

Eternal Sunshine #2 >

April 2009

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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. Or <http://www.guysexplained.com> where women can learn all the secrets of how a man's mind works, and why they act the way they do.

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 – “You looked happy; happy with a secret.” (Ralph in “Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind”)

Welcome to Eternal Sunshine, the only Diplomacy zine to correctly predict Arizona would make it to the Super Bowl. Well, I didn't predict it – Jack McHugh did in his column – but that's close enough for me. This issue is going to be a little on the smallish side I think, based on what I've got planned with a week to go before the deadline. Work has been a real struggle lately, with more hours and more take-home stuff. I haven't felt all that inspired to write, which is why the latest Halfway House chapter is probably only going to be about two pages long. And some of my energy is going into the next issue of Diplomacy World, which is due out a week or so after Eternal Sunshine #27. So combine all these factors, and you get less time, less energy, and less material. And, of course, since Jim Burgess is soooooo far behind with The Abyssinian Prince, those of you who only see this subzine postally have quite a bit of reading to do before you catch up.

Life around the apartment has been rather quiet, if you forget the strain of extra work. Heather and I are both exercising more and trying to eat better, in an attempt to lose a few pounds. So far so good, although Heather has put more into it than I have (and is getting better initial results). I keep telling her I want to get back to the emaciated look I had when I got home from prison, but she says I looked like a concentration camp victim. I don't really want to get that thin anyway; I'd like to lose 15 pounds, perhaps 20, but that's it. And I'm in no hurry, so if I lose ½ a pound every week on average that's perfectly fine with me.

By the way, I may as well mention that I started another new website this month. It seems that almost all of my close personal friends are female, and I am repeatedly being sought out by them to explain the actions of some boyfriend, former boyfriend, or their husbands. So I decided to spread this knowledge to the outside world, and have not put up <http://www.guysexplained.com> as my way of doing so. Aside from the occasional essay on one topic or another, it features simply Q&A from submitted emails. Yes, I've been referred to as a “traitor” by a few males since I opened the site, but so what? Heather's initial response to the site was: “Great, now EVERY woman will want you.” This fear was quickly proved untrue, as a girl I knew from high school and had added to my Facebook friends list threw a little tantrum about how “stereotypical” my view of the male is, and that she refused to support it or the site. I was promptly removed from her friends list. Her loss!

In zine news, Heather is skipping this issue after her long column in ES #26. Don't worry though, she'll be back next time (most likely, anyway). Meanwhile, I should remind all of you how loving, beautiful, sexy, intelligent, caring, affectionate, understanding, tolerant, and nurturing she is. She loves it when I say nice things about her in print! Other than that, you'll find the normal foolishness here: movie reviews, letters, hypothetical questions, a new movie quote contest, game openings, and other crap. And we have the latest columns from Andy York and Jack McHugh. Better than a swift kick in the nuts! I just don't have much to say, so on we go!

Playlist: The Pretenders – The Pretenders; Throwing Copper – Live; Changesbowie – David Bowie; Mozart Horn Concerto #2 and #3; Bounce – Soundtrack; Contractual Obligation – Monty Python; Yellow Submarine – The Beatles.

Halfway Home at the Halfway House – Part Three

While the remainder of my bus trip was tedious, exhausting, and seemed to be eternal, it was actually rather uneventful. I grabbed a sandwich in Little Rock, and managed to get a few hours sleep between there and Dallas. We arrived in Dallas about two hours later than scheduled, and I'd had it drilled into my brain that any late arrival would be considered a serious violation of the travel policy. So I canned the number I had for the halfway house, but the woman who answered didn't seem to care one way or the other. "Just get here as soon as you can, that's fine."

I tried to call Heather too, to hear her voice - and to see if she had calmed down from the fit she'd thrown the last time we spoke. I got her answering machine, left a message, and headed out to the street to find a cab. I was quite familiar with this part of downtown Dallas, having ridden Greyhound in and out of the station countless times when I worked for AmeriFleet. My only real concern was finding a cab driver who could figure out where we needed to go; my directions were pretty simple, but since they'd come off the internet I had no way of knowing whether they were correct or not. Also, Hutchins is a bit out of the way, so it was possible a cab driver would not want to go that far when there was no return fare available.

There were two cabs waiting on the street. I approached the first one and climbed in the back. "I need to go to Hutchins."

"The Halfway house, huh? It's fifty bucks since I can't get a fare back."

Obviously I wasn't the first passenger to climb out of the bus station heading to the halfway house. And I suppose that doesn't say much for the town of Hutchins when the only reason anybody wants to take a cab there is to report to a Halfway House.

As it turned out, my directions were not entirely correct, but only because of a major change off of Interstate 45. The halfway house was supposed to be located about two blocks from an exit, but that particular exit no longer went east and west; the connection to the west had been closed permanently. So instead we had to take a different exit and work through a few side streets. Apparently this change had taken place a number of months earlier, as the cab driver knew all about it.

The area we were driving in was rather empty. There was a gas station/convenience store and a house or two, but that was it. Then we turned right and hit the correct street, and I could see the layout was quite isolated. There was a water tower on one side of the street, with a huge overgrown field. On the left side of the street there were three buildings: one was a typical small commercial building housing some company or other. Farther down the street was a propane company called Blue Rhino, with small and large tanks everywhere, and trucks moving around - it seemed rather active. In between, there was your typical sterile-looking brick buildings, pure government: the Dallas-area Halfway House, administered by the Volunteers of America (who weren't volunteers, of course). It could have passed for a small medical building, except for one fenced-in area with a basketball hoop which could only be accessed from inside the building itself.

I was home...at least my new home for the next six months.

The front door was open, and I walked in. The lobby area was rather quiet, although I could hear a television somewhere in the distance. The standard-issue institutional tile made up the floor. There was a small sofa to the left, and to the right a large desk with two windows, similar to something you'd find at the Department of Motor Vehicles. I approached the window nervously and was happy to see a rather pleasant and unthreatening woman behind the window. I gave her my name, my prison ID number, and my social security number, and she asked me to wait at the couch. "Do not speak to anyone until I have processed your entry," she warned. Fortunately that wasn't much of a problem, as I think only one or two people walked by in the meantime. One, I noticed, was a female...this reminded me that the halfway house was co-ed! I would actually see living, breathing women again. Somehow though, this didn't seem like such a big deal. After all, the only woman I really wanted to see was Heather. And I suppose I had already made the mental jump that I'd see plenty of females now that I was going to interact with the outside world. I know that for some halfway house "clients" (as we were called) this is a major event, but it wasn't for me.

Eventually the staff member brought me into a large room, which she told me was the visiting room and television room. She proceeded to ask me a few questions, mainly to confirm information she already had in her paperwork, and then she went through my belongings. I gave her the two prescriptions I had been taking, so she could put them in the medical closet and have them officially dispensed to me; they were just Zantac and some antibiotic, but I could understand their desire to keep access to prescriptions limited, as well as the need to make sure they were only taken according to instructions. I didn't think there would be an issue with any of the

personal items I was carrying with me, as they all had come directly from my time inside prison, but as it turned out there were three items she confiscated. The first was my big bag of plain M&Ms. "Clients cannot have food, because no food or drink is allowed anywhere in the facility except for the mess hall and the snack room." She told me I could have somebody pick them up when they came to visit. I could understand the no food rule; bugs were always a major concern, especially in the warmer Texas climate. But the other two items she confiscated really confused me: my nail clippers and toenail clippers. "These are held up front, and you can come sign them out when you need them." I wasn't about to be argumentative on my first day, but it seemed a bit silly that they wouldn't allow me to keep the same pair of nail clippers I'd had in prison, especially when I had disposable razors which, when broken open, could cause a lot more damage. Oh well; this would not be the last halfway house rule I'd think was pointless or counterproductive.

After having me sign some forms and giving me a list of rules and policies, she showed me around the rest of the facility, which wasn't much. Down one hallway were the female bedrooms, mess hall, and administrative offices. I guess they felt safer keeping the females (who accounted for about 25% of the population) closer to the powers that be. In the central part of the building, where the two main hallways and the entranceway intersected, you could find the snack room, the medical closet (which was where they dispensed medication from), the library, and the laundry room. This was also the area where the large entrance desk was located, as well as the visiting room. This left one long hallway for me to explore on my own: the hallway with all of the male client bedrooms. The staff member handed me a key, which she said was for my closet, and gave me my room number and bed assignment. It was clear she wasn't interested in walking down that hallway, or wasn't supposed to do it without a male staff member, or both. So I set off on my own.

