

Eternal Sunshine #25

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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.helpfultobytoby.com> for official Toby the Helpful Kitty news, advice column, blog, and links to all his available merchandise! Links to all of the books and DVDs reviewed can be found by clicking on the Amazon Store button in the main menu of the Whining Kent Pigs website.

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.

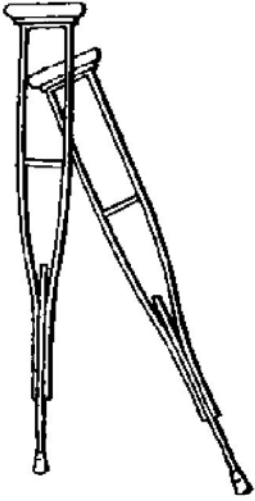
Quote Of The Month – “Joel, hide me in your humiliation!” (Clementine in “Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind”)

Welcome to **Eternal Sunshine**, the only scratch-and-sniff Dipzine in the universe. Just print out a copy and try it. Unfortunately, the smell I choose for each issue is usually a repulsive one. After you scratch and sniff this issue, email me and try to guess what the scent was. The closest guess will get a prize. We're also the only Dipzine which has chosen to adopt PETA's new campaign for reducing fish consumption. As you may have heard (and yes, it's true) PETA wants people to stop using the “harsh” word “fish” and instead refer to those sea creatures as “sea kittens.” Effective immediately, please use this new nomenclature when referring to sea kittens in this publication. You should probably try to integrate this into your daily life as well. So the next time your wife asks you to perform a particular duty which you don't enjoy, the accepted response would now be something like “Forget it honey; it smells like sea kittens down there!”

Speaking of prizes (sticking with zine matters first), I am going to leave the Eternal Sunshine Movie Quote contest open for one more month. Jim Burgess hasn't had a chance to send out the postal copies of The Abyssinian Prize yet, and I want those who only see **ES** through that to have a chance to play. This means YOU have another chance too...even if you already sent answers to me, you can revise or update them. Remember, it doesn't matter if you get all 50 correct (although if you do, you're in the running for the \$25 gift card); just get more correct answers than anyone else, and you'll win a prize. In this case, the prize is going to be a DVD (unless you live outside of North America, in which case I'll figure something else out). Free to play, easy to win, and a decent prize. Give it a shot! You can find the quotes in **Eternal Sunshine** #24, or email me and I'll send them to you directly. ***The new deadline for guesses in the Movie Quote Contest is February 23rd at 7:00am my time (one day before the regular zine deadline).***

In other zine news, the 1898 opening has been dropped, but we still have opening sin Diplomacy and in Deviant Diplomacy. And, as always, you can join in the Bourse or the By Popular Demand game. I'm going to wait an issue or two and then offer some more new games. If you have any requests, let me know. You'll also find the latest columns from Andy York and Jack McHugh, as well as the usual game results. I'm sorry to say nobody had any comments on my news item I wrote about Santa asking for a government bailout. I guess it sucked! What else is new? In the meantime, I'm returning to the series of prison stories. This issue, the result is Part One of the story of travelling to (and surviving in) the Halfway House. Enjoy it, or not, depending on what you feel like doing.

The big news of the month in our household was ***supposed*** to be Heather starting her next semester in school in the Veterinary Assistant program. She was also taking one of two more courses she needed to finish her Associates Degree. But fate has once again intervened, and it will be at least one more semester before she is able to accomplish those goals. I sent an email out to a few people, but for those of you who I haven't told already...on Wednesday night Heather was playing on a trampoline with her daughter Bailey when Heather landed awkwardly on her left leg. Something in her left knee “snapped” (as she describes it) and the pain was excruciating, to where she couldn't put any weight on it whatsoever. She had mobility in her toes, so clearly the injury is limited to her knee.



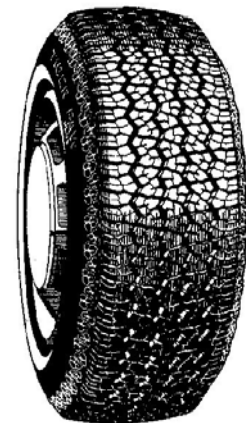
After a good 5 hours in the emergency room we confirmed there is no fracture or dislocation. It is either a very bad sprain, or a full or partial tear of some of the ligaments. We won't know until we let her heal up for a week or so. The doctor directed that after one to two weeks, if she isn't back on her way to recovery, she'll need to then see an orthopedist for examination, a likely MRI, and possible surgery in damage cannot heal on its own.

Heather was given a LARGE leg immobilizing brace for her left leg, which prevents her from bending it. She is in little pain unless she twists her leg within the brace, and she can even put a bit of weight on it with the brace on (and therefore with full support given to the knee). But her spirits are quite low. This accident happened two days after she started the new semester for her Veterinary Assistant program, so she had to immediately withdraw from those courses. There was just no way for her to continue without falling desperately behind, and even then she'd only have been able to attend in a few weeks *IF* her knee was improving. Driving and getting around the two campus locations would be a major obstacle, but a bigger obstacle is the flight of stairs to get to and from our apartment...that takes 5 to 10 minutes up and down right now, with crutches.

You can read a bit more about the accident in Heather's column. As usual, timing was less than ideal. The same day she hurt herself, I came out of work to find my left rear tire down to about ¼ air pressure. I (almost obsessively) check my tires every time I get in the car, so I knew whatever was wrong had happened on the way to work. A quick examination revealed some of the radials were now sticking out of one section, most likely caused by driving on the tire as the pressure dropped. I had to consider myself a bit lucky that there was tire pressure at all, because at least this way I could slowly drive up the street to the gas station and try to re-inflate it.

Unfortunately, the first place I stopped, the stupid air machine ate my 75 cents and gave me nothing in return. I went inside to complain, and the person behind the counter muttered something about how he'd turn on the machine for me from inside. "Push button and hold, push button and hold, yes?" So I went out, pushed the big black button on the air machine in, and held it there...and held it there...and held it there. I must have stood there for 90 seconds, feeling like an idiot. And, as you'd expect, nothing happened. I went back inside, and the guy berated me. "I told you push and hold, you need push and hold!" Eventually I found the manager, who was able to communicate in a semi-comprehensible manner. He came out, checked the machine, and told me the compressor had been acting up and had likely died. He gave me my 75 cents back (while the cashier glared at me as if I'd somehow insulted him or his family or his goat), and I had to search around for another gas station. Finally I found a working machine at a 7-11, and the tire looked like it was holding the pressure pretty well. But I couldn't take the chance of driving on a tire with exposed radials, so I headed towards home, driving carefully, and stopped at a store to buy two new tires.

It was while I waited for the tires to be installed in front, and the two semi-decent tires already on the car moves to the rear, that Heather called me with her wonderful news. "Hi! Umm..I think I need you to come and get me. I fell and hurt my knee and I can't move. And I'm in a lot of pain." Unfortunately I could barely hear her, and I knew it would be another 30 minutes before I could drive. But I hung up, called her back with a better connection, and made sure she was okay. While we were talking I heard the beginning of the "what happened?" commotion on her end of the phone, so I hung up and waited until I could take her to the hospital. Heather was at her ex-husband's place, where his grandparents live too (and where his uncle and Heather's mother were both visiting at that moment), so I could just imagine the nightmare fiasco going on when they discovered Heather lying in the back yard. It was sure to increase her stress, anxiety, fear, and pain...plus her guilt at hurting herself. Personally, I thought it was just as well that if she was going to have this accident, it happened now – when the semester had just started – then later on after she'd been busting her butt trying to learn all she could. At least she could withdraw without penalty.



Anyway, I'm trying to be supporting and loving and caring and a good husband...~~but damn, in a month or two those 21-year-olds that live near my office will start walking around in miniskirts and...~~ I mean, I hope her injury won't require any surgery, but I'll be there to support her and take care of her regardless of what she needs!

Besides, there are worse things that can happen to someone. Speaking of which...



I was saddened to learn of the death of Patrick McGoohan, one of my favorite actors of all time. He died on January 13th in Santa Monica, California. McGoohan has been out of the spotlight for a few years, although this generation of moviegoers will probably best remember him for his role as Edward the Longshanks in Mel Gibson's **Braveheart**. McGoohan was able to bring true villainy to the role, which included his unique clipped speech patterns.

If you go back a few years, you could find McGoohan starring in, or directing (or both) episodes of Columbo with his good friend Peter Falk. McGoohan won Emmy Awards for two of those appearances; the first as Colonel Rumford in "By Dawn's Early Light," and the second as Oscar Finch (hoping to become the next Attorney General of the United States) in "Agenda for Murder." Both episodes were directed by McGoohan, as was one of my three favorite Columbo episodes of all time, "Last Salute to the Commodore." In this episode, we see Falk playing Columbo at his most manic and quirky. Reportedly Falk and McGoohan got along so well because they were both perfectionists; they were happy to do take after take of each scene in order to get it exactly as they wanted it. Obviously this did not endear them to the studio, but anyone who watches those episodes cannot help but admit the admirable qualities they contain.

