

ST99 REPRESENT



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**979represent is a local magazine
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**YOU'RE NOT PUNK & I'M TELLING
EVERYONE:
ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE
MOTHERFUCKER**

I was younger, I used to get real excited by band reunions. I thought it was cool that I would get a chance to see a band play that was before my time. I was far too young and inexperienced in my own band trials that I didn't realize why bands break up in the first place. I mean when you're 14 or 15 all you really want to do is play, you can't possibly see things like drugs, girlfriends or money and ego come into the mix. Then you grow up and get real. Bands break up for exactly those reasons. After a few years it just becomes harder to find people who just want to play for the way it makes you feel, and if you do find that group of people, you never need to worry about breaking up because you never do. As for reunions... they come off as a bit underwhelming. I have been to very few reunion shows where I caught that old magic, and even then it had to be a one time reunion, just for nostalgic purposes. If I was hard pressed to find a band that reunited after 10 plus years and kept going with the old magic, I don't think I could. If there is one thing that is certain in life, it is change and when you leave a band it happens more than you can think.

This was a particular thing I thought about when a unnamed band announced that they were back together after over a decade and wanted to play a reunion comeback show in the hometown they cut their teeth in. Naturally excitement was shown, as nostalgia between the promoters came in. It was quickly dissipated when said leader of band began making requests that at first were thought of as a joke, but soon it became clear that it was very real. The biggest thing? They wanted a stage. Over the course of the years its nice for a band to want something in their performance. A good sound system, decent lights that don't blind, maybe some monitors. These things are nice but not needed to put on a good show. I mean all you really need for a good show is your band and yourself with balls to the wall energy. A stage is one of those things. I mean, I don't even think I like stages all the much to tell the truth. Like Raybeez from Warzone, I kind of like to be with the crowd, as they dare to come close to us snarling like animals. So I found it kind of funny when this band makes it a make or break issue. Their main reason? People need to be able to see them.

I have a hard time getting behind this. Not just the ego of it, but for who they used to be. Here was a band that I knew in my twenties. We puked in shoe boxes, wrecked house parties and made our town quake in terror without any regard of what people thought. They certainly didn't care if people could see them on a stage. It made me a little sad actually. That people could change their musical priorities in such a manner they forget the sheer violence and force in their message and worry more about being seen from all angles in the club by show goers. I guess the old saying is right. You can't go home again. But, if you are sincere and honest in the path you take, you're new path might be even better. You don't need a stage. You don't need fancy sound or expensive instruments. You do need the right people though. Then you'll have the start of something that will never worry about breaking up. —TIMOTHY DANGER

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TODD ON FILM: A MOST VIOLENT YEAR

One film that did not get talked about much this past December was *A Most Violent Year*, an organized crime movie with a refreshing take on the genre. The film depicts New York City in 1981, a different era from today's rampant gentrification and high-dollar developments, when subway cars were still covered in graffiti

both inside and out, and malaise was thick enough for robberies at gunpoint to occur in broad daylight. This is a city a couple years removed from *The Warriors* and *Taxi Driver*, only becoming

worse, and yet a place with opportunity for those looking for it. The question, however, is how should that opportunity be gained; what are the means to get to the ends? The traditional gangster film would go the Michael Corleone or even the Tony Montana route and have the protagonist vanquish all enemies in their way. A *Most Violent Year* has plenty of crime in the environment, but Abel Morales instead wants to gain his power honestly, an internal struggle which rears its head often over the course of the film.

The tone of the film is set immediately as Abel does his morning jog during the opening credits over the music of Marvin Gaye's "Inner City Blues". From the exercise it is apparent that he is a man willing to put in the work to make himself stronger. Morales owns Standard Oil, a heating oil company with a fleet of delivery trucks looking to take the product to the homes of his expanding territory. But rather than strong-arming his way into other territories, Abel wants to use a superior salesman approach to win over new customers. In one scene, Abel (played with a fiery calm by Oscar Isaac) talks with his newly hired door-to-door employees to discuss how to present themselves in conversation with potential clients. With instructions that say as much about his image as that of his company, Abel tells them that they will present themselves as better than competitors through better service and style. "If someone offers you a drink, always choose the classier option."

