have started some partisan bickering. So, I declined to make any comments of my own and moved on to a new, less controversial, question. It is from a conversation I had with Jim Benes, and he subsequently with his class, while visiting Chicago earlier this month. Let the readership know what you think about it!

Lastly, if someone wants to submit entries for an upcoming “The Month in History” section, please send them in. Note that all entries for a given month are 10-year increments. So, next issue, items listed should have happened in January 1999, 1989, 1979, etc.

The Month in History

December 9, 1948 - A C-47 crash lands in southwestern Greenland, stranding eleven air force personnel.

December 19, 1998 - The US House of Representatives passes two articles of impeachment against President Clinton.

December 21, 1988 - Terrorists bring down Pan Am Flight 103 over the skies of Lockerbie Scotland, killing 275 people.

December 22, 1938 - The Coelacanth, a prehistoric fish presumed extinct for more than 65 million years, is discovered off the coast of Madagascar.

December 24, 1968 - Apollo 8 orbits the moon, setting the stage for man’s first off planet landing. While in orbit, on this day, Frank Borman reads from the beginning of Genesis in a broadcast from a quarter of a million miles from the Earth.

December 25, 1948 - Two additional men join the air force crew stranded December 9, in below freezing weather and 100 mph winds, after a failed rescue attempt.

December 28, 1948 - A second C-47, equipped with skis and rocket assisted takeoff equipment, rescue the men stranded in Greenland.

Sources include: Current issue of “Smithsonian” , [Chicago Christmas](#) by Jim Benes

Quote

Talking to one of the staff at “The House on the Rock” in Wisconsin about the Infinity Room (a free-standing, glass walled, room extending out more than 200 feet over the Wyoming Valley), I asked about washing the outside of the windows. He replied in a shocked tone - “We don’t!” and, obviously, had no intention of volunteering to do it.

Poll Question

Each month a question will be posed to the readership. Your thoughts and commentary are solicited for the next issue. Also, any response to what folks have submitted for the previous question are very welcome.

This issue’s question: No commentary submitted

For next issue: “Did the ‘hi-tech’ presentations (holograms, interactive computer graphics, etc) use by the news media during the US election night results enhance or detract from the actual story? If you didn’t watch the US election returns, what are your thoughts on the ‘hi-tech’ enhancements that is starting to become part of every reporter’s story.”

Recipe of the Month

Recipe Philosophy: Except for baking, recipes are only suggestions. I rarely precisely measure, eyeballing most everything. The listed measurements, for the most part, are estimates from the last time I made the recipe. Feel free to adjust to meet your personal tastes – and remember, it is easier to add “more” of something than to compensate when “too much” has been added.

For ingredients, if you don't like raw onions, omit them or replace with celery to retain the crunchiness. If you like food with more spice, add an extra jalapeno or use habeneros instead. On the other hand, if you don't like spicy food, replace the jalapeno with half a bell pepper. Optional items are used when I'm looking for a variation or making it for individuals with specific preferences.

Shrimp Pad Thai

version by W Andrew York

original version from *Cooking Light* (May 2002, page 178)

Ingredients

7-8 ounces wide rice stick noodles (1/2 package), lightly broken up
short 1/2 cup ketchup
3 tbsls sugar
4 1/2 tbsls fish sauce
3/4 tsp crushed red pepper (more or less depending on taste)
4 tsp vegetable oil (or other cooking oil)
1 1/4 lb 91-120 count precooked unshelled shrimp at room temperature
2 large eggs, lightly beaten
1-2 cup fresh bean sprouts
3/4-1 cup sliced green onions
6-10 large cloves of garlic, minced
chopped unsalted, dry-roasted peanuts for garnish

Steps

- 1) Place noodles in a large bowl and cover with hot water until soft. Drain.
- 2) Combine ketchup, sugar, fish sauce and pepper in a small bowl.
- 3) Heat oil in wok (or other large pan) over medium-high heat. Add eggs, cook 30 seconds or until soft-scrambled, stirring constantly.
- 4) Add sprouts, green onions and garlic. Cook 1 minute.
- 5) Add noodles, ketchup mixture and shrimp. Cook about 5 minutes or until heated through.
- 6) Serve with peanuts as optional garnish and Sriracha (Rooster) sauce for additional spice.