His first big role was as John Drake in the British television series "Danger Man" (which was broadcast in the US as "Secret Agent"). Drake was the consummate, suave secret agent, but he never carried a gun and his character was not a womanizer like James Bond. Reportedly McGoohan turned down the role of Bond once or twice (it is accepted that he turned it down before Roger Moore was offered the part, but some believe it was McGoohan who was originally offered the role, and that he suggested Sean Connery instead). The role of John Drake made McGoohan the highest paid actor on British television at the time.

Tiring of "Danger Man" after three seasons, McGoohan moved on to what would be his most famous role: that of the unnamed Number 6 in "The Prisoner." This allegorical miniseries, seventeen episodes in all, was created in partnership with George Markstein. McGoohan plays a man who worked for the government in some secret capacity (some say his character was actually John Drake again, but McGoohan always denied this, saying this character was more of a scientist than a secret agent). He resigns his position without giving a reason, and is kidnapped, awakening in The Village, an idyllic little community from which there seems to be no escape. In The Village nobody has a name; they are all known by number, and McGoohan's character is Number 6. It is never revealed which side runs The Village. Is it the Soviets? Or, is it Number 6's own side, fearful that he may have been betraying them, or simply deciding the knowledge in his head was too valuable to have him wandering around?



While this battle between Number 6 and his keepers runs throughout the series, a number of other topics are focused on; some directly, some through allegory. We have the fallacy of "free" democratic elections ("Free for All"); the question of the Vietnam War and whether those who did not wish to serve were cowardly or unpatriotic, as well as what is and is not worth fighting for ("Living in Harmony"); the dehumanization of mankind through machinery ("The General"); nuclear holocaust ("Fall Out")...and through it all, the constant battle between the individual and society. That was always the connecting factor between the episodes: where does the need of society for conformity stop, and the right of the everyman to be an individual begin?

Despite only containing 17 episodes (which is actually more than McGoohan had planned on originally), "The Prisoner" remains a fascinating look into democracy and society. Which side does anyone belong to? Is there even a side to choose from, or any difference between them? Or has it all become one big machine? Admittedly some of the technology seems goofy today (the menacing "Rover" which patrols The Village can be either eerie or laughable, depending on how you see things), but the power of the series lives on. More than 40 years after its first telecast, "The Prisoner" is shown homage and appreciation, mainly through the Six of One society – a fan

club which debates, celebrates, and holds an annual convention at the Portmeirion, Wales location where much of the series was filmed.

After years of rumor that a movie version was in the works (often attaching Mel Gibson's name to the project), it appears an "updated" series is set to be filmed and broadcast on the AMC Movie network. Unfortunately, while it may be entertaining, I doubt it will hold a candle to the original, and I fear that after watching a new version, audiences will lose the urge to experience the classic. Fortunately for all of us, the series is available on DVD or VHS at reasonable prices. Check it out...I welcome letters on any of the episodes, or the series as a whole.

I've always wanted to design a Prisoner-based Diplomacy variant, but never figured out a way to do it. Anybody have any thoughts on that?

I guess that's going to do it for this month. Next time I may start serial publication of the play I wrote for Heather about how we first met, and our first date. In the meantime, enjoy your Valentine's Day and I'll see you all in a month!

Halfway Home at the Halfway House – Part One

For many Federal inmates, the tail end of your incarceration does not take place in prison. Instead, in an effort to reintroduce you to society (and to keep overflowing population levels down), you are often directed to spend the last one month to the last six months of your sentence in a Federally-designated Halfway House; some of the rules have changed since I came home, but back then you were only permitted to spend 10% of your sentence in the halfway house (up to a maximum of six months), so if you had been sentenced to 36 months you could expect to spend the last 3 in the halfway house. There were exceptions to this rule; in fact, if you were a participant in the Residential Drug and Alcohol Program (RDAP) in prison as I had been, it was **mandated** that you spend as close to six months as possible in the halfway house regardless of how short your sentence originally had been. So in my case, despite having been sentenced to 46 months, I knew I would be spending my last five or six months in the Dallas-area halfway house.

To some inmates, the idea of a halfway house is a big step up from prison. While technically still the property of the Bureau of Prisons, you get to move around in society, find a job, plan for your final release, receive visitors on the weekends, and even request full 24 or 48-hour passes to spend at home. Then, when you were down to only two months left, you could also apply to be switched to home confinement, where you'd be able to sleep at home every night. To me, that sounded like heaven.

Other inmates, especially some that had been locked up for more than five years, told a different tale. They described unworkable rules worse than we lived under in prison, a more confused bureaucracy, and a multitude of hassles that simply were not worth the trouble. The main thrust of their argument seemed to be that it was easier to stay put for a few extra months, survive with the daily routine they'd become completely accustomed to, and then be released directly from prison to home. These inmates made the halfway house sound more like a teasing taste of freedom, without most of the joys but with nearly all of the headaches. In prison they had all their meals prepared, clothes provided, a generally consistent living situation (surrounded for the most part by the same neighbors day after day), and only a few hours of work (or pseudo-work). The last thing they wanted was a new batch of wardens telling them what to do.

For my part, up until a few months before my release I was completely gung-ho about it. I had a job promised – working for the same transportation company I'd been employed by when I'd first come to prison – a stable living situation, and a woman waiting for me who I knew without question I wanted to spend the rest of my life with. I couldn't imagine what problems a halfway house could throw in my way. Besides, the way I figured it, just being able to see Heather again in person - to gaze into her blue eyes and feel the warmth her spirit radiated towards me – was an experience I'd been thinking about day and night for years. That was worth any level of hassle I could imagine.

My enthusiasm was dampened somewhat when I learned the job I had been counting on for a few years suddenly was no longer available. As it was explained to me, the company management had changed, and they no longer wanted to hire anyone who had a criminal record. I did find that a bit funny, since I knew that one of their dispatchers in California had multiple DUI convictions, and some of their drivers had experienced scrapes with the law. While I understood that this was their policy (and perhaps it had something to do with their insurance rider which covered all the vehicles and drivers, although I'm just guessing) I felt rather blindsided by the news, as I'd checked numerous times during my incarceration to make sure they wanted me back. If I had known, I could have tried to line something up along the way, which would have been entirely possible. Instead, there wasn't

time to deal with it anymore from the inside; I would just have to search for a job when I'd arrived in Dallas. More than anything, this had soured my outlook on going to the halfway house. All those months when I could have been writing letters, asking people to make contacts, having Heather photocopy and print ideas for me...they'd been lost, because time after time I was reassured not to worry, a position was waiting for me whenever I was ready for it.

It wasn't just the lack of time left which prevented me from doing any last-minute job hunting. A new complication had arisen: I had no idea where the Dallas-area halfway house was located. I'd heard rumors that it was somewhere in south Dallas, but someone had suggested it might actually be south *of* Dallas. Heather had been searching on the internet for information, and eventually was able to locate a phone number. But when she called to get an address so she could give me an idea of the location in relation to the Dallas transit system, they wouldn't tell her...for "security reasons." What kind of crap was that? How is someone supposed to find the place without an address? Fortunately she was eventually able to find the address on the internet, and print out some maps for me. My former boss Patty also printed some maps, showing the closest transit location...which wasn't very close. As it turned out, the halfway house was located in Hutchins, which is a good ten to fifteen miles south of the southern reaches of Dallas. Being able to move around was suddenly looking a bit more difficult. I'd just have to wait and get the lay of the land when I arrived.

First, however, there was the process of actually getting there. Personally, I hate to fly. And I think I make everybody else on the plane even more nervous than I might be. The last second to last time I flew it was suggested that perhaps I should consider not flying anymore; I did wind up taking a trip to Atlanta which I won on the radio in a Strip Trivia contest (photos still available on request), but I haven't flown since then. So when presented with the option, I chose to take the bus from Pennsylvania to Dallas. I would have preferred to take Amtrak, but that was not an option they offered, due to the infrequency of trains. If something went wrong with the bus, there was always the next one.

Anybody who has traveled long-distance on a bus knows that it is not the most comfortable mode of transportation...I had plenty of experience from my days with the transportation company, so at least I knew what to expect. First of all, the bus is almost always packed tight, which means you're sitting next to someone. On occasion there will even be people standing in the aisle, waiting for seats to open up at the next major station. Most of the passengers on the bus are loud and thoughtless, and a good percentage of them haven't showered in a while; this isn't necessarily their fault, as they may be stuck on the bus for two or three days depending on how long the trip is. Any children on the bus are bound to be loud, or cry, or run around, or kick your seat, or spill things, or drop their empty soda bottle on the floor so it rolls from the front of the bus to the back over and over. If it's too hot, the air is stale and thick....if it's too cold, there is a constant draft as if a window is open. And, worst of all, too many of the passengers want to pass the time by making "single serving friends" (to steal a line from Fight Club). In some ways, a cross-country bus ride makes prison seem like a vacation.