As an immigrant, Abel had to walk and talk the part in addition to hard work in order to be accepted as he is now. Even Morales' truck drivers are held to a standard of hospitality, and he goes out of his way to make sure they are doing well but also in line with the company vision. One driver, and immigrant like Abel but less polished, sees the position of power his boss has achieved and anoints him as his role model. The driver is one of many who gets his truck hijacked in broad daylight, putting him in the hospital for weeks. Morales goes to great lengths to pay the driver's medical bills and takes him home once he is somewhat recovered, but the driver, shaken to his core, knows that he cannot deal with the violence any longer. He needs to get above it somehow.

Amidst the implicit company image and chaos of the city, Abel is trying to vault Standard Oil's place forward ahead of competitors

by acquiring a large piece of property along the East River which would allow him to directly import his heating oil supply. The docking area is owned by a group of Orthodox Jews that Abel has won over amidst other bids through his honesty and character but also through a large sum of promised money upfront in the deal. Simultaneously, his company is under investigation by the district attorney for possible financial fraud, which puts his loan applications and the real estate acquisition in jeopardy. The energy and tension of the plot hinges on how far Abel Morales is willing to go to secure his company's future.



As Abel struggles with the morality of his decisions due to the actions of his competitors, his wife Anna is also pushing him to do more than sit idly by and try to put distance between them and the violence. Anna (played by Jessica Chastain), doesn't share Abel's views of how to secure one's place in the world. She grew up in an organized crime family and is used to getting what she wants. While she is also fully invested in the success of Standard Oil, she repeatedly accuses Abel of not acting like a man, and makes decisions behind his back as she sees fit. The character doesn't go into full Lady Macbeth or Betty Francis-mode, but you get the sense that that switch could be flicked at any moment. Chastain does an excellent job of balancing the iciness and accent with moments of tenderness, morphing her into more than one dimension. She has been doing some great acting for a while now, and her performance here shows that's likely to continue.

While his role in this movie was not as celebrated as Chastain's, Oscar Isaac is about to become a major leading name. A year prior he starred in *Inside Llewyn Davis*, playing the title character

as a social jerk with a battered soul that you couldn't decide if you were rooting for him. This year he'll hit the super hero/science fiction movie scene, playing major roles in the new *Star Wars* and *X-Men* installments. Isaac is able to play Abel with more than words on the page, his facial unease and subtle body language telling you more than the dialogue, and holding his gaze for longer than you are comfortable with. You can see the weight that the character is carrying around with him. It's a bit like watching a more compassionate version of Corleone from *The Godfather*, after the self-discovery of *Part I* but before reaching the throne in *Part II*.

In many respects, *A Most Violent Year* is a mob movie, but the story takes place mostly away from that traditional center of action. It could be called an anti-gangster film (probably a tag I stole from something I read elsewhere), in that the tone of the world is there but the story and characters are entirely different. We route for Abel Morales because he is trying to get ahead the right way in a corrupt world, not a ruthless protagonist who's smarter than everyone else in the room. What we don't know is how long he can hold the violence at bay.—TODD HANSEN

SAM'S DESERT

It's not completely dark like I like it. When Will is over, I have to leave a small night light on because he's a puss and has this weird paranoia of the dark. It's absolutely annoying, and I'm a horrible person for having such thoughts about him being less of a man.

Will is my re-rebound. You know the second mistake that's worse than the first. That's Will. He is everything you never wanted until that one person, whom you loved with the entirety of your being, left without a word. Will's awkward existence makes you sick; kind of. He's strangely tall, and thin enough to profile an eating disorder. When he speaks he has a slight southern drawl that confuses you, and he acquired this Californian pace that drives you crazy. You're eyes begin to glaze waiting for him to finish a sentence. An ADD nightmare.