Notes

- Can use beef, chicken, pork or omit the meat entirely for a vegetarian option.
- If shrimp (or other meat) is raw, cook lightly in additional cooking oil between steps 2 and 3, remove and hold. Return to wok in step 5.
- Additional vegetables can be added in step 4, including jalapenos, corn, water chestnuts, bamboo shoots, shredded carrots, basil, etc; though it deviates from traditional Pad Thai recipes.

Game Section

Facts in Five

Rules: There will be five rounds, the high score at the end of the fifth round will be the winner. Anyone may join anytime with a starting score matching the lowest from the previous round. Anyone missing a round will add the lowest score of that round.

Each round will consist of five categories and five letters. Each player submits an entry for each category which has a key word that starts with each of the letters (twenty-five total entries). Key words are generally the first word; however articles (the, a, etc) and modifiers (“red” in red bicycle for “R” in “mode of transportation” or “general” in General Lee for “G” in “Military Leaders”) are not key words. A word in the category may not be the key word (“bank” in “Bank of America” for “B” in the category “Banks”). For names, the last name is the key word except in the case of commonly used stage names (in a category of female singers, “Q” could be “Queen Latifa” and “Cher” for “C”). An entry may only be used once per round.

One point will be scored for each entry that unarguably meets the letter and category. An additional point will be added if anyone else also uses the same valid entry for the same category. Maximum possible score in a round is 50 with a lowest possible score of 25, presuming an individual submits a valid entry for each category and letter in that round.

Round One Results

Players - Doug Kent (DK), Jack McHugh (JMH), Jamie McQuinn (JMQ), Brendan Whyte (BW)

Bolded - Scores 2 points for matching another entry; ~~Crossed Out~~ - scores 0 points; otherwise scores 1 point.

	*(Wildcard)	D	J	S	Y		
Living Musician							
DK	Jimmy Page	Bob Dylan	Elton John	Ringo Starr	Neil Young		
JMH	Paul McCartney	Diane Ross	Joe Jackson	Cat Stevens	Trish Yearwood		
JMQ	Madonna	Bob Dylan	Billy Joel	Bruce Springsteen	Julio Yglesias		
BW	Michael Jackson	Bob Dylan	Jack Johnson	Sting	Neil Young		
Academy Award Winner							
DK	Tom Hanks	Daniel Day-Lewis	Tommy Lee Jones	Kevin Spacey	Gig Young		
JMH	Paul Newman	Daniel Day-Lewis	John Wayne	Jimmy Stewart	no entry		
JMQ	Jack Nicholson	Bette Davis	Jaws	Schindler's List	Year of Living Dangerously		
BW	Tom Cruise	Walt Disney	Peter Jackson	James Stewart	no entry		
African City							
DK	Cairo	Djibouti	Johannesburg	Suez	Yaounde		
JMH	Cairo	Dar-es-Saalam	Johannesburg	Soweto	Yaounde		
JMQ	Casablanca	Dakar	Johannesburg	Soweto	Yaounde		
BW	Capetown	Douala	Johannesburg	Sfax	Yaounde		
Living American Politician							
DK	Barack Obama	Bob Dole	Jesse Jackson	John Sununu	Bill Young		
JMH	George Bush	Bob Dole	Tommy Thompson	Ted Stevens	no entry		
JMQ	George Bush	Howard Dean	Jesse Jackson	Arnold Schwarzenegger	Yankee Doodle		
BW	George Bush	no entry	no entry	no entry	no entry		
Cigarette Tradename							
DK	Marlboro	Doral	Jade	Salem	Yours		
JMH	Marlboro	no entry	Jacks	Salem	no entry		
JMQ	Marlboro	Doral	Java	Salem	Yuck!		
BW	Marlboro	no entry	no entry	no entry	no entry		
Scores by Category							
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	=	Total
DK	7	6	8	7	7	=	35
JMH	4	5	9	5	5	=	28
JMQ	6	4	8	6	7	=	31
BW	7	4	7	2	2	=	22

Round Two

Letters: O J R X C
 Categories: Hand Tool
 Country with Ocean Coast (Current)
 Prime Minister
 Comic Strip Character
 Language

Possible future game openings - Railway Rivals, Empire Builder, Liftoff!
 Suggestions accepted for other games to offer.