Before the trip was to begin, however, there were a few things I needed to do. Most important among those tasks was the procurement of clothes for the journey. When I'd come up from Texas on Amtrak to report to prison, I'd taken my blue overnight bag, one change of clothes, some CD's, a portable CD player, and other items with me. Then when my father drove me to prison, they gave him my clothes, watch, and driver's license to take back with him. If at all possible, the prison system wants you to have some street clothes sent in to wear when you're released; if not, they provide a pair of jeans, some slip-on sneakers, and a shirt. So I asked that my clothes be washed and sent in, along with my driver's license and social security card. This included my overcoat, since it was generally a balmy 30 degrees or colder in Pennsylvania, and my blue duffel bag which I'd carried with me to New York. A couple of weeks before my release, I received a notice in the prison mail that my clothes had arrived. So, I was basically set. I bought a few travelling supplies at commissary: two big bags of M&M's (one plain, one peanut) to snack on, a few new pairs of socks, stuff like that. And I packed up some underclothes which were nearly new, as well as personal hygiene necessities. I'd already mailed back the letters and books I'd collected over years (that's an experience in itself – trying to put something like \$30 in postage on a box using 30-cent stamps), except for a paperback or two for the bus ride. Everything else – food, coffee, tea, my heavy landscape pants (a prized possession which while BOP property were passed on within the Landscape Crew from inmate to inmate) – I'd given to a few friends. I was all set.

I knew the bus trip was going to be a long, tedious, tiring one. I'd had my friend Patty mail me the itinerary so I could have a general idea of the stops and layovers. The BOP doesn't provide you such material, because they don't want you planning unauthorized rendezvous with anyone along the way. You're supposed to travel directly, without deviation, from the pick-up spot to the halfway house. We were told that the halfway house will expect us at particular times, and if we fail to appear or explain our delay (with proof) we could expect to be sent right back to prison. I was suspicious about that, as you might expect, especially given the complexity of my bus

schedule. Delays, missed connections, overbooked buses, mechanical failures, and the like are rather common on Greyhound, and adjustments are constantly being made. The trip I was planning for looked roughly like this:

<u>Location</u>	<u>Arrival</u>	<u>Departure</u>	<u>Layover</u>
WILLIAMSPORT, PA		03:40pm	
LOCK HAVEN, PA	04:10pm	04:10pm	
BELLEFONTE, PA	04:45pm	04:45pm	
STATE COLLEGE, PA	05:05pm	05:09pm	:04
PHILIPSBURG, PA	06:00pm	06:00pm	
CLEARFIELD, PA	06:25pm	06:25pm	
DU BOIS, PA	07:05pm		
DU BOIS, PA	Transfer	07:25pm	:20
SYKESVILLE, PA	07:35pm	07:35pm	
BIG RUN, PA	07:45pm	07:45pm	
PUNXSUTAWNEY, PA	07:55pm	07:55pm	
INDIANA, PA	08:40pm	08:40pm	
APOLLO, PA	09:20pm	09:20pm	
VANDERGRIFT, PA	09:25pm	09:25pm	
MONROEVILLE, PA	09:50pm	09:50pm	
PITTSBURGH, PA	10:20pm		
PITTSBURGH, PA	Transfer	12:10am	1:50
COLUMBUS, OH	03:35am	04:30am	:55
DAYTON, OH	05:50am		
DAYTON, OH	Transfer	09:00am	3:10
CINCINNATI, OH	10:00am	11:00am	1:00
LOUISVILLE, KY	12:45pm	01:25pm	:40
ELIZABETHTOWN, KY	02:15pm	02:15pm	
BOWLING GREEN, KY	02:25pm	02:25pm	
NASHVILLE, TN	03:40pm	04:45pm	1:05
JACKSON, TN	06:55pm	07:05pm	:10
MEMPHIS, TN	08:40pm	10:10pm	1:30
LITTLE ROCK, AR	12:25am	12:45am	:20
SULPHUR SPRINGS, TX	04:30am	04:45am	:15
DALLAS, TX	06:15am		

Looking over the ticket, the layovers or transfers in Pittsburgh, Columbus, and Dayton were likely to be the worst of the journey. Late night or early morning transfers suck; the bus stations are dirty, there is nowhere to sit comfortably, and you have to force yourself to stay awake or else you might either miss your connection or find yourself without a seat. Sometimes you have to switch buses, or disembark only to get on the same bus again, at some of the non-transfer layovers. I knew the drive from Memphis to Dallas was pretty much a straight shot, as that was a primary Greyhound route. We'd travel one bus during that portion, and we were only hitting the big stations at that point. So I should be able to get a few hours sleep the second night. Other than that, it was all up in the air...things could go smoothly, or they could be a horrendous mess. I'd just have to wait and see.

The night before my departure I did not sleep as much as usual, but I did manage a decent number of hours overall. I'd taken my "vacation" from Landscape duty starting a few days beforehand, so really I was quite bored and counting the hours until I could leave. About 70% of the RDAP classmates left before me (your date of departure was generally in order of how much time was left in your sentence; those who had less time left would leave first, with some exceptions because of space limitations at halfway houses, outstanding state charges, and things of that nature), and my routine – which I'd used to survive prison all this time - was completely out of whack. Plus my mouth was in decent pain because of the ½ of a tooth the dentist had taken out a week earlier (and the ½ a tooth he'd left in). So on the big day I woke up, ate breakfast, said a few final goodbyes, and sat in my cube reading a paperback and twiddling my thumbs until I was finally paged to the front office. It was, at last, time to leave.

I made my way to the front office, with my box of belongings in hand. Everything else had been turned in. I was ready. A few handshakes with buddies here and there first, and into the R&D room I went. Here they gave me my street clothes, coat, and travel bag. I changed, and for the first time in years I looked like a normal person instead of an inmate. But, as usual, a few problems surfaced. The biggest was that nobody could find my driver's license and my Social Security Card. They'd been received and signed for weeks earlier, but now....nothing, no sign of them. This meant I was about to embark on a cross-country journey, as property of the BOP and effectively still a prison inmate, with no identification whatsoever. I figured that they'd let me keep my prison ID at least, as apparently this is a form of legal identification. Nope, no such luck. The R&D officer told me that I should just use my one-page paper form with my reporting instructions as ID if an emergency came up. "Or have whoever it is call us, we can verify who you are." Wonderful.

Then there was the issue of money. I'd saved up about \$400 in my inmate account through work, a bonus for completing my RDAP program, and trying not to spend 100% of what was sent in by my VERY generous family who'd been sending me \$60 to \$80 a month for some time now. This was going to be the money I used to live on until I found myself a job, and to buy any new clothes or other personal items. I could only assume that I'd be paying for public transportation, which isn't cheap either. But this was the moment when the R&D officer informed me that they were going to give me \$150 in cash. The rest would follow "at a later date" to the halfway house, in the form of a check made out to me. I wasn't thrilled about this development either, especially since I knew it was going to cost \$50 or \$60 to catch a cab from the Dallas Greyhound station to the halfway house (assuming I could find a cab willing to take me out there). "Oh don't worry about that, just ask at the Halfway House, they're supposed to cover the cab fare." The R&D office *did* provide me with some sort of Federal requisition form which I was supposed to be able to use to buy the bus ticket without cost to myself. And I had confidence in that part of the process, if only because inmates left the facility a few times a week and they MUST have worked the kinks out of the system by now.

So I was on my way. I didn't have any identification; I was low on cash; I was worried about the trip, my job prospects, my aching tooth, and fitting into society as a human being; and I was anxious about the slightest misstep sending me straight back to prison. But I was on my way. I caught a ride with the work van to the Front Circle, my old stomping grounds with the Landscape crew. I went inside, signed a few more forms, and was told to wait in a holding area with two inmates from the Medium Security prison who were also being released that day. I guess we waited an hour - but it felt like three - before the "town driver" van came to drive us to the local bus station. Bernie, an inmate I knew, was the driver that day, and he took us out onto public land, driving the local roads like regular people, until we came to a gas station/convenience store where the bus stop was located. Bernie helped all three of us to make sure our vouchers were processed in exchange for the bus tickets, wished me luck, and headed back to the prison. The other two inmates talked, and enjoyed the first cigarettes they'd had in months. I just stood outside in the cold, waiting and feeling nervous. I really had no idea what the Halfway House would be like, or what would be waiting for me when I got to Dallas.

All I did know was that I was headed back. And back home Heather was waiting for me...and even my cat Tigger, who was now nearly 20 years old, and who I had assumed would have died long before I walked into our apartment again. So as anxious as I was about the future, I was also psyched about it. I wasn't a free man, not yet, but I was going home. Or, at least, to the Halfway House. And that was a lot closer than I'd been in a long time.

Hypothetical of the Month

Last month, we gave you the following: You participate in a football pool at your job. The company is large and has hundreds of employees in your building, so not everybody knows everybody else. Each week you pay \$5 to play, in a simple pool where you select a winner in each pro game on Sunday, and a total score on Monday to break any ties. Monday morning you're informed that you tied for first place with three other employees. You don't know much about football, so this is surprising to you. You check your Sent email folder and see you predicted a total score of 42 for the Monday night game. Whoever gets closest without going over wins the entire pot, which is close to \$500. Tuesday morning you arrive at the office and are congratulated: the final

score of the game was 17-10. Somehow the person running the pool had innocently transposed your total, and thought you selected 24. You also discover that there was only one other employee who guessed below 30: a generally-disliked woman who works in the custodial department had guessed 21. The holidays are arriving; with the tough economic times there are no bonuses at your company this year, so this money will likely be the difference between "merry" and "bah-humbug" in your household. Any attempt to share the winnings with the other woman will draw her suspicion and reveal the mistake, so that is not an option. Do you keep the money or do you admit the error?