Immediately on the left was a door marked Employment Services, which I'd been told was where the Employment Counselor had her office. Then on both sides of the wall were about eight payphones, each requiring 50 cents per call. These phones were meant to be our contact with the outside world; call phones and phone cards were not permitted. I guessed that the Halfway House got some kind of percentage on the amount of money spent, but I couldn't be sure. There was one regular free phone "clients" were allowed to use, but it was at the front desk, and meant for phone calls to locate employment only – nothing else. I'd soon learn the was often a line to use that phone, so for simplicity's sake it would often be worth it to drop the 50 cents into the payphone.

I walked down about half of the hallway, and found my room on the left. Opening the door, I entered an 8-bunk room; 4 pairs of bunk beds. My bed was #7, which was the top bunk immediately on the right. The rest of the room was pretty much empty. There was a small table with a sink in one corner, and some folding chair scattered about. A small television, belonging to one of the clients, sat on a chair between two bunks. I located my closet: it was quite small, but it would have to do. It was meant to hold all of my personal belongings for the duration of my stay. Nothing was to be left out in the open. There were also two other doors in the room; the one on the left led to a small room with two toilets and a sink. The one across the entranceway led to the two small showers and another sink. Every bed was empty, but appeared to be used by someone. So while I'd traded down from a prison "range" with 40+ inmates to a small room with 8, I still wouldn't be getting any privacy in this place. I shrugged; it was only for six months, and I'd be at work much of the time. How bad could it be?

I'd been informed that a client orientation was being held the following day, so I had nothing to do until dinner time around 5pm. Heather was already at work, so there was no reason to call her. And I didn't want to fork over the long distance charges to call anybody else. So I did something I'd been dying to do for three days: a took a long, hot shower. I cleaned myself up, shaved, put on some fresh clothes (my choices were limited but I planned on asking Heather to bring me some in the next day or two after work), and climbed into bed. The bunk was a solid metal frame style, with no springs underneath, and the mattress and pillow were very thin. But it wasn't much worse than what I'd been used to from prison, and the room was quiet. Exhausted from the long journey, emotionally and physically fried, I closed my eyes and quickly dozed off. As I drifted away, I thought about all the things I needed to do over the next few days: get Heather to bring me some clothes, get plenty to eat, find a job – ANY job for the time being, and be sure to obey all the rules of the halfway house. I'd just keep to myself and the rest should be easy.

But, as I had learned to expect, accomplishing goals when involved in the Federal prison system is only as easy as the staff and administration want to make it for you. And I was soon to learn that the rules and attitudes of those around me were not designed to make life simple. In fact, some of them seemed specifically designed to make it impossible to succeed! Like in prison itself, my goals in the halfway house would have to be changed from "achieve goals and progress" to "survive and count the days until I'm out of here."

Hypothetical of the Month

Last month, we gave you this hypothetical: You work for a mid-sized company. Your work for the IT department takes you throughout the building, in and out of every department. In an executive's office one afternoon, you are busy updating some software on his desktop when you spill some coffee. Quickly wiping it up the mess, you find yourself holding his American Express corporate bill. Your eyes are drawn to it, and you are astonished at the amount of money this executive is spending. You also see what appear to be a number of personal charges on the corporate account. What do you say about this revelation, if anything? And to whom? Or what other action do you take?

Melinda Holley - The operative word here is 'appear'. Without knowing precisely the nature of the transactions or the arrangement the executive has with the company, I have no way of knowing if any of the transactions are illegal. I wouldn't do anything but I'd sure start listening to any office gossip about this guy.

Tom Swider - None, other than I'm usually too busy in my job to be snoopy but-insky and notice such things. Maybe an interesting take on this is that corporate credit cards are such an unfair one-sided deal. Employees are responsible for late charges, even if it's the fault of their employer. Many people use the cards for both business and personal expenses, apply checks they receive from their employer to pay the expense, and pay the remaining balance. I'm expecting that government agencies directly pay the bill, and that government employees would be making an ethical violation. As you said "corporate bill", there's typically no direct pay hence to dilemma. Besides, some executives have extraordinaire expenses when courting large clients ... again, none of my business and more than likely all legit. That's why businesses have accountant and independent auditors.

Andy York - I'd never be in that position - I don't drink coffee, so there wouldn't have been any spill to clean up!

Bill Brown - My attitude would be that as an IT guy it is none of my business. I have no idea what sort of salary agreement he is on or what has been agreed between himself and the company (he may even be repaying any personal charges that he puts on his card - who knows?).

Phil Murphy - First off - given the current situation with the economy, I'd have limited sympathy for those who take advantage of perks like that. That seems like an abuse to me and I'd be horrified by it if I were a business owner. So as a responsible employee, I'd ask to see the boss and tell them what I found. If they do nothing about it, their choice. I would be tempted to mind my own business if the economy was booming but if the company was under pressure I'd have no hesitation in reporting it. It's effectively theft if you're not supposed to charge personal items on the corporate account.

My answer is - I photocopy the statements for future blackmail use, either against the executive or against the firm itself should they decide to fire me for reasons I feel are unfair. Remember the scene in American Beauty? Yeah, something like that.

For Next Month: You work in as a cashier in a grocery store. Occasionally they also have you work at the customer service desk. The woman who runs the desk is very aggressive and short when she deals with other employees, and makes no secret of the fact that her boyfriend has done time in prison for gang-related violence after someone "betrayed" him. One day you happen to see out of the corner of your eye as she throws five or six cartons of cigarettes into the trash, tying the bag up and putting it in the rolling trash bin in the room behind you. You can only assume this is a method she uses to move these cigarettes outside, at which time she can retrieve them and sell them, give them to friends, or use them personally. You're not sure, but you think she may have noticed your awareness of her actions. But her demeanor does not change for the remainder of the day. Do you report her to the manager, or someone else? Or take some other action?

2nd Eternal Sunshine Movie Quote Contest

The rules to the contest are simple. Below you will find quotes from a number of movies. Every movie I'm quoting from can be found in our apartment on DVD or VHS. ***Some of the quotes may be off slightly, as they're all from memory, but that's your tough luck.*** Your mission: identify as many of the movies as you

can. The person who submits more correct answers than anyone else wins a DVD of my choosing (unless you live outside of the USA and Canada, in which case I'll send you something else since you can't watch Region 1 DVDs). Research is permitted, but frowned upon (although a number of these movies can be found mentioned in prior issues of Eternal Sunshine, or on my 100 Movies list). If anybody is able to identify ALL the movies correctly, you win a \$25 Cinemark gift card! If more than one person submits all the correct answers, the person who submitted them first wins. Likewise, if there is a tie for most number of correct answers, the tie goes to the set of answers I receive first. The only person NOT eligible to win this contest is Stephanie Rogers, because she own last time. To make things easier, and less intimidating, I have cut the number of quotes down to 25. Hint: NONE of the movies which appeared in the 1st contest are used below (unless I screwed up, which is always possible). Now on to the quotes!

1. Don't worry Smitty, that's why you've got two.
2. Masturbation; refuge of the lonely housewife.
3. Do you realize you've had three names in the last two days?
4. Am I mad enough Professor? Am I?
5. Where have you seen this divine spark in operation Colonel?
6. I'll have a half double decaffeinated half caf with a twist of lemon.
7. Yes Captain, computer indicates we are about to be swallowed by a giant sheep dog.
8. Can I use the bathroom? I may have shit my pants.
9. Ever fired your gun in the air and yelled "Arrrrrrrr!!!!"?
10. With your bad knee, Ed, you shouldn't throw anybody.
11. On the 3rd date, Harry, I'm going to screw your eyes blue.
12. Never being happy isn't the same as being unhappy. Is it?
13. Mister, we **are** the weirdoes.
14. My meteor, my price.
15. I speak for all mediocrities in the world. I am their champion.
16. He's like all men: a big kid in a man's body.
17. Sometimes when I think of how good my book is going to be, I can't breathe.
18. I liked being in bed. I pretty much didn't like anything else.
19. There's nothing funnier than the ridiculous faces you people make mid-coitus.
20. Tentacles. N-T. Big difference.
21. How many rooms am I checked into in this shit hole?
22. I wouldn't be afraid of death if I was you. I'd be more afraid of driving in rush hour traffic.
23. You can't fire me; you don't even know my name!
24. The Empire State Building is the closest thing to heaven in the city.
25. Get this, honky. You go tell Raphael that I ain't taking no jive from no Western Union messenger.