**Deadline For The Next Issue of Out of the WAY:
 December 27th, 2008 at 7:00am – See You Then!**

Game entries, letters of comment and other material can be sent to:
 wandrew88 at gmail.com; or by post to: W. Andrew York; POB 201117; Austin TX 78720-1117

Game Openings

Diplomacy (Black Press): Signed up: Philip Murphy, Ian Pringle, need five more to fill. Get in on the fun now!

Deviant Diplomacy II (Black Press): Signed up: None. Need seven to fill. Rules below. A classic variant which can become as insane as a Charles Manson interview.

Chaos II (Black Press): Signed up: None. Need thirty-four players to fill. Rules below.

Diplomacy Bourse (Black Press): Buy and sell the currencies of the Diplomacy nations. This Bourse is using the new game Dulcinea as it's basis. Players may join at any time, and are then given 1000 units of every currency still in circulation. The rules to Bourse can be found below the Dulcinea gamestart.

By Popular Demand: New game starts this issue, using a Joker rule. Players may join at anytime.

Standby List: HELP! I need standby players!

I may offer another Gunboat 7x7 soon, so keep your eyes open. I'm also thinking about a game of Final Conflict. If somebody wants to guest-GM a game of anything, just say the word. If you have game requests please let me know.

Chaos II (rh06) By Michel Feron

1. The rules and map of regular Diplomacy (ed. 1971) are used, except as noted below.
2. There are 34 players, each starting with one supply center.
3. There is a preliminary season (Winter 1900) during which each player builds a unit on his center (armies on land-locked provinces, armies or fleets on coastal provinces).
4. Each player is also allowed to erect two conquered supply centers into 'home' supply centers during the game. He will then be allowed to build on these new supply centers as on his starting center. To become a new home supply center, such center must have been controlled by the same player during two consecutive Winters. The player must also notify to the Gamesmaster that he wishes to transform a conquered center into a home center, since such transformation is not automatic.
5. Such a center will lose its quality of home supply center when occupied (even during a Spring season only) by a foreign unit. The player can of course give it back its quality of home supply center by recapturing it and controlling it during two new Winters and re-notifying the transformation. Anyway, the loss of a home supply center does not allow a player to erect a third center into a home supply center.
6. If no more than one third of the remaining powers (including those in civil disorder) own more than 17 centers, they may send a formal declaration of alliance to the GM during a Winter season. Every concerned player must send the GM a declaration giving the complete list of all the other powers of the alliance and, if all the lists tally with each other, all the allied players share a tied victory.
7. The center with which one starts does not lose its quality of home supply center when occupied by a foreign unit during a Spring season only.

Although he did say 'CHAOS II' was inspired from Don Miller's 'CHAOS', Michel Feron did find the idea of his variant in the same author's 'ANARCHY'.

Deviant Diplomacy II (rc08) by Phil Reynolds

- 1) Unless stated otherwise, the 1976 Rules for Diplomacy are in effect.
- 2) Abstract: The basic idea of Deviant Diplomacy II is that players can propose and vote into effect both new rules and rule changes.
- 3) Seasons: The game is run using three separate seasons: Winter, Spring, and Fall.

For Winter seasons, players will submit Winter orders and proposed Spring rules.

For Spring seasons, players will submit Spring orders, votes on the proposed Spring rules, and proposed Fall rules.

For Fall seasons, players will submit Fall orders and votes on the proposed Fall rules.
- 4) Beginning the Game: Players will be asked to submit only proposed Spring rules. In the subsequent game report, the GM will publish the proposed Spring rules and request the things needed for the first Spring season, and so the process begins.
- 5) Proposing Rules: Every Winter and Spring season, a player may propose a rule change or a new rule. If a player fails to propose a rule, then his last proposed rule will be repropose, unless it has been voted into effect already, in which case the rule's negation is proposed.
- 6) Restrictions on Proposed Rules: The GM reserves the right to edit or withhold proposed rules, but this should be done only in the most extreme cases which render the game too complex, unplayable, or pointless.
- 7) Voting on Proposed Rules: Every Spring and Fall season, a player is given a number of votes equal to the number of supply centers he controlled at the end of the previous Fall season. A player can cast all of his votes for one rule, or he can split his votes among multiple rules. Players' votes are published.
- 8) Resolving Votes: The rule receiving the most votes goes into effect beginning the next season. If there is a tie, then all tied rules go into effect beginning the next season.
- 9) Victory Condition: To control a majority of the existing supply centers.
- 10) Notes to GM: When running this variant, the GM will need to make a special effort to keep notes carefully, provide correct information in a clear manner, and so on. It is recommended that the GM prefix proposed rules with the first letter of the proposing power. For example, "(A) Fleets may not convoy." To vote, players would order, for example, "3 votes for Rule A." Vote totals can be reported like so: "A = 9, E = 3, F = 0, G = 0, I = 3, R = 7, T = 0." A list of rules voted into acceptance will need to be kept and published. These rules can be prefixed by a brief headline. For example, "No Convoy Rule: Fleets may not convoy." Using these methods will result in easier reference for players and GM alike.