Melinda Holley - For me, at least, it doesn't matter how well liked or disliked the other person is. I would own up to the mistake and not take the money. Besides, the other woman might need the money for something more serious than holiday presents (food, medication, rent, insurance, etc.). I don't need that kind of negative karma (got enough coming from other sources).

Kevin Wilson – An easy one this time. I run pools. I play fantasy football in three leagues. I've made errors and they have always been pointed out to me and if I see an error I point it out too. In this case, I'd do the same. Of course, I'd complain humorously, talk about what I could have done with the \$500 but I'd send it back.

Andy York - Not that I'd actually participate in a football pool, but if this situation happened, I'd certainly correct the error and have the winner receive the pot. And, yes, I'm the type of person who will tell the folks at the store when I'm overcharged and when I'm undercharged or if they miss scanning something while checking out. An example, when I checked out of the Dallas hotel after the Tut exhibit visit, they failed to bill me for the extra exhibit ticket. I let them know that the bill was short.

Heather - I would WANT to be selfish and keep it, but my conscience would not let me and I would have to "fess up".

For next issue, your new hypothetical: You live in a small rent house on a generally quiet street. You've lived there perhaps six months, and you haven't been formally introduced to any of your neighbors. You simply know them in such a way as to wave at them in a friendly fashion when you see each other. However, you have grown to learn their tendencies and habits. One couple next door to you seems to have no children. The female works for an airline as a pilot or flight attendant; you've seen her in uniform getting into or out of her car. From what you can tell, she leaves town for three or four days at a time. Now, in the past few weeks, you've seen another female arriving and departing the house, only when the female of the household is away. She's somewhat younger, very attractive, and dresses in a very alluring and seductive manner. You suspect infidelity is afoot. What do you do, if anything? And why? Your options are wide open in this hypothetical.

The Dining Dead -

The Eternal Sunshine Movie Reviews

The Reader – If you have enjoyed the book *The Reader* by Bernhard Schlink, this film review is not all that important. Suffice to say that, with the normal limitations you might expect, Stephen Daldry's direction and a strong cast do justice to a difficult subject. The differences between the book and the film are not so jarring that they pull you away.

However, if you haven't read the book, I hope this excellent film will give you the incentive to do so. *The Reader* tells the story of Michael Berg (played during his adult years by Ralph Fiennes). Jumping back and forth in time between adulthood and his teenage years, we're brought into postwar Germany. The 15-year-old Michael (played quite well by German native David Kross) is stricken with scarlet fever. Becoming ill on his way home, a trolley ticket taker (Kate Winslet) helps him. Months later, when he is recovered, Michael brings her some flowers in thanks. Just beginning to feel his manhood, Michael returns another day, and an affair begins. It isn't until his third visit that the secretive and suspicious Hanna even reveals her name to her young lover. She educates him in lovemaking, and he (at her urging) reads to her. From *The Odyssey* to *Huckleberry Finn*, she is deeply moved by his oral renditions. Then, one day, she disappears from Michael's life, leaving no word and no reason.

A law student in college, Michael takes part in a special seminar where a small group of students attend the war crimes trial of six women accused of horrific acts as guards in concentration camps. To his amazement, Hanna Schmidt is one of those defendants, and there is no denying that she took part in terrible wrongs. But Michael has seen the humanity and emotion inside her guarded skin, so he finds it difficult to fully comprehend why she took part or how much blame she should shoulder. Then, when the trial takes a turn against her, he realizes things about her which had eluded him earlier – facts which could have a bearing on the case and might lighten her sentence...yet he is afraid to reveal them, as it is clear Hanna has her own reasons for keeping them hidden.

I think that if you haven't read the book, the film plays better if you know less about the plot in advance, so I am avoiding revealing very much information. The acting really is superb, with Kate Winslet able to combine sexuality, hardness, and ashamed confusion into a believable character. Ralph Fiennes has a quiet manner about him, as he often does, but in this case that serves his character well. And again, I need to single out the very strong and believable performance of David Kross. We see him progress from unsure boy to man in a very natural way, but one which ties almost seamlessly into the Fiennes adult version.

Almost every review for *The Reader* I've seen has been glowing, and I see no reason to disagree. There are so many issues and ideals within the film, but one important one is the beauty – and power – of the written word, for good and for evil. So after you've seen the movie, do yourself a favor and personalize that message by reading the book too.

Seen on DVD – **Dog Day Afternoon (B+)**, Pacino at his best is Pacino when he was younger and less self-conscious. Makes me miss the NYC area from those days). **The Amityville Horror (C+)**, the book was such a terror when I was young, but I remember this movie being simply awful. Instead it does have some creepy moments). **Burnt Offerings (C-)**, I remember enjoying this film when I was younger, but I guess what was creepy and original to me back then is simply slow and boring now. And the sound on the DVD was poor. However, watching the film did make me want to go to IMDB.com to reread the details of Oliver Reed's death: "He died of a heart attack in a bar after downing three bottles of Captain Morgan's Jamaica rum, eight bottles of German beer, numerous doubles of Famous Grouse whiskey, and beating five much younger Royal Navy sailors at arm-wrestling. His bar bill for that final lunch time totaled 270 Maltese lira, almost £450.") **Rose Red (D+)**, this Stephen King miniseries was a lot of build-up for no payoff). **Three Days of the Condor (B+)**, still a good movie, with Redford's character showing the power of reading and learning; and WHAT happened to Faye Dunaway's career?).

Books in Boxers

***Eternal Sunshine* Book Reviews**

Wigfield – The Can-Do Town That Just May Not – Amy Sedaris/Paul Dinello/Stephen Colbert – The comic geniuses who brought you the hilarious and under-appreciated Comedy Central series "Strangers With Candy" (okay, the movie wasn't so great) team up for this book which purports to tackle the question "why are small towns disappearing from America?" The entire book is written from the point of view of (and under the pseudonym of) Russell Hoakes, an "author" who used to paint highway lines before convincing Hyperion Books to cough up a sizable advance for a 50,000 word book. Through a series of mishaps Hoakes is introduced to Wigfield, which is a shantytown hastily constructed in a riverbed opposite the Bulkwall Dam, which is scheduled to be destroyed by the state. Hoakes takes it upon himself to do what he can to save the town, halt the dam's destruction, and to capture on paper the views and lives of its residents (who are mainly strippers and used car parts dealers)...and to do it in 50,000 words if in any way humanly possible.

The book itself drags at some points, but does have its share of laughs along the way. Still, unless you were a fan of the comedic flavor of "Strangers With Candy," I don't think you'll find Wigfield worth your time. And even if you share that comic sensibility, I doubt you will enjoy this book enough to justify the \$22.95 cover price of the hardcover version. Stick to the soft cover, and even then try to get it on sale (Amazon has it for like \$11). Fortunately I got my hardcover at Half Price Books, marked down to below \$10 PLUS on sale from there. The book is a miss, but it's a near-miss. A tweak here or there and I believe it could have been really funny.



Heather's Tricks and Treats

To begin with, we have my very first letter! At least we know one person reads this column!

Andy York: *I have to fully agree with you about "Firefly". It was a excellent series and the movie was great finale to the storyline. If you're interested, there were two short comic books series (each three issues long, if I remember correctly) that expand a bit on the timeline. Also, if you are a Buffy fan, Whedon is presenting "Season Eight" via comic books (up to issue #21). There is also an Angel comic series and one for Spike. Whedon is also penning some other comic books with his usual wit and irony.*

I have read some of the "Buffy Season 8," as well as the Angel and Spike comics. For whatever reason I just couldn't get "into" the Buffy ones like I did the Angel and Spike comics. The writing style seemed different to me somehow, or it didn't make the change over as well as Angel and Spike. I look forward, with great anticipation, to reading ANYTHING else Firefly. (Hint, Doug, Hint!!!). Thanks for the letter!

I wanted to apologize to everyone for not including any book reviews (snippets, actually, is what I do) lately. I have been on a Netflix/Hulu/DVD watching spree in anticipation of not being able to watch much of anything once school started. That won't be a problem **NOW!** On Wednesday the 21st (the first day of school was Tuesday the 20th), I went to go see my daughter, Bailey. We went outside and were having lots of fun, laughing, being goofy and jumping on the trampoline. In the middle of our hair-flying fun....I came down on my leg, and my knee went sideways, and something snapped like a broken rubber band! I fell back on the trampoline, clutching my knee, trying not to totally freak out because I didn't want Bailey to have a nervous breakdown. After going to the emergency room, we found out I had at least sprained my knee (hopefully that is all and I won't have to have surgery). With a knee/leg immobilizer going from the top of my thigh down to my ankle, I realized I had some serious decision making to do. I couldn't walk, drive, do kennel duty at school, and I certainly could not chase after an animal to get a fecal sample for my Parasitology class! I had to drop all my classes this semester, and I will re-enroll in the fall. After my knee totally heals, I can decide what I am going to do until the fall semester. I might get a part-time job in veterinary office for the experience. In the meantime, while I am busy healing, there will be lots of reading going on! So...all of this was just a long way of saying that I will have some book reviews (snippets) for you guys soon! I know you all can't wait! P.S. any sympathy cards, books, comics, DVDs, CDs, cash, gift cards and/or prosthetic limbs and joints can be sent to our home address. Thanks!