But he's so gosh-damn sweet. I can admire that about Will. He is a gentleman, and patient. It took him almost a week coming over to my house every day to finally kiss me. His kisses are predicted and sloppy with too much regret. He tastes metallic and empty. His arms are awkwardly long and have no destination. They either travel in un-intimate ways or just hang in air aimlessly. I expect more out of a mediocre, 27 year old guitarist. I guess I expect too much.

It's impossible for me to fall asleep with Will lying next to me. He breathes too heavy, and I haven't had any other man sleep next to me since "He Who Shall Not Be Named." It's not Will's fault. It's mine. I think too much. I haven't moved on and haven't truly tried. I miss "him." Everything about him was just perfect. Together we planted stars where seeds should have been and grew a galaxy when no one was looking. Together we made dreams. He took my hand and showed me what he wanted, and convinced me I was the only girl who could give it to him. And then, out of nowhere, he vanished. Without a sound he was gone, and I was left here to mend a mess far too big and much too deep to understand. I'm broken. I became a girl dying in a desert, and I am in frenzy to feel less deserted. So, I rolled over to the first guy to ask me out. I assumed I'd feel better. Instead of sleeping, with Will, I lay thinking of "him." The sound of "him" breathing like an orchestra, the calluses on his palms, his tattoos and scars; that man was a canvas of curiosity and beauty. Sorrow pours when I picture him. To hear his voice one last time or to touch his skin and taste his mouth; it's all I think about. Just one last time.

Will felt my body shiver and woke up enough to ask if I was okay, and to half-heartedly swing his arm over my waist to attempt to hold me. I give him credit for caring enough to ask and attempt to comfort me. Bravo, William.

I don't want Will seeing me cry. I don't want him knowing how weak I am. He's not forever, nor am I so he doesn't get

everything.

I quickly breathe deep and turn to face him. I kiss him with the salty memories that I attempted to wipe from my face. I slide my hand down his stomach and back up to his chest, he likes this. Doing this pattern over and over, but going a little lower each time I slide my hand down drives him crazy. He gets the point and climbs on top. He takes my pants off but I leave my shirt on. I remove his shirt and the pair jeans he fell asleep in; I toss them on the floor. He kisses me harder and harder, sliding his fingers in the place I adore the most. He explores as much as I let him. Each time he goes to grab my breasts I move his hands back down. I don't want him touching there. That's not his place. It will never be. He spreads my legs and pulls me closer to him. I take all of my hopes and dreams of "him." My memories, and all of "his" lies, and bury them in-between my thighs. All of the "I love yous" and the "I miss yous" are the ghostly echo of each thrust clapping and bouncing off all four walls in my not so dark room. Harder and faster, the clapping is the only thing I can hear and think of; a perfect rhythm of satisfactory distraction. I can feel his body begin to tense up, and he's breathing much harder. He grabs my arms and pins them down as his body shudders and breaks out in chills.

I let him cum inside.

Will climbs off to go and clean up while I lie here in that weird post-sex delirium. On the verge of sleep and satisfaction, I feel Will crawl up beside me and kiss my shoulder. This is why I keep Will around. I'm selfish enough to make him stay for the fear of being alone in my head. It's not so bad when someone else is next to me, or on top. To be wanted and fucked in the most self-loathing time is a heroin I can't get enough of. I lust for that self-destruction high; it makes better sense when I think about why "he" left. Deep down he saw what I could become, he saw all of my demons, and no matter how much I loved him, and how much he knew that, I believe my own monsters got to him before his could get to me. The difference is that I would've stayed and burned with him. I would've gone to the ends of the earth for him. But, I wasn't enough. He wanted more, he needed absolute, and I was a whim.

I don't want to be here with Will. I want my one last time, and I can get that when I close my eyes. Will smiles and kisses my neck as his large, rough hand migrates down and smooths the surface of the skin on my thigh. Honestly it feels good. Good enough to close my eyes and drift to sleep. Even Will's heavy breathing can't stumble my fall.