Eternal Sunshine Game Section

Diplomacy "Wouldn't It Be Nice?" 2008A, Spring 1904

Austria (Kevin Wilson - ckevinw1 "of" cox.net): F Aegean Sea Supports A Bulgaria – Constantinople, A Bohemia – Galicia, ~~A Budapest – Galicia~~ (*Dislodged*, can retreat to Trieste, Vienna, or OTB), A Bulgaria - Constantinople (*Fails*), F Ionian Sea - Tyrrhenian Sea, A Serbia - Bulgaria (*Fails*).

England (J r mie LeFran ois - jeremie.lefrancois "of" gmail.com): F Baltic Sea Supports A Sweden, A Edinburgh – Denmark, F North Sea Convoys A Edinburgh – Denmark, F Norway - St Petersburg(nc) (*Bounce*), F Norwegian Sea - Barents Sea,

Sweden Supports A Edinburgh - Denmark.

France (Alexander Levinson - al "of" tolkin.nl): A Belgium – Burgundy, A Brest – Paris, A Gascony Supports A Belgium – Burgundy, A Marseilles Supports A Belgium – Burgundy, F Western Mediterranean - Tunis.

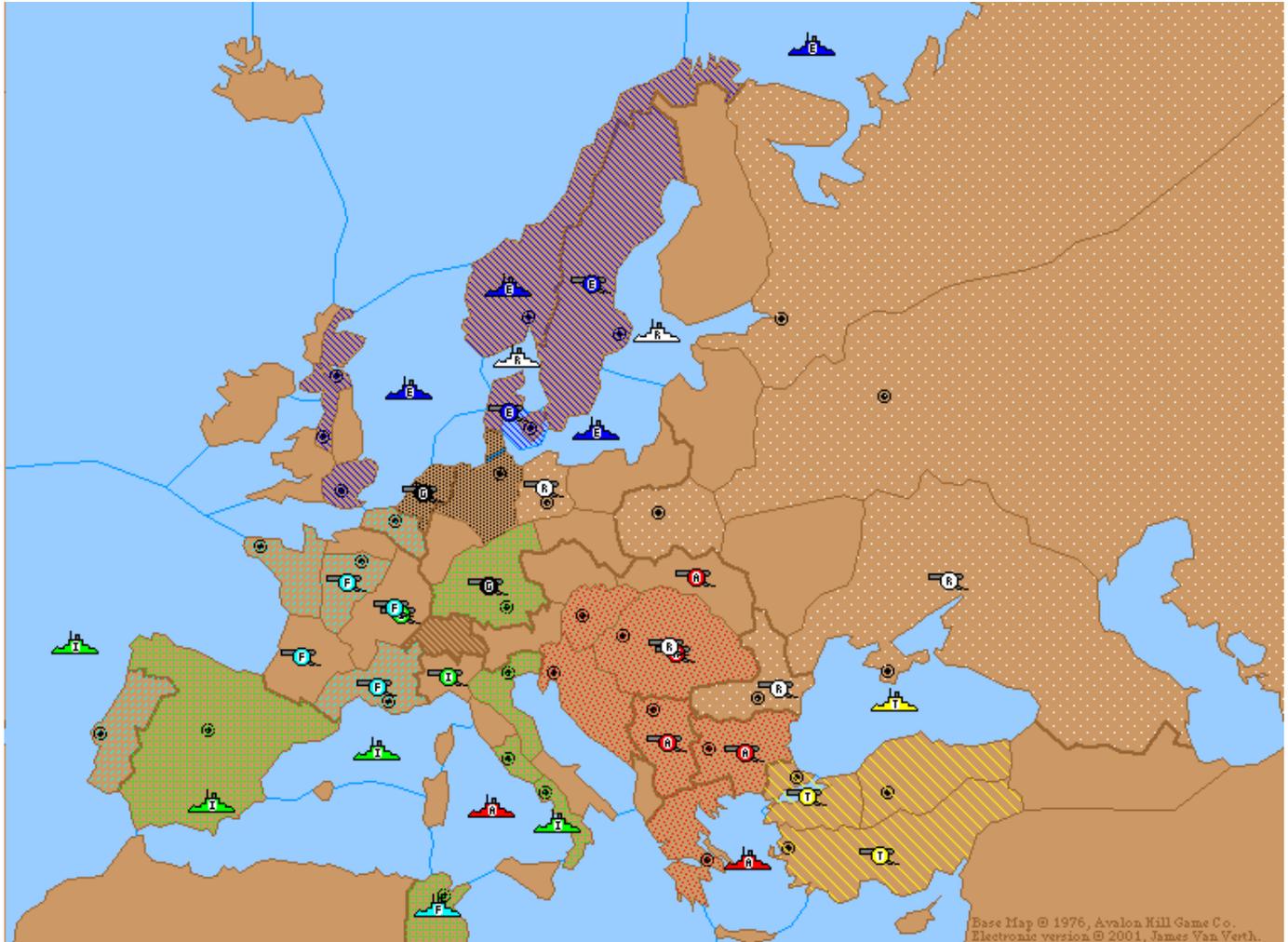
Germany (Graham Wilson – grahamaw "of" rogers.com): A Holland - Kiel (*Bounce*), A Ruhr - Munich.