Meet Me In Montauk

The Eternal Sunshine Letter Column

Jim Burgess: Just wanted to note how interesting it is to find out stuff about your own brother in someone else's Diplomacy zine! I knew he talked his way into that first job (I tell people I advise all the time to do that, now have another story to use), but didn't know the details.

[[I guess he just doesn't feel comfortable talking to you. Maybe he thinks you'll jump all over him and criticize every decision he makes...the way you do to me!]]

I don't think David was hiding it or anything, it isn't embarrassing, but he always has been the cute and sexy one, I'm the ugly smart one. David and I both still have our father (sorry, again, that you don't have yours!) and he has been driving David crazy, he is someone very influential on both of us though, in ways myriad and undefined. But he's a gamer, has always been a gamer, and thus we are gamers.

[[Wait, David told me that he was the cute and sexy and smart one, and that only leaves you with ugly. Sorry!]]

Gosh darn, Doug, you have 50 Movie Quotes!!! I know a small handful and others might come to me, but couldn't you have split them up across a year of issues, four or five an issue??? Tell the truth now, how many of these are Kevin Spacey quotes? The Lester Burnham/American Beauty one jumps out at me first. My wife can't stand what's her name ☺ who plays his wife, so she hates their exchanges, but I love that part of that movie. Other parts I hate too, that was a love/hate movie for me.

[[In the future, I'll try just doing 20 or so – and yes there will be more quote contests. But the point is, with 50 people should be able to get a few. Right now I think the person in the lead has like 3 or 4 correct...tsk tsk tsk. And there is a real prize for whoever wins, most like a BRAND NEW DVD from a choice of 4 or 5 titles.]]

Allison Kent: I miss him too [[our father]]! They say it gets better with time, but I find it gets worse. That is only logical; the longer you don't get to see someone or see someone, the more you'd miss him, right?

[[I suppose, when it is someone very important to you. When it's someone of less importance, you slowly forget about them.]]

I didn't know you had BO! I never noticed. Do you wear deodorant?

[[I don't really have BO...I'm just repulsive in a general way.]]

When is Andy coming to PA or NJ? There is a Brazilian steak house I have wanted to try in Philly, but it is expensive!

[[You'll have to check with him....remember, you can expect him to pay for everything unless he loathes you.]]

Andy York: It'll be interesting to see the commentary about the differences in the two versions of the Tut trip. Hopefully it'll spark some discussion!

[[I think, in general, people recognize how much more accurate my version was. Your version was completely fabricated.]]

I agree with your assessment of the movie Milk. It was one of the best movies I'd seen in 2008 - it is a must see! However, my movie of 2008 is Slumdog Millionaire.

[[We still haven't seen that, and I have a feeling we won't until it's on DVD...if for no other reason than Heather's knee keeping us out of the movie theater for a few weeks or longer.]]

Alex Richardson: Thanks very much for the plug in 'Eternal Sunshine' - it is always nice to get a mention in another zine. I shall try and include a bit on the "archive arms race" which you and Stephen have going between you in return.

[[Just remember we are supportive of each other in that regard...the only reason I have ANY UK zines on my archive page is because I want people to realize they exist, so they'll go to Stephen's archives to see more. I can't scan these zines quick enough...they arrive much faster than I can process them. But eventually I'll make a real dent in them. And when that happens, if not before, I have another project to begin work on...]]

I see that you have included 'Once Upon A Deadline' in the archive. This brings back a few memories as I ordered a copy of it through the ISE when it first appeared in 1986. I'd put out about 5 issues of Obsidian by then and wanted to see what advice could be gleaned from the American Dip hobby, only to find that I had already made just about every mistake possible for a novice editor and it was too late to rectify them.

(I can remember enjoying Conrad von Metzke's pieces in particular, such as the history of Costaguana and the one on press releases which argued that postal Diplomacy was about more than just ordering pieces around a board. I can also recall agreeing with Doug Beyerlein's suggestion that editors should pace themselves and start small and wishing that I had...)

[[I really did find OUAD quite useful when I started my first zine Maniac's Paradise. These days some of it is quite dated and of no importance, but other sections are as valuable as they ever were.]]



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)
Issue #3

I can't believe that I prepared two pages of genius last issue and you sons of bitches couldn't be bothered to send me one stupid email of thanks, or a single freaking comment. What the hell is wrong with you people? Clearly if you're reading a zine published by Doug the Idiot, I shouldn't expect too much from you. But do I have to hit you over the head with a board, maybe one with rusty nailed pounded through it for good measure, before you send me praise and money and valuable gifts? If I wrote my autobiography now I'd probably have to call it "I am Surrounded By Brainless Zombies." And all of you could be characters. Doug wouldn't even have emailed me this month, if it wasn't for the fact that he asks for my relationship advice about three times a day. This guy has no idea how to control his women, or rule his home life. Which reminds me of something that happened the other day: I asked Carol to make me a turkey pot pie, and she told me to make it myself. I was pissed, but I let it slide. Then I asked her to iron my "Fire Andy Reid" sweatshirt, and she told me to do it myself. So I calmly got up and asked her how she would like it if she didn't see me at all for three days. She said that was fine with her!

My estimate was a bit off though. The swelling went down pretty fast, so she was able to see me again by the second day.

It has been said that "genius will often go unrecognized in its own time." I can't remember who said it though...it could have been Ben Franklin when he was boinking the whores of Paris, or maybe it was Gandhi or Howard Stern or Hulk Hogan. How the hell do I know? Go look it up, that's what the internet is for, you lazy bastards. I'm not going to sit here and live your lives for you. If I was, you can be sure I'd be doing a better job of it than you are right now. This country is a mess. This whole world is a mess. And this hobby is a mess. And I lay the blame squarely on all of you. You are all part of the problem. If you would just get the hell out of my way, or follow my instructions, things would be running a lot smoother around here. And I wouldn't need to spend \$150 million on an inauguration party either. I mean, damn, I could throw a kick-ass Super Bowl party for less than \$500. Add another \$500 to that and I could hire The Thompson Twins or maybe Cheap Trick to be our personal live halftime entertainment. Or I could go discount-rate and get Billy Squire for \$250. You choose.

Sorry, I got on a rant there and lost my train of thought. What the hell was I gonna say? Let's see...genius, country, world, problem, solution, party, Super Bowl. THAT'S IT. Super Bowl. If you braying sheep could put down your Lite Beer and stale Cool Ranch Doritos for a second, maybe some of you can think back two months, back to my first edition of this column. Picture it: you were sitting there, early December 2008. You were probably worrying about what you could shoplift from Wal-Mart for Christmas gifts. You hadn't showered in three days. The smell was making your eyes water. You were reading through the latest "Maternal Buttshine," or whatever Doug calls this rag. Can you see it now? Blah blah blah, boring boring boring, oh, look, a column from Jack McHugh. Finally something worth reading, right? Suddenly a few of your brain cells began to crackle to life. Try to think back...do you remember my Super Bowl prediction? Huh? You probably thought to yourself "Is this guy kidding?" when you read it. Right? Well get your kneepads on, suckholes! I was right. Nobody else in the COUNTRY was predicting it back then. But I was. Me. Jack McHugh, unrecognized genius. Now, just so nobody can claim I'm making this up, I've asked Doug to insert the actual portion of the page here. But if that isn't good enough for you, you can find the entire issue on Doug's website. Here is what I said:

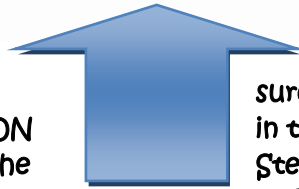


Brain Farts: The Only Subsubzine With It's Own Fragrance
By Jack "Flapjack" McHugh - jwmchughjr "of" gmail.com
(or just email Doug and he'll send it to me)

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.



You see that? Huh? Here, I'll put a big arrow in to make miss what I'm trying to point out. I am the **ONLY PERSON** was smart enough to correctly predict that it would be the Super Bowl. None of those television experts, nobody on ESPN⁶, nobody on the internet, nobody in the newspapers. Nobody. Just me. ME! Jack McHugh the Genius. Instead of ignoring me, you all should be erecting a statue in my honor. Hot models should be feeding me grapes, pouring me wine, and satisfying me in unmentionable ways.

sure your feeble eyes don't in the **ENTIRE WORLD** who Steelers and the Cardinals in ESPN or ESPN2 or ESPN3 or

Instead, I lost one of my two jobs. Typical.