Deadline for entries is April 27th, 2009 at 7:00am my time. Good luck!

Music That Never Gets Old

This is just a little poll, which grew out of one of those "tell everybody about yourself" things you see on Facebook or on mass emails. But I thought about this one question, and I'm interested in hearing everybody else's response.

The task is simple: give me three songs which never get old (in your opinion). Please include the artist if you know it, or if it's a song with many versions...just choose the one version in particular which doesn't get old for you.

I'll print all the responses I get, and who knows? Maybe we can make a little collection of the songs the way Jim Burgess planned to with "23 Songs" before he collapsed under the weight of all that recordkeeping.

The Dining Dead -

The Eternal Sunshine Movie Reviews

The Wrestler – If you follow movies at all, it is inevitable that you've heard quite a bit about *The Wrestler*, and about how though the film Mickey Rourke has resurrected a career which has been deceased for some time. For a short while Rourke's portrayal of Randy "The Ram" Robinson was the favorite to win Best Actor at the Academy Awards. He didn't win in the end, and having now finally gotten around to seeing the film I believe the Academy made a wise decision giving it to Sean Penn for *Milk* instead. For while Rourke gives a fine performance, it isn't as earth-shattering as all the hype had led me to believe. And neither is the film as a whole.

"The Ram" is an aging professional wrestler, who in the late 80's was on top of the sport. Now he is physically deteriorating, broke, and without any contact with his only daughter. Making ends meet by working part-time at a grocery store hauling boxes, and doing appearances on the weekend either to sign autographs or to perform in the ring with younger up-and-comers. The wrestling scenes are truly the highlight of the movie, as we see the incredible physical punishment the "fake" wrestlers take in the name of entertainment. After each fight, Randy has to be taped up, sewn up, and glued up. Broken glass, barbed wire, staples; they're removed from his flesh by semi-professional medics. And on top of all of that, "The Ram" fills his body with countless steroids and growth enhancers. Without question, he is living on the far fringe of show business, and trying to hang on before he falls off the cliff.

After a heart attack derails what's left of his wrestling career, Randy tries to cross the bridge into the real world again. He hasn't spoken to his estranged daughter (Evan Rachel Wood) in years, but at the gentle prodding of a local stripper he has a thing for (Marisa Tomei), he attempts a reconciliation. Those attempts are awkward, emotional, and carry tremendous baggage. Likewise, his desire to move beyond the customer/stripper give-and-take with Tomei's character "Cassidy" (whose real name is Pam), looks to be hopeless. Even his desire to work full-time at the grocery store, which requires tedious customer interaction, is a draining experience for Randy.

Rourke is, in many ways, telling the story of his own life here, and it his familiarity with the desperation which allows him to give a compelling performance. From swallowing sarcastic comments from his boss to sleeping in the back of his van when he gets locked out of his trailer, none of Randy's plans seem destined for success. Even the 20th anniversary of his most famous bout, for which a rematch is planned, is a huge question mark. Rourke is himself barely recognizable compared to his early acting days; his face looks like it has seen a few too many punches and surgeons knives.

The performances of Rourke, Tomei, and Wood are all solid, but *The Wrestler* has a tendency to get too melodramatic, and during those moments the direction of the plot seems obvious. However, the strength of the performances keep the film from leaving a sour taste in your mouth. More than anything, the film delivers in an attempt to show just how sad and full of true despair the aging wrestling community is. They had their time in the spotlight, but now the world has completely passed them by.

The Wrestler is a good film, but not an exceptional one. So lower your expectations a bit, but see it. It's worth your time.

The Last House on the Left – I generally avoid remakes whenever possible (the poster I just saw for the remake of *The Taking of Pelham 1-2-3* starring John Travolta and Denzel Washington still has me feeling ill). But since Heather had never seen the Wes Craven version, and considering how low-budget it was, I agreed to give this new version a try. All things considered, it was a decent suspense film, a level above most of the thriller crap they dish out these days.

The story itself is rather simple, a mix of unfortunate coincidences. Vacationing at their remote lake house, a couple (Tony Goldwyn and Monica Potter) and their daughter (Sara Paxton) anticipate a quiet time by themselves. The daughter takes their vehicle to go visit a friend in town, and this is when things begin to unwind. The two decide to accept the offer of a young man they don't know (Spencer Treat Clark) to return to his motel room for some marijuana. They enjoy themselves, for a while...until the young man's father, uncle, and uncle's girlfriend return unexpectedly. As it happens his father (Garret Dillahunt) is an escaped convict, and the trio just murdered two officers in order to arrange his getaway. The girls know too much, or have seen too much, and they cannot be released. You can guess at the direction of the plot from there, except the twist is the gang takes refuge from a storm in a nearby house...the house occupied by the vacationing couple.

The violence in the film is quite graphic, but in some ways made more terrifying not because of the blood splattering on the screen (as in other horror films) but because of the brutality, rawness, and complete lack of remorse from all involved (save the harassed son of the gang leader). There are some quite gratuitous shots early on of Paxton undressing and dressing again that seem completely unnecessary. However, the scenes of violence, rape, and murder carry a less opportunistic feel. They are shocking because the acts themselves are shocking, not because of an over-the-top approach. Director Dennis Iliadis combines shorts cuts with viewpoints of various characters to keep a very human reality to the subject matter. Suspension of disbelief isn't quite so

difficult as in other films of the genre. With that in mind, and because of the somewhat intelligent and understandable actions of the family members (again, compared to the "fall down cowering until you are hacked to pieces" or "leave the gun next to the supposedly dead villain" clichés) you can actually find yourself rooting for the good guys, and against the bad. The monster is no mindless, faceless Jason or dream-based Freddy...the evil and selfish disdain for the lives of others comes from very human characters...the kind who do exist, and who we should be afraid of.

Don't expect anything momentous, but if you want to enjoy some suspense, with some abundant gore and violence, you can give this film a try. But if blood, knives, rape, and cruelty of man against man are too much for you, don't bother. You'll just walk out feeling ill.

Sunshine Cleaning – I suppose it might be a bit of a surprise to base a drama/comedy film on the idea that cleaning up blood and brain matter from crime scenes could make a profitable business, but then again almost every television show these days involved some sort of Crime Scene Investigation unit. So why not the cleaning people who come in when it's all over?

That's the new business direction of Rose (Amy Adams), who is a single parent trying to support her seven-year-old son. Making a living as a maid for a cleaning service, while still having romantic trysts with her now-married high school sweetheart, Rose is stuck between the dreams of youth and the life she is now a part of. This new business, suggested by that married boyfriend (Steve Zahn) seems to be her ticket to a real career.

She brings in her rebellious and general screw-up sister Norah (Emily Blunt), and they make a go of it, undercutting the professional competition while Rose figures out what equipment, training, and licenses she needs to be fully legitimate. She also gets help from their father (Alan Arkin, always a treat). Aside from the welcome money, both sisters discover they feel different sorts of ties to their clients. Rose is drawn to the family members left behind, and Norah is pulled towards those who have died (or, as often seems to happen, killed themselves).

There are some good laughs in Sunshine Cleaning, but the drama and emotion is always front and center. It isn't just the death and the blood; whether the victim is somebody loved, forgotten, ignored, or a "sort of do-it-yourself" death, the heaviness and waste of lives without love and companionship is focused on. And in ways sometimes unexpected, the pain of suicide on those left behind is also apparent. Sunshine Cleaning is not an overly-powerful film, nor a hilarious one. But it's good, mainly on the strength of the performances (Adams, Blunt, and Arkin make us believe in the honesty of their characters). You won't be overwhelmed, but I think you'll enjoy it.

Seen on DVD – The Four Seasons (B+, I am a bit surprised how well this holds up, just as I am surprised that I enjoyed and appreciated this film when I was about 13 years old). **Stephen King's Golden Years (B,** we got this on VHS for \$1, and it's really enjoyable until the end, which is sooooo stupid and sudden. No explanation, nothing.) **Becket (A-,** Burton and O'Toole come so close to overacting, but they stay on the good side of the line, for a terrific film). **Serenity (B+,** the film which wrapped up the television show "Firefly" and its storyline. It was actually pretty good overall, and I don't think you need to have seen any episodes to enjoy it).