Italy (Don Williams – dwilliam "of" fontana.org): No Moves Received!

~~A Burgundy Hold~~ (*Dislodged*, can retreat to Picardy or OTB), F Gulf of Lyon Hold, F Mid-Atlantic Ocean Hold, F Naples Hold, A Piedmont Hold, F Spain(sc) Hold.

Russia (Melinda Holley – genea5613 "of" aol.com): A Berlin - Kiel (*Bounce*), A Galicia – Budapest, F Gulf of Bothnia - St Petersburg(sc) (*Bounce*), A Rumania Supports A Galicia – Budapest, A Sevastopol Supports A Rumania, F Skagerrak - Denmark (*Fails*).

Turkey (Brad Wilson - bwdolphin146 "of" yahoo.com): F Black Sea Supports A Constantinople, A Constantinople Supports A Rumania - Bulgaria (*Void*), A Smyrna Supports A Constantinople.



Would Jim Burgess (jfburgess "of" gmail.com) please submit standby orders for Italy? Hopefully Don will return next issue.

Summer and Fall 1904 Deadline is December 30th 2008 at 7:00am my time

PRESS

Jeremie to Don: If you call me again at 2 in the morning, I'll give all my centers to Al. I might do it anyway as he is so much more persuasive than you are!

Naples to Munich: Well, Graham, you are acting like you suck too. I thought that backhanded complement to

me at the expense of my fellow players in this game was just pure sour grapes. Which of us only has two units left on the board? We'll be happy to relieve you of them if you can't engage us into the mid-game. In the old days, people in your position would write interesting press that we might even want to read. I'm sure you don't really suck, but how about rather than complaining about irritation that you grease the wheels with some cogent negotiation.

Con – Moscow: Your move, Madam.

London to the Americans: I just don't understand the Canadians in this game, at least you Americans don't tell me I suck all the time. I thought I was doing reasonably well here, thanks to all of you.

Kevin to Brad: Maybe not a Turkish prison, but Katrina was worse than any Turkish prison I can imagine. Where's Brownie when you need him?

Real Baseball Fans to Turkey: Now tell us again how Philly fans deserve anything except heartbreak and losing? Have they behaved any better since they received the Grace of Ghod that they didn't deserve??

Flapjack to Bwad: Where were you during the parade, I looked for you everywhere?

CA to DE: I am nothing if not zen, I have cut my commute and now have made great progress toward nirvana!

Gamestart: Diplomacy "Dulcinea" 2008C, Winter 1900

Austria (Stephen Agar – stephen "of" stephenagar.com): Has F Trieste, A Vienna, A Budapest.