I wasn't completely surprised, considering how bad the economy is, but it certainly wasn't good timing. This isn't exactly a good time to be looking for a job. And the want ads you find out there...these companies must have their heads up their collective asses. I mean, do they really believe they'll find someone to meet all of their qualifications? They want somebody with a bachelor's degree, three years minimum experience with 8 different platforms, plus two years Call Center experience, all for a regal \$15 an hour. What they're really asking for is someone who has been out of work for two years and is stuck living with his parents, approaching 50 years old, who will kill himself just for the chance to enter the workforce again. Then they'll use him to train Cousin Boris who just got off the boat from Russia, so they can let Boris replace him a year later at twice his salary. And I'm speaking from experience.

I hate looking for a job, and dealing with all the various bullshit that comes along with it. Whichever direction you go, you've got a different set of complications. Do you want the illusion of job security, going with a big company, or do you want a small one? One thing nice about small companies..they don't f*ck around...either they hire you or they don't and they don't take very long to make a decision. One reason why I tend to steer clear of larger companies and I try and avoid recruiters: they think you're time is valueless and never want to shit or get off the pot. You get endless rounds of interviews and waiting on decisions...and then they go hire an internal candidate most of the time anyway, and maybe you get a letter a month or two after they do it.

I notice I've gotten pretty blunt now in interviews. I expect certain things up front: salary range, list of duties, the criteria you'll measure my performance, and the metrics of what is considered a good performance. Otherwise I move on pretty quickly. If you can't answer those questions, then you're not serious about hiring anyone and I don't waste my time.

I don't believe in all that networking bullshit, at least not when I'm job hunting. It takes too long to "cultivate" people. That's for people with money (or relatives with money) that have time to kiss ass for

months and have "power lunches" at overpriced restaurants. I don't have the time or the money for that shit.

I also generally don't answer ads that say demand salary requirements. Sorry, I'm not interested in bidding against college kids who live at home or spouses looking for something to do during the day. Plus I don't think most people who don't have a salary range aren't interested in hiring anytime soon. They are just fishing to see what the market washed up on their desk. And most of the time they haven't done their homework; they can't answer the rest of my questions. What will I do all day to help you make money? How is my job adding to your bottom line? How will you know if I'm doing a good job or not?

If they even hire anyone, that is. I suspect at least two-thirds of those ads never higher anyone. Most of the time I see the same ads again and again and again on the job boards, so either it's so shitty no one will stay, or they aren't hiring anyone.

I've gotten like this from having very bad interviews with people who weren't prepared, and who acted like the interview was an audition for me to convince them to hire me, with no input from them. My time is valuable, and if you don't understand that from the first minute you talk to me then I don't want to talk to you. It really is true, if you don't respect yourself no one else will. I demand respect up-front now, and just dismiss people who can't deal with it, because I know that means they plan on screwing me over later.

I don't have a problem with a job interview where they want to see if you can do the job, but don't just say "the job is tech support..how would you do that?" That means you haven't bothered to figure what my duties are, and can't even give me any sample work. That kind of an interview is a waste of my time and their time. I'd rather have them say "my sever is not coming up..what do you check first?" If you want me to come up with duties, that's a **MANAGER** of tech support's job. I can do that as well, but then tell me what I am managing. Don't expect me to walk in with no knowledge of your company - and I mean real knowledge, not you're fucking "about us" page on your website - and expect me to run a department. That tells me nothing about what people do on a day-to-day, hour by hour basis. Show me your procedures manual or the website that your employees use internally, or some contracts you have with clients, not your 3 paragraph synopsis that gets updated once every two years.

Or my favorite, the ever popular "news" page: marketing sunshine that is shit for prospective clients, which tells you nothing about the employees or what they do or how they get it done. I'd rather come in for a first interview for 30 minutes, get three problems, and come back the next day with an executive summary of one or two paragraphs of the problem and three possible solutions to each problem...no more than a paragraph or two each and you decide if I fit in your company. That's what employees are for, they get paid for that. I'm not getting paid to be interviewed, and I have better things to do than discuss why you're a shitty manager. This way we have something to discuss about the actual work. I hate the "let's make small talk" shit, like we're two friends out for a drink. We're not friends, and the only thing worse is the attitude that they are "giving" me a job, as if I'm their idiot brother-in-law and Mom said they had to hire me. Fuck you...if you don't think I'm going to be able to add to your bottom line then don't hire me.

Phew, I worked up a sweat on that one. Time for a nice cold brew. And not the piss-water they advertise on commercials during NFL games. Which reminds me, if I have to sit through one more Pizza Hut commercial with those drunk morons, "I'm all about the multigrain...guys, I didn't make this pizza, it was delivered by Pizza HUT!"...or another Dodge Ram commercial "Wow, it has its own toolbox, that is friggin cool. I could put some hammers or shovels in there and stuff!", I'm liable to shove an ice pick through my eardrums to make myself deaf. Now send me some feedback, or else!

Out of the WAY #4

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

=====

Not much new this month - though I did get my first LOC for this 'zine. Feel free to send in commentary, discussion, feedback or other thoughts on *OotW* or just about anything else. And, please feel free to join in the Facts in Five game or to submit something for the Poll Question. Heck, I'll even take suggestions!

Have a good February, spend Valentine's with someone special, and most of all, keep warm!

Commentary

on temporary hiatus - this month's topic didn't quite come together in time for this issue

Letter Column

(always welcome, send them in!)

Doug Kent: Why do you refer to my directions as "navigation" with a sarcastic tone? If you hadn't been so intent on watching Chinese porno DVD's on the dashboard DVD player of your Escalade, you might not have missed that turn. And then we ran that red light because you got distracted brushing crumbs out of your beard. I felt like I was in The French Connection or something with how fast you drove. Still, I gotta hand it to you, I never through you'd be able to out-run that cop. Now I understand why you don't put license plates on your ride.

[WAY] Well, I was hoping for more response on the differences between Doug's recollection of my visit to Dallas and my commentary about that Saturday. I must say it is difficult to confuse an eight-year old Saturn with an Escalade. As for Chinese porn on the "DVD" player, it is more like a radio with sound bars moving up and down - maybe that's what Doug thinks is porn from watching scrambled signals on the TV in those cheap motels he stay at. And, about the "navigation" comment, I tried to put a positive spin on the "head that a way on the trail where cars go superfast. It's (the museum's) somewhere near those tall, pointy, buildings over there" directions you were giving.

The Month in History

February 22, 1909 - The "Great White Fleet", sent by Teddy Roosevelt on a world cruise, finishes their 14-month tour.
Sources include: Current issue of "Smithsonian"

Babylon 5 Quote

Brother Alwyn in *The Deconstruction of Falling Stars*: "Faith and reason are the shoes on your feet. You can travel farther with both than you can with just one."

Source: [But In Purple...I'm Stunning!](#) by J. Michael Straczynski, edited by Sara "Samm" Barnes, copyright 2008.

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: What are your expectations for the first year of the Obama presidency?

nothing submitted

For next issue: Space exploration, should it be curtailed, remain solely in Earth orbit or head to Mars?

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.

Macaroni & Cheese for Many

by W. Andrew York
(last revised 01/25/09)

Ingredients:

2	8oz packages	elbow macaroni (or other shaped pasta)
1	cn	Cream of Celery Soup
1	cn	Cream of Mushroom Soup
1/2	lb	Mild Cheddar Cheese, shredded
1/2	lb	Monterey Jack Cheese, shredded
1	c	Whole Milk (at room temperature - have more on standby)
2+	tbl	Granulated Garlic (can substitute fresh, softened, garlic)
		Salt & Pepper to taste

Steps:

- 1 - Heat oven to 350 degrees.
- 2 - Cook pasta according to directions, drain, put back into pot.
- 3 - Mix in both soups, garlic and milk, season with salt & pepper
- 4 - Mix in both cheeses, in batches, mix until melted (additional milk may be needed)
- 5 - Pour into greased 9x12x2 pan
- 6 - Bake uncovered for 30 minutes (optional, put additional cheese on top for last 5 minutes of baking)

Note - for a 1/2 recipe, omit the cream of celery soup.

Other Optionals:

Add in one or two 4oz cn Mushrooms
Use two cans of Cream of Mushroom instead of Cream of Celery Soup
Add in 1 sliced caramelized onion (or add in fresh garlic during the caramelization)
Top with bread crumbs softened with butter for last 10 minutes of baking
Use additional and/or different cheeses or stronger ones

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 Three Results

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

REMINDER - Last names are generally the key word, not first names.

CORRECTION: Last turn's submission by Brendan Whyte was incorrectly credited to David Burgess. The scores below reflect the correct totals.