Books in Boxers

Eternal Sunshine Book Reviews

Our Cancer Year – by Harvey Pekar and Joyce Brabner, with art by Frank Stack – Although I'd read a bit of his work, and am currently working my way through a compilation volume of his American Splendor series (which inspired the movie of the same name), this was the first full graphic novel by Pekar I had read. I'd actually heard about it years ago, at the tail-end of my time on the CompuServe comics forum. The novel documents the year Pekar spent being diagnosed with and treated for cancer, and all the things going on in his and his wife Joyce's life during that time. Frank Stack's art adds some real dimension to the tale, although the level of personal disclosure (a staple of Pekar's work) is something I strive for in my own writing. You definitely feel much of what both Pekar and Brabner are feeling...and the story is not told solely from Pekar's point of view, so anyone who has struggled with a seriously ill loved one can identify with what Joyce is going through. If you've seen the film American Splendor, don't expect everything from the big screen to match the true details of the experience on these pages, but that shouldn't distract you much. This is a very moving work, well worth your time. Look for the paperback version, new or used.



Heather's Tricks and Treats

Heather is taking this issue off, but should be back next time! Especially if you people send her some letters! It has just been a very busy month for everybody.

Meet Me In Montauk The Eternal Sunshine Letter Column

Kevin Wilson: Well, I finally got around to looking at the zine and the turn. I was just as well off not sending a turn as I would have had the same score. Ouch! That's probably a deficit I can never make up now. But, I'll try to be more on time and think of them some more.

In the meantime, I did finally watch No Country for Old Men. It was good, but I think Crash and The Departed were both better.

[[I have to disagree on The Departed. I found it to be rather boring, and very overrated. Anyway, you've learned a lesson when it comes to BPD: while many people send their orders in at the last minute, many send them in within 24 hours of the zine coming out too!]]

Phil Murphy: Well I can't speak for other people but I'm mad busy with college work atm. It's all I can do to keep up with my games atm! :(

I did read ES 26 and I enjoyed it greatly. Heather's column struck a chord for several reasons - I won't go into them here but I'm glad I read it - so thank your good lady for sharing! I also continue to enjoy your story about the half-way house, though I can't imagine it was an easy experience for you!

So, yes people are reading it :) It could just be people being busy and all that. Or maybe they're allergic to keyboards with spring coming? Sharpening their knives for the inevitable stab-fest when the orders go out?

[[We both know that the ratio of readers to letters is always a big one, so thanks for the note!]]

Cal White: I read it as well and have to say it probably the best one you have done. You already know that I really enjoy your prison stories, but I thought Heather's piece was easily well done. Unfortunately, I am crazy-busy these days with an existing business to run as well as another startup that I'm working on, so I will have to remain (mostly) as a lurker.

[[This month seems to have everybody behind the 8-ball, myself included!]]

Hugh Polley: Getting players from the past places is like pulling teeth. I suggested that the cat, dippy knight, and world dip should have their best features upgraded and simplified, then merged into one place. I suggested World Diplomacy for the name. This was rejected by all. Web Sites like diplomaticcorp.com are where players have migrated to.

[[I still get some old-timers here and there, people from the postal era. I really enjoy the mix of newer internet-based players and those brought up with zine play.]]

Short of someone more talented than I doing something like this the old zine form is in serious trouble. Note: I had to scroll to the end of the zine to find the games. May I suggest they be moved to start of the HTML or that a link at start of zine to each game be created.

[[I suppose I could do that. For me the games are never the primary part of the zine, so it had simply never occurred to me to add the bookmark.]]

Bill Brown: While I am a great fan of movies, it is not in my makeup to remember details such as quotes, so I can't enter your contests without cheating! I have seen the internet destroy quizzes and competitions - it is too easy for anyone to find nearly everything there. And even with an honor system you will always find people who will spoil it for everyone just because they want to win at any cost. I'm also not a great fan of reading reviews of movies I haven't seen yet, so I generally don't read yours.

[[There really is no way to solve the internet-search problem, except I make sure that in a test-search, at least one of the quotes can't be found.]]

Heather's column was painful to read at times (in the empathetic, emotionally wrenching kind of way). I just wish you and Heather a happy, healthy life. We are a long time dead, so try to enjoy it while we have it and be thankful when we wake every day - the day we don't is the day we are gone forever. And be thankful we have someone to love and someone who loves us - many people don't even have this in their lives.

[[I am thankful for Heather hundreds of times a day, every day...even when she is crabby and grumpy!]]

Phil Murphy: I've said it already on the ES group (somewhere), but I did find Heather's column valuable in understanding things going on in my own life.

It's not an easy thing to write about such experiences. I would find it very difficult to do so. For that, I commend your fine lady (and yourself for your prison stories, among other articles) because I imagine that the decision to do it was not taken lightly.

[[Actually I find it quite therapeutic. And since I plan on trying to collect them in some published format, the zine's monthly deadline forces me to find time to write at least a couple of pages.]]

There are always difficulties where family is concerned - something I know quite a bit about myself too! While I didn't go through the same traumas as Heather did - I have had some problems and so I empathize with Heather. I won't go into my own, partly because they seem trivial in comparison, but mostly because I tend to keep these things private as it's the type of person I've become. I wish I could speak more about it but... I guess I'm too chicken and since things in my family are pretty stable the last few years I don't want to seem ungrateful for what they have done for me.

To Heather: I cannot imagine what it must have been like - you've had so many challenges in your life - I am glad that you made it through and that you and Doug found one another. I get the impression you two are very suited to each other. Of course I'd have to meet you both to confirm this ;)... Both of you have faced such challenges (divorce, family difficulties, depression, and separation from those you love) and from my own experience it takes a partner who has also faced these challenges to make a relationship work. Otherwise how can they understand? I'm glad myself and Robin do have this - I think it's important. And I think you and Doug are very fortunate. It'll be a challenge, the future always is, but one you both recognize. And recognition of the difficulties at the start makes all the difference.

[[As Heather and I always remind each other, those experiences are what brought us to the points in our lives where we could meet and be ready to love each other the way we do. Perhaps if we hadn't been through some of it, we wouldn't appreciate what we have now!]]

As for your mother, well I can understand the issues you brought up. But at the same time... I'd miss my mother if she was gone and I'm sure you would too. That said, it's better to realize why there are difficulties there, and to be able to talk about them - perhaps it will lead to a better understanding between you, who knows!

[[Knowing her mother, I wouldn't count on it!]]

Finally, on a totally unrelated note - did you see Watchmen and what did you make of it?

[[I haven't seen it, because I am terrified that they will have ruined it. I don't know if much of the graphic novel could be properly translated to the screen. The only version I was ever interested in seeing, when it was proposed, was Terry Gilliam's...but that never came about. Did you see it? Did they actually change the ending?]]



***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 #5***

Another dose of Flapjack. Why don't you people appreciate what I give you? If you won't send me cash and valuable gifts, you should at least nominate me for Diplomacy Hobby Awards, or the Pulitzer prize. Where else can you get this kind of genius for free?

After my amazing Super Bowl prediction of Arizona versus Pittsburgh, I am sure a lot of you are asking, "So Jack, you're an incredible prognosticator, and clearly unmatched in assessing the talent of major sporting teams. What are your thoughts on the upcoming baseball season?" Well, fortunately for you I've had one too many beers tonight, so instead of putting this valuable material on a 1-900 gambling line where it belongs, I've decided to give it to you...here...for free. Pay attention, fart-knockers!

American League East: Toronto, Tampa Bay, NY Yankees, Boston, Baltimore. That's right folks, I'm predicting that Toronto takes this one. Tampa Bay will remain a force, but they'll struggle in the mid-season. The Yankees will once again fail to buy themselves a playoff birth; some of that big money they spent will wind up sitting on the DL.

American League Central: Minnesota, Kansas City, Chicago White Sox, Cleveland, Detroit. The big surprise here won't just be the performance of the Royals, but the comeback of the Twins. I think KC may still have the division lead coming into September, but a late fade will cost them the top spot, while Minnesota puts together two tasty winning streaks. Detroit will play as badly as GM manages its finances.

American League West: Texas, Anaheim/Los Angeles/Cabo/Belize Angels, Oakland, Seattle. A pathetic division, Dougie will be happy when his stupid Rangers win the division unexpectedly. Too bad they'll lose in the first round of the playoffs, with only one victory before being eliminated. The thing which hurts Oakland and Anaheim are the depleted bullpens.