England (Simon Gwilliam - simon.gwilliam "of" baesystems.com): Has A Liverpool, F London, F Edinburgh.

France (Brad Wilson – bwdolphin146 "of" yahoo.com): Has F Brest, A Paris, A Marseilles.

Germany (Lee Self – leeself "of" gmail.com): Has F Kiel, A Munich, A Berlin.

Italy (Melinda Holley – genea5613 "of" aol.com): Has A Rome, A Venice, F Naples.

Russia (Jack McHugh – jwmchughjr "of" gmail.com): Has F Sevastopol, F St. Petersburg (sc), A Moscow, A Warsaw.

Turkey (Jim Burgess – jfburgess "of" gmail.com): Has F Ankara, A Constantinople, A Smyrna.

Spring 1901 Deadline is December 30th 2008 at 7:00am my time

Gamestart: "Dulcinea" Diplomacy Bourse

Diplomacy Bourse Rules

The game of Bourse is a game played alongside, but separate to, a Diplomacy game. The rules were first devised by Don Miller.

1. Any number of players may participate. Each player starts with 1000 units of currency of each country - Austrian Crowns, English Pounds, French Francs, German Marks, Italian Lira, Russian Rubles, and Turkish Piastres. At the start of the game all currencies are equal in value and worth \$1.
2. Orders are in two parts, buying and selling. Players may never sell more than 500 units of any one currency at any one time, but may buy up to as much as they can afford. Any surplus after purchases may be retained as a Dollar balance against future purposes. There is no limit to the number of dollars that may be withdrawn from this balance, but it may never go into deficit.
3. Each time 100 units of a currency is sold (or bought) it's value in relation to the Dollar drops (or rises) by 1¢; currencies are computed to 1/100th of a cent, so a purchase or sale of 1 unit moves the value by 1/100th of a cent. A currency value is only adjusted once against the dollar, by the aggregate amount bought or sold - thus if on turn one two people bought 300 and 315 marks respectively and another player sold 500 marks the adjustment would be +1.15¢ (300+315-500 = +115 more bought than sold). So the mark would rise from \$1.00 to \$1.015. Your purchases and sales for each turn take place at the **newly computed prices**; the price movement takes place BEFORE your purchases and sales are settled. In other words, in the above example, the purchases and sales would take place at \$1.015, not \$1.00. I'm not sure if everyone does it this way, but I do.

4. When a country is eliminated in Winter season, trading in the currency ceases and its value reduced to zero. Otherwise the value may never fall below 0.01¢. There is no upper limit.
5. Players may play Bourse under a pseudonym, or they may use their real name. A player may join the Bourse at any time and is given a holding of 1000 units of every currency still in circulation.
6. Orders cannot be conditional. If orders are incorrect or illegal they will be adjusted down. Players are asked to include details of their calculations with their orders.
7. The game ends when the associated Diplomacy game ends. The winner is determined by the number of supply centers held by each country times the amount of currency held.
8. In addition: (a) Those playing in the associated Diplomacy game may play in the Bourse and (b) No Dollar surplus may be created in Spring 1901; you **must spend** whatever funds you raise by selling **during that turn only**.
9. Deadlines will be 12 hours before the Diplomacy game deadlines.
10. If less than six people submit orders for Spring 1901 (or acknowledge they are playing but choose no action), the Bourse will be cancelled.

Spring 1901 Bourse Deadline is December 29th 2008 at 7:00pm my time

WINTER 1900 PRESS

Baron Wuffet: Buy low, sell when they reject my directors.

By Popular Demand

Credit goes to Ryk Downes, I believe, for inventing this. 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 10 Categories

1. A pointless holiday.
2. A unit of measure for length or distance.
3. A day of the week.
4. Something you borrow.
5. Something that expires.

Bill Brown gives an inch, but Dane Maslen takes a mile...and that is the difference which puts Dane on top.

Congratulations to Dane Maslen for finishing in first place. Dane, I'll be in touch about your choice of prizes. Now, can he possibly repeat this performance? Send in your orders for Round 1 of the new game and see if you can stop him!

Selected Comments By Category:

Pointless Holiday – Andy York "Personally I would have said Confederate Heroes Day, but hardly anyone outside of Texas would choose that." Philip Murphy "Controversial, but I'm entitled, being Irish. It's just an excuse to act the fool and get horribly, horribly drunk. Which is not a bad thing, just not very idealistic or noble or meaningful."