My last thought: I am equivalent to a cigarette butt. I feel good and taste like bliss when you want me, but, when I burn down I am throw out of a speeding car to be lost in the sand of a desert highway. I am deserted and mangled. I am the remaining proof of a cancer.—JESSICA LITTLE





STILL DRINKING

For the record, I have never brewed my own beer. For this reason, I am as glad people make beer as those beer-makers are glad people pay significant incomes to drink the beer beer-makers make. And right now the primary girth of my gladness rises and sets on a little beer mecca in Chico, California. Last month in these pages I sang hymns to **Sierra Nevada** for their **Nooner Pilsner**. Well, if those hippie bastards didn't release another beer better than the Nooners and that will only exist ONCE. As in, what is on the shelf is all the shelf will hold. And this new beer—the Beer of beers, at this sacred moment—is especially good because it's the (uber-limited) collaborative product of a bunch of brewer nerds at something super brewer nerdy called Beer Camp, which I suppose is like band camp except you promiscuously relate on heaps of malts instead of tuba cases. Similarly, my mouth is relating quite well with Sierra Nevada's **Beer Camp Hoppy Lager**. It's beautiful. SNBCHL is even more beautiful than SN Nooners Pilsner, as if the company is trying to out pageant their own models. A rigged pageant! And, sadly, this glass of SNBCHL beside me is the last bottle of SNBCHL in my whole entire house. Sure, I could run all over town and find more SNBCHL, but there's something romantic about



rolling these dice. About sipping this last bottle slowly. About imagining my life tomorrow, SNBCHL far down the river, and wondering if I'll see her again. If I wrote my own music, I'd write SNBCHL a ballad. Of course, I do not write music anymore than I brew beer, so I'll listen to Cindy Lauper and drink Cedar Creek tall cans until SNBCHL doesn't seem real anymore. That's how we do it—the rebounding and the transitioning—around here.

A few things to know about **Cedar Creek Brewing Company**: 1) Cedar Creek, Texas sits eleven miles west of Bastrop on HWY 21, which means the brewery is a day trip away; 2.) the crap on the side of the tall can (sold in fours) is worth reading; and 3.) I am amazed no one is talking about this brewery. Jim Elliot, head brewer, and team make good beer. I'm glad for that. Here's a look at Cedar Creek's year long line-up in my preferential order:

Scruffy's Smoked Alt (5.1% ABV/35 IBUs) features German Rausch malts smoked over Beechwood. I don't know anything about German Rausch malts, but I like knowing there ain't nothing liquid about the smoke in this beer. The nose recalls my hoodie after a couple of hours next to Danny's fire-pit. And the flavor—crap-my-pants! — this is where I enter fan-boy mode! This sucker is absolute goodness. Flavors bristle with beef brisket burnt ends and maybe slight notes of grilled peaches. Totally malt forward, Scruffy's will serve as cracker enough for smoked gouda or even a bit of Brie. Wait! Holy Italian cow's milk! Taleggio! Perfect pairing! Scruffy's Smoked-Alt with Taleggio semi-soft super-funky foot-tang cheese! That's it. This beer is top notch. A definite 9/10. I rarely find a beer so quickly sending me out the door for more beer and accoutrements.

Dankosaurus IPA (6.8% ABV/65 IBUs) has been brewed "with enough hops in here to bury a Brontosaurus". Hey, good on these guys for keeping the Brontosaurus, my childhood favorite, alive! Screw this overly-technical Brachiosaurus bullshit! You know, these Brontosaurus poopers are the same schmucks who shat on Pluto. No thank you, science! I'll keep my innocence and my dreams and my inauthentic dinosaurs and "My Very Eager Mother Just Served Us Nine Pizzas" solar system fully intact! Sheesh! Sorry. Wee rant there. Back to the Creek—Dankosaurus IPA is a beer that even those dill-holes Richard Dawkins and Neil Degrasse Tyson could genuflect upon. This is a good IPA. Strangely sweet. Lots of fruit bunched up in the corners. Not the best I've had, but I'm feeling a solid 7/10.