National League East: Philadelphia, NY Mets, Washington, Florida, Atlanta. And no, I'm not letting my emotions interfere with my predictions. The only thing I am not 100% sure of is whether the Mets finish a game over Washington, or a game under. Everything else is set in stone here.

National League Central: Pittsburgh, St. Louis, Milwaukee, Chicago Cubs, Houston, Cincinnati. The Pirates become the new Rays, taking the division with youth, power, and pitching. The Big Red Machine has a number of parts out of warranty; time to trade in for a newer model.

National League West: San Diego, Colorado, Arizona, LA Dodgers, San Francisco. You know Manny is a cancer, so don't expect anything out of the Artful Dodgers. San Diego runs away with this division.

Wild Cards: Tampa Bay and St. Louis

World Series: I'm not really set on this, I'd like to see the first month of the season, but for now let me go with Toronto and San Diego. If I had to predict a winner out of them, I'd take San Diego with only 55% conviction.

Hey I heard a funny joke today...why does the Obama administration want to put a 40% tax on aspirin?

Because it's white and it works. Get it?

Seriously though, I read on-line today that the Federal government is raising the national tax on a pack of cigarettes from 39 cents to \$1.01, starting April 1st. I don't have any problem with this sort of "sin tax" (as long as they don't try piling it on my beer, those stinking sons of bitches). Smoking is a dangerous and filthy habit, and nothing bugs me more than seeing some jackass toss a cigarette out his car window when he's done with it. Like the entire world is his personal ashtray. Okay, actually a lot of things bug me more than that, but it DOES bug me. A lot.

But then I started thinking about all the financial problems that the government is having. The non-partisan CBO says the deficits from the Obama Administration's plans will be MUCH high than they are projecting, because their economic assumptions are far too optimistic. We each need to do our part to help; I remember the President saying on his radio address that we will all have to make sacrifices (although that apparently doesn't include refusing the \$500,000 book deal he signed 5 days before inauguration, or the money that he and Chris Dodd took from AIG, Fannie Mae, and Freddie Mac in campaign donations...you DO know that they were the two biggest recipients of money from those firms; and that Dodd personally changed the language in the bailout bill to exclude limits on the bonuses he is now bitching about. I wonder why I find it hard to accept his crocodile tears now?)

Anyway, I think I've come up with a plan to help the country out of this mess. Everybody over the age of 50 needs to start smoking 4 packs of cigarettes a day. First of all, this will greatly increase the tax revenues, both on the state and federal level. That's your way of doing your part to help! Then, when you get cancer, the government will put you on a waiting list for treatment, and you'll drop dead, thereby removing their need to pay you for all that Social Security money you paid into the system. Why can't these politicians think of that?

Okay, last joke of the month...in 2010, a doctor calls Doug's wife about Doug's test results. "I'm sorry ma'am, but we had a mixup at the lab and we've got two test results here, both for a Mr. Kent. We're not sure which is his, and they're both bad news. One of them has Alzheimer's, and the other has AIDS."

"Can't you just test him again?" Heather asks.

"No, sorry, the new government health plan only allows for one test like this per patient. But I do have a solution which I think will determine which one applies to Doug. All you need to do is drive Doug out to the middle of town and leave him there."

"What do I do then?"

"Just wait. If he finds his way home, don't have sex with him anymore."

See you next month kiddies! In the meantime, send me beer!

Out of the WAY #6

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

It's been a busy month, lots going on at work (though I'm actually making headway on some things, including a project review that had been on hold for three years due to time constraints). However, more keeps coming in and I've plenty to do to keep me busy for some time to come, even if nothing else comes my way.

The past few days, at home, I've been dealing with the aftermath of a severe hailstorm event last Wednesday night. My apartment complex was at/near the epicenter of the storm and we had three inch hail coming down and the ground was covered. Five hours later, there was still unmelted hail.

Needless to say, over 100 windows in the complex were broken and many cars suffered significant damage. In my case, I lost the back window and the hood/roof/trunk are covered with dents. Also, four pieces of plastic were cracked, or in one case, actually had a hole punched through it. So, I've been trying to file insurance claims (my agent's office was also hit by the storm and, when I went in on Thursday morning, ceiling tiles were falling in and they'd lost their phone lines). I'll finally get to see an adjuster tomorrow morning.

Then, the trial of getting a simple back window for a 2000 Saturn SL1. The glass place found one (just one!) in Dallas and was planning to install it on Friday. However, when the shipment of 100 windows finally arrived late afternoon, my window wasn't on it. It seems the company sold it to someone else. So, it'll be at least mid-week, next week, before another can be shipped in from elsewhere in the country. Fortunately, the company owner came over Saturday and put a better "temporary" cover on the window. My cardboard and dry cleaner bag kept the rain out, but at about 20mph, started to flap - threatening to fly off onto whoever was behind me and keeping my travels very limited.

On the plus side, the damage (beyond the window) was only cosmetic. The car runs well and has had very few problems over the years. So, I'm glad that it wasn't badly damaged mechanically. I'm not in a "car buying" mood (or mode, for that matter) right now.

Commentary

Well, the inaugural Facts in Five game winds down this issue. It seems it really didn't catch on and, as time went on, the players seemed to lose interest. Only one person really commented on the game recently. The primary concern was the difficulty of the categories and in finding answers that met them.

First off, for those of you unfamiliar with the game, the copy I have was published by 3M (I think there was a later version by Avalon Hill). It was a "party" game where each round consists of five categories and five letters with five minutes to fill out the grid. The categories are determined by a card draw. Some of the cards have a Class (such as World Leaders/Rulers) and a list of Categories (such as Living, African, Biblical, King, etc). The drawer announces the Class and then chooses one or more categories. Other cards only have a list of Classes which the drawer picks one. Once all the categories for the round are determined, the five letters are drawn, the egg timer turned over and everyone fills out the grid to the best of their knowledge. Scoring is based on number of answers in each row (letter or category) squared. For instance, if you had two entries for the letter "E" you'd score four points. If you had five entries for the World Leader category, you'd score twenty-five. Total score for the round was the combined number from each of the ten rows. There are five rounds in each game.

In translating to a pb(e)m format, the scoring system needed significant alterations. Otherwise, the casual player would have no chance against the person who could spend hours googling potential answers. Therefore, the one point if you had an eligible entry for that row. An extra point was given if your entry matched another persons to encourage folks to choose entries that are more common/mainstream rather than going to the tangent or fringe entry (and to ease GMing it!).

The letters were drawn from the bag each round and the categories taken off of the cards. In choosing categories for the classes, I tried to narrow some of the broader ones down to give a better chance of matches. Also, research was not discouraged allowing those who enjoyed some googling to do so without being able to run away with the game.

Taking those comments, and some others made during the course of the game, I've been trying to come up with a better version. One difficulty is that this game, in the pb(e)m format, loses the "time crunch" aspect and opens up the possibility of research. Additionally, beyond the stricter category choices, the only real difference from By Popular Demand (BPD), is the scoring. So, I'm at a loss on how to present the game without it being a scoring variant of BPD. I'm open to suggestions?

In the meantime, I'm going to hold on a new "all players" game for a column or two, hoping to "fix" Facts in Five. If not, I'll launch some other game in the near future - as always, suggestions are welcome!

Also, there are some other games on the list. I just added Pandemic which I played for the first time at ChimaeraCon in San Antonio about a month ago. I'm working on the pb(e)m rules and I'm currently thinking of running a turn for each player each issue, with a second move for the first player to allow a rotation in player order (ala Chris Hassler's Settler's games in *S.O.B.*). The Dispatcher role will be eliminated, and a round probably will be interrupted when an Epidemic card is drawn. I'm not sure how I want to handle the Infector step (announcing them ahead of time or having players write conditionals). The other option, of course, is to play as many turns as possible between each issue and publish the "current state of the game" in the issue. Also, the game would always be played at the Introductory level for the cards held by each player (Intro level has all cards revealed, while the Normal and Heroic level has them kept in the player's hand, though they are free to tell the other players what they may, or may not, have).

The one thing about the game is that it relies heavily on player interaction and cooperation. All players win, or all players lose. There is no individual victory - it is humanity against four pandemics. If the players don't cure all four diseases before a pandemic occurs, the germs

win! Any input or suggestions from potential players is welcome. And, if the expansion comes out before the game starts, I'll see about incorporating it into the game offering.