Players - Bill Brown (BB), Doug Kent (DK), Jack McHugh (JMH), Jamie McQuinn (JMQ), Brendan Whyte (BW), Kevin Wilson (KW)

	S	M	A	P	F
Foreign University					
BB	Sorbonne	Moscow State U	U of Auckland	Amer Univ of Paris	Flinders U
DK	U of Southampton	U of Manchester	U of Antwerp	U of Plymouth	U of Frankfurt
JMQ	Sorbonne	McGill U	Australian Nat'l U	PanAmerica U	Firenze U
BW	U of Sussex	Massey U	U of Auckland	Prince of Songkla U	Flinders U
KW	Swiss Fed Inst Tech	U of Manchester	Aarhus U	Paris Universitas	U of Freiburg

Famous Modern Structure (built post 1950)

BB	Sydney Opera	Millau Viaduct	Burj Al Arab	Petronas Towers	Falkirk Wheel
DK	Sears Tower	Millar Park	Arrowhead Stadium	Petronas Towers	Fedex Field
JMQ	Space Needle	Millennium Dome	Akashi Kaikyo Bridge	Petronas Towers	Faulty Towers
BW	Sydney Opera	Millennium Dome	Auckland Harbour Bridge	Pentagon	Frank Lloyd Wright's House
KW	Sears Tower	Millennium Dome	Arecibo Radio Telescope	Petronas Towers	no entry

Professional Magazine

BB	Science	Today Facility Mgr	Foreign Affairs	Foreign Policy	Flare
DK	Screenwriter	Medical Econ	Architectural Digest	Publishers Weekly	Folio
JMQ	Sales	Machinist	Aviation Week	Publishers Weekly	Finance Week
BW	Surfing Weekly	Marie Claire	Annals of Assoc of Am Geo	Professional Wrestler	Fire and Movement
KW	Science	Motor Trend	Architectural Digest	Proc Nat'l Acad of Science	Foreign Affairs

Science Fiction Author

BB	Robert Silverberg	Julian May	Isaac Asimov	Terry Pratchett	Philip Jose Farmer
DK	William Shatner	Alan Moore	Isaac Asimov	Jerry Pournelle	AD Foster
JMQ	Fred Saberhagen	Diane McCaffrey	Forey Ackerman	Frederick Pohl	AD Foster
BW	no entry	no entry	Isaac Asimov	no entry	no entry
KW	Robert Silverberg	Diane McCaffrey	Isaac Asimov	Philip Pullman	AD Foster

Chemical Element

BB	Strontium	Magnesium	Aluminum	Phosphorus	Fluorine
DK	Sulfur	Magnesium	Aluminum	Phosphorus	Francium
JMQ	Sulfur	Magnesium	Argon	Potassium	Fluorine
BW	Sodium	Magnesium	Aluminum	Phosphorus	Fluorine
KW	Sodium	Magnesium	Argon	Phosphorus	Fluorine

Scores by Category	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	Previous	Now	Total
BB	8	7	4	6	9	49	+	34 = 83
DK	6	7	7	7	9	65	+	36 = 101
JMH	no entries submitted					59	+	29 = 88
JMQ	6	7	6	7	9	58	+	35 = 93
BW	7	5	5	2	10	55	+	29 = 84
KW	6	7	7	7	10	53	+	37 = 90

Round Four

Letters: T S D L C
 Categories: Christmas Song Title, Female Religious Leader, Nobel Prize Winning Scientist, Living American Nonfiction Book Writer, Musical Instrument

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

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**Deadline For The Next Issue of Out of the WAY:
 February 21st, 2009 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: Jonathan Nichol, need six more to fill. Rules in ES #23, or by request. A classic variant which can become as insane as a Charles Manson interview.

Diplomacy Bourse (Black Press): Buy and sell the currencies of the Diplomacy nations. This Bourse is using the new game "Dulcinea" as its 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 in ES #24.

By Popular Demand: Game currently underway, join any time.

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, and Colonia VII-B remains a favorite. Does anybody have an interest in Kremlin? Or Cannibalism? The idea of an Intimate Dip round-robin tournament isn't such a bad though. If somebody wants to guest-GM a game of anything, just say the word. If you have specific game requests please let me know.

Eternal Sunshine Game Section

Diplomacy "Wouldn't It Be Nice?" 2008A, Autumn/Winter 1904



Austria (Kevin Wilson - ckevinw1 "of" cox.net and ckevinw "of" yahoo.com): Retreat A Bulgaria – Off the Board. Has F Aegean Sea, F Ionian Sea, A Serbia, A Trieste, A Warsaw.

England (J r mie LeFran ois - jeremie.lefrancois "of" gmail.com): Build F Liverpool. Has F Baltic Sea, F Barents Sea, F Liverpool, A Livonia, F North Sea, F St Petersburg(nc), A Sweden.

France (Alexander Levinson - al "of" tolkin.nl): Has A Burgundy, A Marseilles, A Paris, A Spain, F Tunis.

Germany (Graham Wilson – grahamaw "of" rogers.com): Has A Holland, A Kiel.

Italy (Don Williams – dwilliam "of" fontana.org): Has A Brest, F Gulf of Lyon, F Mid-Atlantic Ocean, F Portugal, F Rome, A Venice.

Russia (Melinda Holley – genea5613 "of" aol.com): Remove F Skagerrak. Has A Berlin, A Budapest, F Gulf of Bothnia, A Rumania, A Sevastopol.

Turkey (Brad Wilson - bwdolphin146 "of" yahoo.com): Build F Ankara. Has F Ankara, F Bulgaria(ec), A Constantinople, A Smyrna.

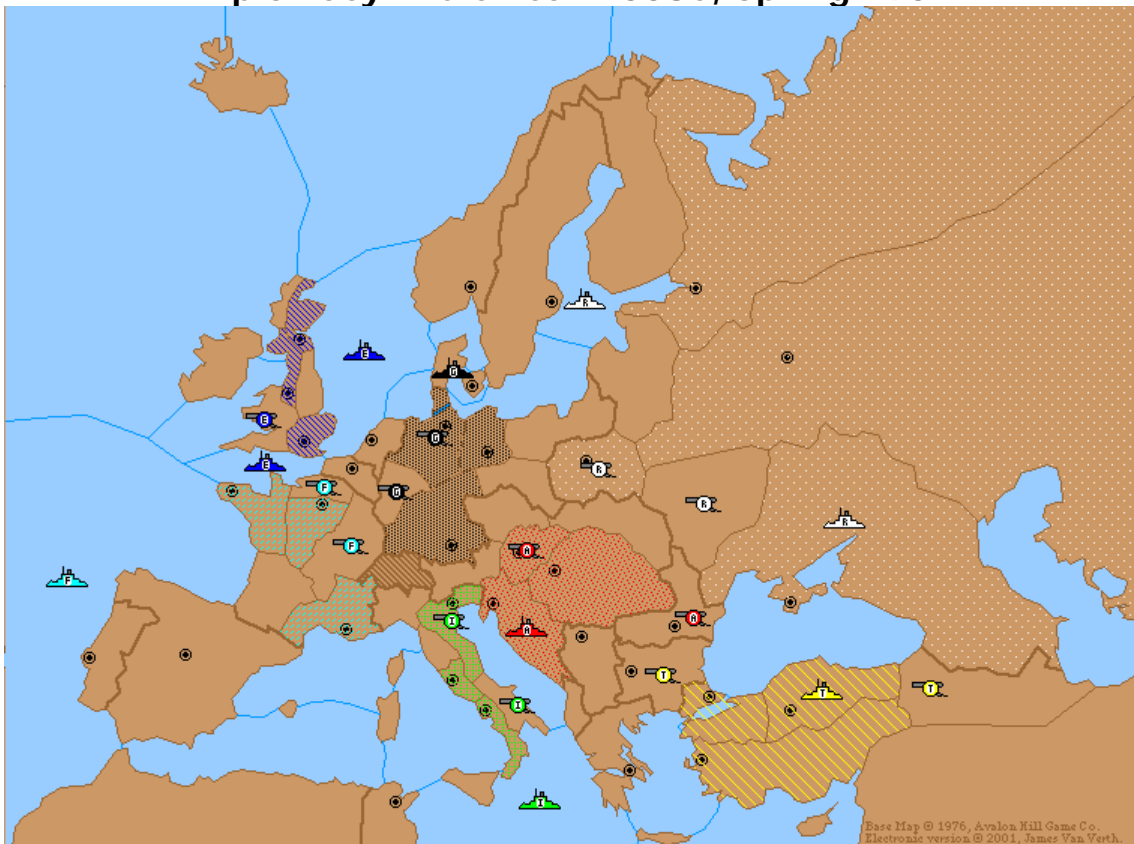
Autumn/Winter Separated From Spring By Player Request Spring 1905 Deadline is February 24th 2009 at 7:00am my time

PRESS

Germany – Russia: I'm gonna get you for that!

That's it? One lousy line of press? Pphpht!!!

Diplomacy "Dulcinea" 2008C, Spring 1901



Austria (Stephen Agar – stephen "of" stephenagar.com): A Budapest – Rumania, F Trieste - Venice (*Fails*), A Vienna - Galicia (*Bounce*).

England (Philip Murphy trekkyj "of" gmail.com): F Edinburgh - North Sea, A Liverpool – Wales, F London - English Channel.

France (Brad Wilson – bwdolphin146 "of" yahoo.com): F Brest - Mid-Atlantic Ocean, A Marseilles – Burgundy, A Paris - Picardy.

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

Italy (Melinda Holley – genea5613 "of" aol.com): F Naples - Ionian Sea, A Rome – Apulia, A Venice Hold.

Russia (Jack McHugh – jwmchughjr "of" gmail.com): A Moscow – Ukraine, F Sevastopol - Black Sea (*Bounce*), F St Petersburg(sc) - Gulf of Bothnia, A Warsaw - Galicia (*Bounce*).