The Lawn Ranger Cream Ale (5.0% ABV/16 IBUs) is a super light alternative to the traditional domestic lager. According to the stats on The Lawn Ranger, Cedar Creek tosses in a bit of rye and flaked oat to solidify the body and bolster the flavor. I'm probably drinking this out of season. The lightness and sweetness, the lack of any hoppy claws or dark malted teeth on a dreary, cold day just feels wrong. But I can detect the charm. It's pleasant. No, actually it's damn good for a sessions ale but, again, a little May sunshine and a long stretch of manual labor would exponentially improve this beer experience. I'm feeling a low 7/10.



Gone A-Rye Double IPA (8.5% ABV/90 IBUs) comes canned with the disclaimer "Don't let the numbers fool you, Gone A-Rye is extremely easy to drink". Good to know, but one of the hallmarks of good rye is it's not easy to eat. Good rye bread should offend. It should burn a bit in order to hold all that hot pastrami and sauerkraut. Like solidly good mustards or capers or jalapeños or Sarah Silverman bits, a truly good rye bread—or beer—should make taste buds twitch and sweat glands ovulate. This Gone A-Rye screams double IPA. The enormity of the hops and malts are evident—the malts especially, their sweetness dimming down/nearly canceling out that impressive 90 IBU count. And the nose reveals something special, though I don't recognize it immediately as rye: again, dimmed by malts. And while I vaguely taste the rye, it washes away quickly beneath the stringency of hops and sweetness of malts. While Gone A-Rye is certainly drinkable, even enjoyable, it defies its own pronouncements. I'm feeling a low 6/10.

Elliot's Phoned Home Pale Ale (5.1% ABV/37 IBUs) promises "a strong grapefruit note" as a result of the new American Bravo hops. Great. Citrus is my favorite hop profile. And Elliot's definitely delivers grapefruit on the nose. The flavor, sadly, tastes thin. Citrus notes rule the roost here, but nothing essentially grapefruity—or any particular kind of fruity—pops out. This is pretty standard pale ale fare: nothing too big, nothing too small, and just enough flavor to make a craft newbie feel good about himself. I'm feeling a solid 5/10.—KEVIN STILL

And I've got to add one more to the drinking list for this month. Several years ago, the 979Represent art team and yers truly stumbled upon a keg of **Abita Oyster Stout** at Lovejoys (RIP) in Austin. It was a super limited beer made on spec from an avid Abita fan's recipe. Apparently there was a contest and this person's recipe won. Anyhow, I've been a craft beer drinker for 20+ years now and the oyster stout is a style that I'd read about in the Michael Jackson beer encyclopedias but had never come across in the wild. That Abita is still one of the top five beers I've ever had in my life. So imagine my surprise when Wonko The Enabler handed me a sixer of **Real Ale Brewer's Cut Oyster Stout** (6.5% ABV). I was stoked! Well, it's no Abita. Real Ale's version is based off of the dry Irish style. So it is roasty for sure, and with a hint of the oily fishy character of shellfish. It has a good dose of hop bitterness to it as well, which I think is part and parcel for most of Real Ale's offerings (I'm not a big fan of their beers usually...I'm like the Anti-Kevin, the Ex-Hoptimist if you will). What made that Abita Oyster Stout so special was that it had a malty chewiness along with a briny, saltiness to go along with the oyster slick mouthfeel. It definitely tasted like a good stout with oysters. The Real Ale? Well, it's a good dry stout but it has so little of the oyster character to it that they may as well have been called it something else. But if they had, I probably would never have had a taste. So I'm a give them an E for effort and quite happily drink the rest of the sixer, but I will continue to ruminate on that big oyster stout that got away... — KELLY MINNIS

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INTROVISIONAIRE: WITH ALL GOOD

This is the twelfth chapter of a novel than began being serialized in 979Represent with the April 2014 issue and will be serialized each month.—ed

It must have appeared as if the technicolor test patterns of old had somehow unexplainedly exploded forth from utter nothingness, vomiting forth an oddly shaped sleigh type vehicle encrusted in what appeared to be gold and various other worldly precious stones, containing two unsightly disheveled individuals from the Sol system to whosoever should and possibly could have been around when the two arrived a mere fraction of a moment later on a special landing pad atop another plateau on what they would come to find out eventually in due time, was a lesser known rock orbiting Alnitak (Zeta) on the outer edge of the Three Kings or as what has been referred to most recently in human history as the belt of Orion—the Hunter.