Letter Column

(always welcome, send them in!)

Babylon 5 Quote

Sheridan in *Into the Fire*: "A Vorlon said 'Understanding is a three-edged sword.' Your side. Their side. And the truth."

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

The Month in History

April 4, 1949: Birth of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to defend Western Europe against the spread of Communism by military conquest. The mutual defense provisions are not invoked until the attacks on America that occurred September 11, 2001.

April 30, 1789: George Washington was elected by a unanimous vote of the electoral college as the first president of the United States under the new Constitution. The Constitution replaced the Articles of Confederation, under which the United States had been governed until then. The Articles did not have a provision for a president.

Sources include: Current issue of "Smithsonian"

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: Nuclear power, is now the time for revived interest in this alternative to oil/coal/natural gas?

Do the negative effects to the environment by the oil/coal/natural gas power plants outweigh the concerns about storing spent nuclear fuel?

[**David Burgess**] First, I would like to say it is nearly impossible to determine the truth on energy generation and the environment. On one side, you have the insane environmentalists twisting information to make the world believe the world will implode. On the other side, you have the oil and energy companies twisting information to make you think their energy is safe and won't hurt a fly. I haven't practiced in my field since graduation, but I do have an environmental engineering degree. I personally can't think of any reason why nuclear power would ever be in consideration for a new power generation? If you add in the cost of disposal, the risk for contamination during production and the possibility of terrorist sabotage, I think they should stop all nuclear power generation. I believe that oil, coal and natural gas can generate electricity cleanly, if the money is spent on scrubbers to treat the emissions before releasing them into the environment. The majority of the damage being done to the environment from coal electricity generation is being done by power plants build before the clean air regulations were passed. They should not grandfather in the old plants and the harm to the environment would be greatly reduced.

[**WAY**] I have to completely agree with you, David, that the claims from every side of the argument are based on twisted information to make their case. It is even more difficult when most of the studies are funded by companies/organizations that have a vested interest in promoting a certain view or belief. For the layman to get a reasoned understanding of the entire issue is all too difficult.

I also agree with you that oil, coal and natural gas can cleanly generate electricity - if the companies involved are willing to spend the time, money and effort to do so - especially, as you point out, with the older plants. Coupled with that will be the willingness of the consumer to pay a higher price for electricity and for other items in the marketplace to cover the costs. Also, with these types of plants, the mining of the resources to power them will need to be made "cleaner" - particularly with coal where strip mining and such can seriously degrade the nearby land.

However, I personally am a proponent of nuclear power. But, again, to do it right will cost money and an ongoing commitment to produce electricity safely and with proper security. There are dangers, but the track record over the past 50 years is very good with lessons learned being taken in to improve security and safety in the newer plants. And, as with fossil fuel plants, as necessary, new regulations should be imposed on all plants without across the board grandfathering (as in all circumstances, special cases excepted).

The bottom line - many of the reported lapses in the operation of any power plant, and the mitigation of environmental damage to the surrounding community, are due to the "how cheap can this be done to meet the minimum security/safety requirements to maximize profits for the investors" mentality rather than one of "how can we produce the most electricity while minimizing the negative effect to the environment and community while ensuring a reasonable rate of return for the investors".

For next issue: What is your favorite country to play in Diplomacy? What makes it your favorite? Does your choice change if you are playing face-to-face instead of PB(E)M?

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.

Crab Rangoon

by W. Andrew York
based on a recipe by Gee Gee Bessey
(last revised 3/29/09)

Ingredients:

1/4	cup	Crabmeat or Imitation Crabmeat
8	oz	Cream Cheese (softened to room temperature)
1/4	cup	minced Green Onions
1/2	tsp	Salt
1/2	tsp	Pepper
1/2	tsp	Garlic Powder
1/2	tsp	Ground Ginger
		Chicken Stock (if commercial stock, omit Salt above)
1	pkg	Won Ton Wrappers

Steps:

- 1 - Shred crabmeat into small pieces. If real crabmeat, pick over for any remaining shell.
- 2 - Mix first seven items (all but the last two) by hand, using the chicken stock as need to soften the mixture. Note - mixture should be stiff, not runny.
- 3 - Place about a teaspoon of the crab mixture into the center of one won ton wrapper.
- 4 - Dab a small amount of water along the edges of the wrapper.
- 5 - Either pinch the sides together to make a star over the crabmeat pocket or fold the wrapper in half.
- 6 - Fry in a 325-degree deep fryer until the won ton wrapper is crispy and browned.
- 7 - Drain on paper towel.

Other Optionals:

Minced jalapeno peppers, for a spicy bite.

Can use already cooked, ground pork, beef or chicken in place of the crabmeat

For a more exotic taste, try a bit of oyster or hoisen sauce in place of the first bit of chicken stock (start with a little so that you don't overwhelm the other flavors)

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.

UPDATE: Last turn, Kevin Wilson submitted orders right as I was sending in the column. His entries were accepted and updated totals are listed in the “previous” column in the scoring.

Round Five Results - Final Totals

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.

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

	W	G	C	U	E
Awards					
BB	Wolf Prizes	Godel Prize	Clio Awards	U Thant Peace Prize	Emmy
DK	Webby	Grammy	Clio	Universe	Eisner
KW	Walkley	Golden Globes	Camera d'Or	no entry	Emmy
Mixed Drinks					
BB	Whiskey Sour	Gin & Tonic	Cosmopolitan	Urine Sample	Ectoplasm
DK	White Russian	Greyhound	Cosmopolitan	Unicorn	Ectoplasm
KW	Warm & Fuzzy	Georgia Peach	Cocktail	Uncle Sam	Egg Nog
Weapons					
BB	Wakizashi	Gun	Crossbow	Urumi	Epee
DK	Whip	Grenade	Cutlass	Uzi	Elephant Gun
KW	Winchester Rifle	Gun	Club	Uzi	Exocet
Geometric Forms					
BB	Whitney Umbrella	Gyroid	Circle	no entry	Equilateral Triangle
DK	Wire	Gyroid	Circle	Umbrella	Equilateral Triangle
KW	no entry	Goid	Cube	no entry	Ellipse
Norse Gods/Goddesses					
BB	Wotan	Gefion	no entry	Ull	Elli
CK	Woden	Gna	Chuck	Unele	Eir
KW	Wodin	Gerutha	no entry	Urd	Eir

Final Standings

Scores by Category	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	Previous	Now	Total
BB	7	7	6	6	5	118 +	31 =	149
DK	6	7	6	7	5	133 +	31 =	164
JMH	no entries received					110 +	25 =	135
JMQ	no entries received					112 +	25 =	137
BW	no entries received					109 +	25 =	134
KW	5	5	7	2	6	126 +	25 =	151

Congrats to **Doug** for his win over second place **Kevin** and third place **Bill**!

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

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**Deadline For The Next Issue of Out of the WAY:
 April 25th, 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, William Wood, need four more to fill. Get in on the fun now!

Gunboat Diplomacy (Black Press): Signed up: Two players, need six more to fill.

Deviant Diplomacy II (Black Press): Signed up: Jonathan Nichol, Pete Gaughan, Jason Bergmann, John Walker, Mark Lew, Jim Burgess, need one more to fill. Rules in ES #23, or by request. A classic variant which can become as insane as a Charles Manson interview. ***Just need that last player to let the fun begin!***

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.

Intimate Diplomacy Round Robin (Black Press): Signed up: Tom Swider, Peter McNamara, needs two more. Four players, each playing in 3 games at once (one game against each of the other three players). The rules to Intimate Diplomacy can be found in ES #26.

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 (the current one is down to one game, which is at 1913. The final results will be printed here whenever it wraps up). 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? And once Deviant Dip II starts, if the rest of you realize what a fun variant it is, I may offer another game of THAT! 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, Fall 1905

Austria (Kevin Wilson - ckevinw "of" yahoo.com): F Aegean Sea Supports A Serbia – Bulgaria, F Ionian Sea – Tunis, A Serbia – Bulgaria, A Trieste - Budapest (*Fails*), A Warsaw Hold.