Turkey (Jim Burgess – jfburgess "of" gmail.com): [F Ankara - Black Sea](#) (*Bounce*),
A Constantinople – Bulgaria, A Smyrna - Armenia.

Fall 1901 Deadline is February 24th 2009 at 7:00am my time

I *did* hear from Simon a few days after **ES** #24 was released, explaining why he had missed the deadline. However, I never heard back from him with any Spring orders after that initial email. So, Philip Murphy is now the new English player of record, having called for a Vote of No Confidence in Parliament and successfully moving his party into controlling position of all foreign policy and military matters. And how about some more Press folks?

PRESS

Baron Gwilliam, Late Swain of the Last Hovel But One on the Left Before the Canal to the Duke of York: Dearest sir, I ingratiate myself to your service. I shall lead the armies of the realm to the parapets at York and forever put all my energies to your service.

Duke of York to Swain Gwilliam: Did I really hand you that Baronet? Just why did I do that? You had better serve me more faithfully than this.

Flap Jack Burps, Farts, and Snores and then is roused to wakefulness: Brp, awp, uh where am I? Who roused me out of my sound (in more ways than one) sleep??? The puny insignificant one who did that will pay, will pay dearly.

Flap Jack sees the Casino: Hey, can I bet on me? Really, I can?

Board to Brad: We all offer you the sincerest condolences on your recent accident! We hope you will be able to continue with the game and best wishes for a speedy recovery.

Boob to Board: I can't write press if I have nothing to react to? No one loves poor me, no letters, no postcards since the last deadline, and almost no press to react to, here what is this darn Bourse, I HATE Bourses, did I give my permission to allow my game to be Boursed? Where is the man in charge, I want his hide!!!???

GM – Boob: My hide, as well as the rets of me, is pledged to Heather. Sorry.

Boob to Baron Wuffet: Teffuw on you, who cares about you???

"Dulcinea" Diplomacy Bourse Trading Underway...Rothschild places an early size bet on the Sultan!

Billy Ray Valentine: Sells 300 Crowns and 300 Lire. Buys 200 Pounds, 200 Francs, 200 Rubles.

Duke of York: Sells 500 Pounds and 500 Rubles. Buys 300 Crowns, 50 Francs, 300 Marks, 50 Lire, and 300 Piastres.

Smaug the Dragon: Sells 500 Pounds. Buys 500 Francs.

Rothschild: Sells 500 Crowns, 500 Pounds, 500 Francs, 500 Marks, 500 Lire, and 500 Rubles. Buys 3000 Piastres.

Baron Wuffet: Sells 200 Crowns, 300 Marks, and 100 Lire. Buys 100 Pounds, 200 Francs, and 300 Rubles.

Wooden Nickel Enterprises: Sells 100 Pounds, 200 Francs, 100 Marks, and 100 Rubles. Buys 200 Crowns, 200 Lira, and 100 Piastres.

VAIONT Enterprises: Sells 500 Francs, 500 Rubles, 250 Marks. Buys 500 Lira, 500 Piastres, 250 Pounds.

Remember, new players can begin at ANY TIME, with 1000 of each currency. Now that Spring 1901 is over, you no longer have to spend everything you sell...you are permitted to hold as much cash as you please!

	<u>Austrian</u> <u>Crowns</u>	<u>English</u> <u>Pounds</u>	<u>French</u> <u>Francs</u>	<u>German</u> <u>Marks</u>	<u>Italian</u> <u>Lire</u>	<u>Russian</u> <u>Rubles</u>	<u>Turkish</u> <u>Piastres</u>	<u>Cash</u>	<u>Total</u> <u>Value</u>
Opening Value	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.00		
Closing Value	\$0.95	\$0.895	\$0.975	\$0.915	\$0.985	\$0.89	\$1.39		
Player Holdings									
Billy Ray Valentine	700	1200	1200	1000	700	1200	1000	0	\$6,971.50
Duke of York	1300	500	1050	1300	1050	500	1300	0	\$7,182.00
Smaug the Dragon	1000	500	1500	1000	1000	1000	1000	0	\$7,040.00
Rothschild	500	500	500	500	500	500	4000	0	\$8,365.00
Baron Wuffet	800	1100	1200	700	900	1300	1000	0	\$6,988.50
Wooden Nickel Enterprises	1200	900	800	900	1200	900	1100	0	\$7,061.00
VAIONT Enterprises	1000	1250	500	750	1500	500	1500	0	\$7,250.00
Any New Players	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	0	\$7,000.00

PRESS

(Spring 1901) Here we see the opening portfolio strategy of an experienced investor. The move to divest Crowns and Lira is obvious, but why is he dumping Marks? Does he have inside information on the Kaiser or is he making a statistical play?

Duke of York to the Bourse: Call me a traitor, but if Swain Gwilliam... er Baron Gwilliam won't do as he is told, I WILL sell his butt off to the highest bidder!!!

Smaug to Middle Earth: Currencies come and currencies go - I lie on my wealth - a mattress made of gold, jewels and precious things. It's safer than a bank since *I* guard it myself. *snorts flames*

Next Bourse Deadline is February 23rd 2009 at 7:00pm my time

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. ***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. 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 2 Categories

1. A color not associated with Christmas.
2. A circus animal.
3. A film in which Dustin Hoffman appears.
4. A character in Alice in Wonderland (besides Alice).
5. A relative.

David Burgess not only got the highest score this turn; he ALSO only missed the highest possible score by one point (including proper placement of his Joker). Only by choosing Black instead of Blue for the first category did he miss the one point. As you can see, scores and position can have some wild swings with the Joker added to the game.

<u>Player</u>	<u>Color</u>	<u>Circus</u>	<u>Hoffman</u>	<u>Alice</u>	<u>Relative</u>	<u>Turn</u>	<u>Total</u>
David Burgess	Black	Elephant	The Graduate	Mad Hatter	Mother	62	101
Bill Brown	Yellow	Elephant	Midnight Cowboy	Mad Hatter	Mother	55	96
Philip Murphy	Yellow	Elephant	Tootsie	Mad Hatter	Uncle	49	91
W. Andrew York	Blue	Elephant	The Graduate	Mad Hatter	Brother	57	91
John Colledge	Black	Elephant	Rain Man	Mad Hatter	Mother	52	87
Allison Kent	Yellow	Elephant	Rain Man	Cheshire Cat	Father	39	77
Heather Taylor	Black	Elephant	Tootsie	Cheshire Cat	Mother	47	74
Jamie McQuinn	Black	Elephant	Tootsie	Mad Hatter	Uncle	48	74
Jim Burgess	Blue	Elephant	The Graduate	Mad Hatter	Mother	54	74
Dane Maslen	Blue	Elephant	Tootsie	White Rabbit	Father	41	69
Brendan Whyte	Blue	Lion	Rain Man	Mad Hatter	Father	33	68
Melinda Holley	Purple	Elephant	Tootsie	White Rabbit	Sister	47	65
Brad Wilson	Yellow	Elephant	Rain Man	Cheshire Cat	Aunt	48	65
Don Williams	Orange	Elephant	Tootsie	Mad Hatter	Sister	56	65
Tom Swider	Orange	Elephant	Rain Man	Cheshire Cat	Mother	43	63
Kevin Wilson	Orange	Tiger	The Graduate	Cheshire Cat	Cousin	23	55
Paul Bolduc	Purple	Elephant	The Graduate	White Rabbit	Spouse	34	55
Jack McHugh	Blue	Lion	The Graduate	Mad Hatter	Mother	40	54
Jeremie Lefrancois	Black	Elephant	The Graduate	White Rabbit	Father	41	50
William Wood	Orange	Seal	Tootsie	Tinman	Uncle	22	41
Brad Martin	Blue	Lion	Serpico	Tinman	Uncle	22	34
Martin Burgdorf	Green	Hippo	Rain Man	Mad Hatter	Cousin	22	34
<u>MOST POPULAR</u>	Blue	Elephant	Tootsie/Graduate	Mad Hatter	Mother	47	

Selected Comments By Category:

Color – John Colledge “I’m Dreaming of a Black Christmas just doesn’t have the same ring to it, does it?”

Circus Animal – John Colledge “I thought they had stopped using animals in circuses these days?” Kevin Wilson “Kind of a toss between elephant and tiger. Being from Missouri, I’ll go with the tiger.”

Dustin Hoffman Film – John Colledge “I didn’t realize he had been nominated for so many Oscars.” Dane Maslen “I was also tempted by ‘Marathon Man’ but I didn’t think it was safe to pick it.”

Alice in Wonderland Character – Kevin Wilson “Gotta go with cats since we both have them.” Allison Kent “I have never read the book or seen the movie. I always hated as a child when people would call me Allison Wonderland.”

Round 3 Categories – Deadline is February 24th, 2009 at 7:00am my time

1. A method of execution.
2. Any song by The Beatles on which Paul McCartney does NOT sing lead.
3. A famous poet.
4. A movie that won Best Picture at the Academy Awards.
5. Something you cut.

**Deadline For The Next Issue of Eternal Sunshine:
February 24th 2009 at 7:00am my time – See You Then!**