The layout of their landing spot was very much similar to that of the place they had left only moments prior. Except that this place it seemed was intended, for at least the latter part of its duration, to serve as a greeting point for some grand event. From the looks of things though, it seemed like that moment had still yet to arrive. As though the entire culture that had once inhabited it had passed without seeing whatever it had been awaiting for the last few millennia at least.

A bit dazed but otherwise surprisingly alright, Peist and Ol' Ed dismounted with as much haste as they could muster once all things were considered to the best of their faculties. Still somewhat buzzed, Peist spotted a few odd looking stones towards the outer region of their landing spot. They seemed normal enough—three stones in all, each with it's own symbol engraved upon it. Upon closer inspection the stones appeared to be metallic ores. Once in hand though, they were cold as ice to the touch but began to warm and hum in Peist's sweaty palms. His teeth chattered with excitement. The "stones" he noticed too were lined with a ever-so-thin crystalline coating which appeared to be sprayed on as far as he could tell. That was however a matter for another time. For now he could only further speculate on the origins, let alone the purpose of said ores. The mysteries of life were for all he knew were now here at his fingertips or they could simply be a mere child's toy left to illustrate the current state of abandonment. The joys of adventure and life experience were indeed becoming much welcomed by the ever studious hermit inventor extraordinaire. He was again becoming quite the risk taker he felt. Ed seemed more interested in the odd sky since Gus seemed to have no qualms with the stones. Peist took this as a sign of good fortune.

Peist's eye's flickered for a moment and the hairs on his arms began to stand on end as the first stone began to glow more and more intently as waves of information began pouring forth through his fingertips directly into his soul not as if viewing a recorded history or message so much as uncovering a lost or forgotten memory rooted deep in the core of one's being. The initial surge was almost too much but curiosity and shier tenacity saw him through. "It could have been more nothing" he thought, "but instead my blind curiosity saw to it otherwise!" ... "To LIFE!!!" he screamed while laughing at the absurdity of it all. By now Ed had more than begun to take note of the glowing lights on the temple floor that seemed to tell him a tale of his own. One that was simple, beautiful, moving, complete, and a real heart twister in itself. It was, it appeared, to be intended for more primitive man—just in case.

The story went as follows. A serpent woman—the creator, was walking through the halls of her empty palace one day and saw the joy and comfort that glowed from her giant Titan neighbors in the distance through her veranda down the corridor. She sent at once for someone to fetch them but alas there was no one to fetch them for her. She could only remember she had never known anything but her palace. Upon realizing this she began to cry and cry. She sobbed so hard the angels in the heavens heard her, and descended down to her chambers and gave her the gift of companionship and love in one swoop. She was so thankful they let her birth in seven days. When she asked who the Father was the Angels from the heavens who shown like orbs of light and watched over her during her brief pregnancy informed her that her distant neighbor had heard her sobs too and that his wife had

agreed to allow him to offer his seed to warm her life as token of their goodwill. The Angels told her that they had offered the child something no other being but them possessed at the time—personal insight. And that said child would be the first of a new line that would warm the heavens with life of all kinds. The children looked a lot like MAN to Ed. And he was probably right as Peist had now gone through all three stones and gotten a slightly more detailed version of what they would later both agree was essentially the same story. The stones, as Peist revealed to Ed, represented the major planetary asteroids that orbited the stars in the belt. Each one had a very troubled story to tell of greed, deceit, and vanity ruining them ultimately. It was all too heart-breaking to take in at once and Peist had practically cried himself much like the woman in the story revealed to Ed. In fact, it wasn't until he held all three ores in his arms cradling them much like hurt children, that they again glew and revealed the real meat to their tale!