England (J r mie LeFran ois - jeremie.lefrancois "of" gmail.com): F Baltic Sea - Sweden (*Bounce*), F Barents Sea Supports A Finland - St Petersburg, F English Channel Supports F Irish Sea - Mid-Atlantic Ocean, A Finland - St Petersburg, F Irish Sea - Mid-Atlantic Ocean, A Livonia – Moscow, F Norwegian Sea - North Atlantic Ocean (*Bounce*).

France (Alexander Levinson - al "of" tolkin.nl): No Moves Received! A Burgundy Hold, ~~A Marseilles Hold~~ (*Dislodged*, can retreat to Gas, OTB), A Paris Hold, ~~F Tunis Hold~~ (*Dislodged*, can retreat to Wme, Naf, OTB).

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

Italy (Don Williams – dwilliam "of" fontana.org): A Brest - Paris (*Fails*), F Gulf of Lyon Supports F Spain(sc) – Marseilles, ~~F Mid-Atlantic Ocean – North Atlantic Ocean~~ (*Dislodged*, can retreat to Wme, Naf, Por, Gas, Spa(sc), Spa(nc), or OTB), F Spain(sc) – Marseilles, F Tyrrhenian Sea Supports F Ionian Sea – Tunis, A Venice - Piedmont.

Russia (Melinda Holley – genea5613 "of" aol.com): A Berlin Hold, A Budapest - Rumania (*Fails*), F Gulf of Bothnia - Sweden (*Bounce*), A Rumania - Bulgaria (*Fails*), A Sevastopol Supports A Budapest - Rumania (*Fails*).

Turkey (Brad Wilson - bwdolphin146 "of" yahoo.com): A Armenia – Syria, F Black Sea – Constantinople, F Bulgaria(cc) Supports F Black-Sea–Constantinople (*Dislodged*, can retreat to Bla or OTB), A Smyrna Hold.



Map Shows Positions and SC Ownership Prior to the Autumn 1905 Retreats

I am calling William Wood (WoodW "of" offutt.af.mil) as the standby for France.

Autumn/Winter 1905 And Spring 1906 Deadline is April 28th 2009 at 7:00am my time

Autumn/Winter 1905 will be separated from Spring 1906 on 3 requests.

Ownership of supply centers:

Austria:	Bulgaria, Greece, Serbia, Trieste, Tunis, Vienna, Warsaw=7, Build 2 (Only Room for 1)
England:	Denmark, Edinburgh, Liverpool, London, Moscow, Norway, St Petersburg, Sweden=8, Build 1
France:	Belgium, Paris, Spain? = 2 or 3, Build 1 or Even or Remove 1 or Remove 2
Germany:	Holland, Kiel = 2, Even
Italy:	Brest, Marseilles, Munich, Naples, Portugal, Rome, Spain?, Venice = 7 or 8, Build 1 or 2
Russia:	Berlin, Budapest, Rumania, Sevastopol=4, Remove 1
Turkey:	Ankara, Constantinople, Smyrna = 3, Remove 1 or Even

PRESS

ROME to GM: I don't like the looks of all those English battleships headed away from Russia and into warmer water ...

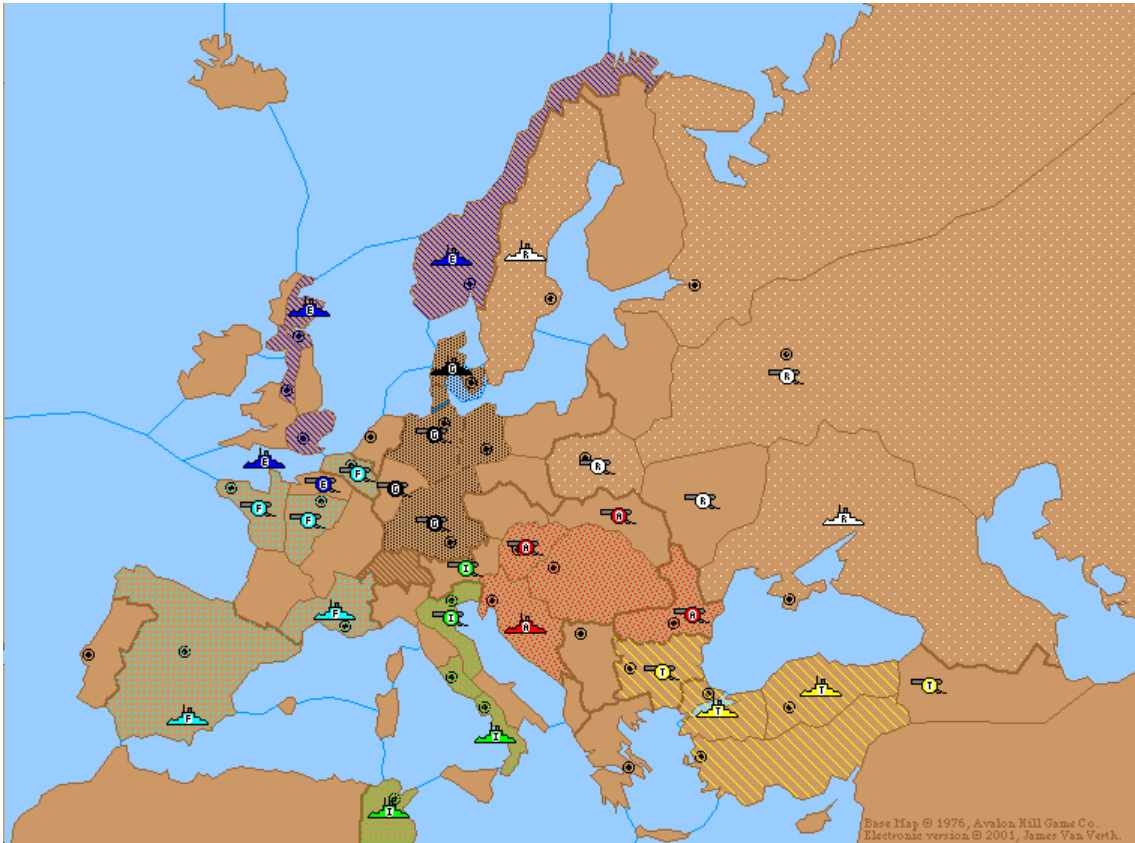
GM – Rome: Should have sent me some bribes if you wanted a sudden change in unit position.

ROME to LONDON: Didn't we have an arrangement?

ROME to PARIS: I suppose I should acknowledge defeat and go home, but I am a testardo at heart.

ROME to KIEL: You are having a devil of a time getting MUN back ... aren't you talking to the neighbors at all? I mean, I left the place in good working order well over a year ago.

Diplomacy "Dulcinea" 2008C, Winter 1901



Austria (Stephen Agar – stephen "of" stephenagar.com): Bld A Vie..Also has A Gal, A Rum, F Tri.
England (Philip Murphy trekkypj "of" gmail.com): Bld F Edi..Also has F Nwy, F Ech, A Pic.
France (Brad Wilson – bwdolphin146 "of" yahoo.com): Bld F Mar, A Par..Also has A Bre, A Bel, F Spa(sc).
Germany (William Wood – woodw "of" Offutt.af.mil): Bld A Mun..Also has F Den, A Ruh, A Kie.
Italy (Melinda Holley – genea5613 "of" aol.com): Bld F Nap..Also has F Tun, A Tyr, A Ven.
Russia (Jack McHugh – jwmchughjr "of" gmail.com): Bld A Mos..Also has A War, A Ukr, F Swe, F Sev.
Turkey (Jim Burgess – jfburgess "of" gmail.com): Bld F Con..Also has F Ank, A Arm, A Bul.

***William Wood is now the German player of record.
Spring 1902 Deadline is April 28th 2009 at 7:00am my time***

PRESS

PRIME MINISTER TO FRA: This is what happens when you don't respond to letters. Next time, be so good as to write back! Then this sort of 'misunderstanding' won't happen!

Rus-Tur: My business is with you.

Tur-Rus: What business did you have in mind?

Swain Murphy to the Duke of York: I bow before thee to do your bidding. Whom shall I smite?

Flap Jack REALLY Protesteth: Why don't you all just shut up.

Duke of York to the Board: This is pretty much the quietest game I've ever seen, shall we have yet another English player for me to manipulate and control?

PRIME MINISTER to Duke of York: Hang on a minute - whose side are you on? Mine or the usurper? And I don't live in the Hebrides. :P

PRIME MINISTER to Flap Jack: Get your telegraph fixed! Mail packets went out of fashion at the same time as ruffs.