Unit of Measure – Melinda Holley "Inch (because you KNOW women DO measure)." ***[[Poor Heather only needs the singular form of the word to do that. "Inches" is not necessary. I think my father referred to it as the Irish Curse.]]*** Andy York "Being Amero-centric, otherwise Kilometer." Philip Murphy "My mother kept jockeys as lodgers for over ten years for the local racing stables."

Day of the Week – Andy York "A toss-up between Friday, Sunday, and Monday."

Something you Borrow – John Colledge "I am sooooo tempted to say `rubber' but you guys have a slightly different meaning for that word over there! ☺ " Andy York "In today's economic climate, money should be on everybody's mind."

Something That Expires – Melinda Holley “Warranty (2 days before something breaks).” Andy York “Maybe Milk would be a good answer too.”

<u>Player</u>	<u>Holiday</u>	<u>Measure</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Borrow</u>	<u>Expires</u>	<u>Turn</u>	<u>Total</u>
Dane Maslen	Presidents Day	Mile	Monday	Money	Passport	30	311
Bill Brown	Presidents Day	Inch	Monday	Money	Milk	27	309
Berend Renken	Labor Day	Mile	Wednesday	Money	Drivers License	27	304
Tom Swider	Flag Day	Mile	Monday	Book	Milk	24	302
Brad Martin	Queen's Birthday	Foot	Friday	Money	Deadline	22	299
Jamie McQuinn	Labor Day	Mile	Sunday	Sugar	Drivers License	18	298
Kevin Wilson	New Year's Day	Meter	Monday	Money	Credit Card	20	291
David Burgess	New Year's Day	Foot	Friday	Money	Milk	26	285
Brendan Whyte	Presidents Day	Mile	Friday	Book	Milk	26	269
W. Andrew York	Columbus Day	Mile	Friday	Money	Car Registration	28	259
Allison Kent	Flag Day	Inch	Friday	Money	Milk	27	253
David Partridge	NMR	NMR	NMR	NMR	NMR	10	251
Brad Wilson	Arbor Day	Mile	Tuesday	Money	Coupons	23	245
Melinda Holley	Bosses' Day	Inch	Friday	Hammer	Warranty	12	236
John Colledge	Bank Holidays	Mile	Saturday	Mobile Phone	Subscriptions	14	225
Jeremie Lefrancois	Easter	Meter	Sunday	Money	Time	18	218
Jack McHugh	Grandparents Day	Meter	Monday	Book	Drivers License	15	217
Gina .Teh	NMR	NMR	NMR	NMR	NMR	10	209
Martin Burgdorf	Independence Day	Mile	Saturday	Sugar	Passport	16	193
Philip Murphy	St. Patricks Day	Furlong	Wednesday	Money	Deadline	17	170
Joakim Spangberg	NMR	NMR	NMR	NMR	NMR	10	144
<u>MOST POPULAR</u>	Presidents Day	Mile	Friday	Money	Milk	34	

General Comments: Tom Swider “Never even considered chicken and the noodle variation as separate, especially when you allowed a non-insect to qualify as a correct answer. But you're the boss, and lines have to be drawn somewhere, even if they zig a little now and then.” *[[I look at it this way...when you go to the store, chicken, chicken noodle and chicken and rice soups are all available, which helps demonstrate they are different. If I make homemade chicken soup, it has no noodles. If I make matzo ball soup, it has matzo balls. If I make chicken noodle, it has noodles.]]*

Gamestart: By Popular Demand

For this new game of By Popular Demand, we are using the same rules as above, except in each round you may specify one of your answers as your Joker answer. **Your** score for this answer will be doubled. In other words, if you apply your Joker to category 3 on a given turn, and 4 other people give the same answer as you, you get 10 points instead of 5. Players who fail to submit a Joker for any specific turn will have their Joker automatically applied to the first category. Remember, a prize will be awarded to the winner!

Round 1 Categories – Deadline is December 30th, 2008 at 7:00am my time

1. A team in the National Football League (American football)
2. A name brand of food products.
3. Something obsolete.
4. A department store chain which no longer exists by name.
5. A month with exactly 30 days.

**Deadline For The Next Issue of Eternal Sunshine:
December 30th 2008 at 7:00am my time – See You Then!**