“Dulcinea” Diplomacy Bourse

	<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 Value</u>
Opening Value	\$1.1386	\$1.2276	\$0.725	\$1.0506	\$0.885	\$0.6948	\$1.29		
Closing Value	\$0.9186	\$1.1598	\$1.2961	\$1.0643	\$0.9850	\$0.5748	\$1.2122		
Player Holdings									
Billy Ray Valentine	500	1677	700	1000	700	700	1500	\$ 0.59	\$7,286.60
Duke of York	2200	0	1050	1300	1050	0	1300	\$ 37.50	\$7,413.03
Smaug the Dragon	500	1273	1000	2071	2000	500	0	\$ 501.30	\$8,194.69
Rothschild	0	0	4835	0	0	0	3500	\$ 0.42	\$10,509.76
Baron Wuffet	1486	1722	200	1322	400	300	1122	\$ 3.08	\$6,958.05
Wooden Nickel Enterprises	1000	1726	2176	900	1000	1248	100	\$ 0.39	\$8,522.56
VAIONT Enterprises	500	2200	0	1050	1700	0	1600	\$ 2.49	\$7,744.89
<u>Any New Players</u>	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	\$ -	\$7,210.80

Billy Ray Valentine: Decides to play in the Jacuzzi instead of making any transactions.

Duke of York: Holds his position.

Smaug the Dragon: Sells 500 Crowns, 500 Pounds, and 500 Piastres. Buys 1500 Lire.

Rothschild: Sells 500 Crowns, 500 Pounds, 500 Marks, 500 Lire, 500 Rubles, and 500 Piastres. Buys 4335 Francs.

Baron Wuffet: Sells 500 Crowns, 500 Francs, 500 Lire, and 500 Rubles. Buys 622 Pounds, 622 Marks, and 622 Piastres.

Wooden Nickel Enterprises: Sells 200 Crowns, 500 Pounds, 200 Rubles, and 500 Piastres. Buys 300 Lire, 1876 Francs.

VAIONT Enterprises: Sells 500 Crowns. Buys 200 Pounds, 200 Lira, 100 Piastres, and 15 Marks.

PRESS

SMAUG to ALL: See, what did I tell you? Francs down 25% in the last quarter! *snorts flames*

WEN to VAIONT: Tourniquet or bell? If the former, please wind it up very tight. VERY tight!

Mr. Burgess to VAIONT Enterprises: I'm happy to shut up, I'm too busy to say anything anyway. What makes you even think I'm in this game??

Duke of York to Whiners: Why bother Jim-Bob? This game is pretty lame so far from everyone who's been writing, including me.

Duke of York to the Bourse Regulators: I protest and choose to stand pat as a result.

Regulators to Duke of York: Why would you want to stand on Pat? Wouldn't she get upset? Or is she into that sort of thing?

Anonymous: Go Italy!

Wroth holds what he had while it dribbles through his fingers.

Baron Wuffet: I just want to get in my balloon and go home to Kansas.

Spring 1902 Bourse Deadline is April 27th 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 4 Categories

1. A type of pasta other than spaghetti.
2. A type of knife.
3. A fabric other than cotton.
4. A type of shark other than Great White.
5. A brand of cosmetics.

Selected Comments By Category:

Pasta – Paraic Reddington "The fastest pasta in all of Mehico! Ariba!! " John Colledge "Apart from 'Teddy Bear' pasta, (Christmas present) it's the only one apart from spaghetti we have in the cupboard at present." Kevin Wilson "Lots to choose from here but I think I'll get a couple of hits here. I'm a fan of rigatoni and penne myself. They seem to hold a sauce better." Andy York "The staple of Kraft's boxed Mac and Cheese."

Knife – Paraic Reddington "It was either him or Jack." Kevin Wilson "I couldn't decide if "type" meant a descriptive or a brand. Obviously I choose the descriptive name." Andy York "Next in line would be paring."

Fabric – Paraic Reddington "Funny on so few dimensions. " John Colledge "All those little worms beavering away deserve some recognition." Kevin Wilson "You didn't say natural fabric even though the "other than cotton" might imply natural fabric so I went that route. I guess nylon and some other synthetics will also be popular."

Shark – Paraic Reddington "The rest (card, loan etc) are too obvious. Oh wait...aren't those things in the oceans called sharks too? " John Colledge "this is annoying as I asked the same question in TBNS a while back, and can I remember which was most popular? Can I thump! Still, these guys look a bit out of the ordinary so will hopefully prove to be popular." Kevin Wilson "Another one with lots to choose from but I think tiger sharks are some of the more common and more frequently seen in aquariums etc." Melinda Holley "What do I know? they all scare me to death!"

Cosmetics - William Wood "If I get this right I get saddled with the label "Metro" but at least my skin will be radiant." Paraic Reddington "Any men that match on this, the pasta and the fabric should spend a little more time watching football." John Colledge "Argh! I have asked this as well – same response!. Can't remember." Kevin Wilson "I can't think of what my wife uses so I went with something I could think of. I was tempted to say Merle Norman (do they still make that?). I had a friend in college who had a girlfriend who layered Merle Norman on so thick we called her Merle. Some of the department store brands that come to mind are Estee Lauder,

Lancome, Armani etc but I think those would be less popular. I guess Avon could be popular too." Andy York
 "The crossword puzzle answer."

<u>Player</u>	<u>Pasta</u>	<u>Knife</u>	<u>Fabric</u>	<u>Shark</u>	<u>Cosmetics</u>	<u>Turn</u>	<u>Total</u>
Philip Murphy	Penne	Steak	Wool	Hammerhead	Nivea	48	163
Bill Brown	Fettucini	Bread	Silk	Hammerhead	Max Factor	38	160
John Colledge	Tagliatelli	Bread	Silk	Hammerhead	Calvin Kline	35	157
W. Andrew York	Macaroni	Chef	Polyester	Hammerhead	Estee Lauder	28	154
Jamie McQuinn	Macaroni	Bowie	Wool	Hammerhead	Avon	45	142
Don Williams	Linguini	Bowie	Silk	Hammerhead	Maybelline	40	140
Heather Taylor	Angel Hair	Bowie	Polyester	Hammerhead	Revlon	35	139
Brad Wilson	Penne	Swiss Army	Wool	Hammerhead	Avon	40	139
Jack McHugh	Linguini	Bowie	Wool	Hammerhead	Chanel	47	137
Dane Maslen	Tagliatelli	Fish	Silk	Hammerhead	L'oreal	41	134
Allison Kent	Penne	Butter	Polyester	Hammerhead	L'oreal	29	131
David Burgess	NMR	NMR	NMR	NMR	NMR	6	130
Paul Bolduc	Linguini	Steak	Silk	Hammerhead	Avon	39	123
William Wood	Linguini	Bowie	Silk	Hammerhead	Mary Kay	42	122
Jim Burgess	Macaroni	Steak	Wool	Mako	Avon	29	117
Melinda Holley	Linguini	Butcher	Silk	Tiger	Cover Girl	22	114
Tom Swider	Macaroni	Jack	Silk	Bull	Mary Kay	23	112
Brendan Whyte	Lasagna	Bowie	Wool	Loan	Shisedo	21	102
Jeremie Lefrancois	Penne	Swiss Army	Wool	Hammerhead	Opium	38	100
Kevin Wilson	Fettucini	Steak	Wool	Tiger	Mary Kay	29	90
Brad Martin	Penne	Swiss Army	Wool	Nurse	Revlon	26	88
Martin Burgdorf	Macaroni	Bowie	Wool	Salmon	Lancaster	29	69
Paraic Reddington	Lamborghini	Mac	Of Time	Pool	Surgery	6	46
MOST POPULAR	Ling./Mac./Penne	Bowie	Wool	Hammerhead	Avon	41	

Phil Murphy pulls the high score for the turn, moving him into 1st place. Meanwhile, Jack McHugh grabs the second highest score. The maximum score, with Joker on Hammerhead, would have been 55 this round. Paraic Reddington's goofy answers pull the minimum 6 points.

Round 5 Categories – Deadline is April 28th, 2009 at 7:00am my time

1. Something you make with corn.
2. A newspaper comic.
3. A type of bird.
4. A movie with Nicholas Cage in it.
5. Something you pierce.

**Deadline For The Next Issue of Eternal Sunshine:
 April 28th 2009 at 7:00am my time – See You Then!**