To help make sense of things and get back on with the story I'm going to break it down for you. There are three major stars in the three kings or belt of Orion; Alnitak (Zeta), Anilam (Epsilon), and Mintaka (Delta). Each of which has a major orbiting planetoid with it's own special life baring ecosystem. The three were said to be as old as time itself. With that time came major advances in technology and travel which saw increased communication between the three isolated cultures. Sacred Geometry had brought them together. They knew though different, that they were intertwined. So they tried to exploit each other's resources "peacefully". As the world's deteriorated, factions of each dominant species began to see the true reality and necessity of their coexistence for survival. Various factions rose up from time to time over the ages with grandiose dreams of coexistence through dominance. Some went as far as to use genetic modification as a means to hopefully gain not only control but to bring about prophecy. But more on that later. Their closest success came in the form of beings referred to as the Anunnaki which was essentially a hybrid of the humanoid inhabitants of the Titan race near Alnitak and the Gaseous light beings of Mintaka. Through their mutual vain attempt at self fulfilled prophecy the result was a very arrogant race of "gods". The combination of the strength of the physical form of the Titans with the spiritual essence of the light beings of Mintaka saw the newly created race massively emotional, irrational, hypersexual beings with giant strength. They were then, now, & forever destined to be children of sorts. Of course the Anunnaki rebelled after finding out that they were created for a failed goal and became lost in an all consuming greed for gold and other precious metals to fuel their objects of self appraisal. They fled to Niburu—the land of the burning moon. There they were further fueled by contempt for their makers and grandiose goals. In hopes of mocking their creator's prophecies, they created the Ilgui who were just as brash and irrational, if not more. The Anunnaki used the Ilgui as laborers to build grand palaces of worship for themselves and to mine for gems and metals. Some were more noble than others, but ironically none remained loyal long to Anunnaki control. This rebellion is chronicled in human history as the War of Angels. The end result was what would become the Angels and demons for most early accounts. The contempt of the next creation (MAN) saw the remaining, surviving Ilgui driven mostly insane with jealousy and through time it's said their hate transformed them into ugly darken beasts who retreated into the hallow Earth. Like their creators, and their creators before them, and so on they too tinkered with genetics. Making many of the monsters of lore.

It was a latter council known collectively as the High Council of the Divine Trinity that understood a greater good and common goal. As implied by the name the High Council of the Divine Trinity was an eventual union of the inhabitants of the three stars. It was created during the fall of the three worlds after nearly 400,000,000 years of discourse, wars, and famine to disprove the ancient prophecies that their worlds could only transcend to the next plane of existence and activate technology said to come from before time itself that spans the three worlds. Each world serves a separate function both isolated and combined that's purpose had been lost to them by the time they knew where here was. But one that's mystique and truth lay dormant in tradition and religious scripture. They nearly killed each other off in denial of such theories more then a few times. Until eventually, only a few elders of each civilization remained on each world to search their

THINGS (OL' ED'S WILD RIDE PT. IV)

immortal minds for the solutions to their ages old conundrum. The Titans of Zeta came together with the light beings of Delta, who finally came to reason with the reptilian minds of the inhabitants of the largest planetoid near Epsilon to correct the grievous errors of the Anunnaki experiments. Thusly it was them, NOT the Anunnaki who created MAN. The Anunnaki had only lied to ancient man in hopes of preventing and perverting destiny. The High Council of the Divine Trinity created man in hopes of fulfilling the ancient prophecies which stated that it would be the offspring of the unified worlds in far distant times that would eventually return and inherit the devastated three worlds. Their return would bring them to a specific point at which their mere presence genetically will activate a presumed ancient trans global machine which would in theory restore the home worlds and bring about a new era of enlightenment. With it would allegedly come a new species capable appreciating the achievements of the past and building on them in due time.

It was stated that the offspring would be raised away isolated from outside influence. The theory being that they would ultimately evolve enough culturally to enable the growth of technology to decipher the past and enable them (the offspring) to return to the heavens—restoring the home worlds of the Three Kings with their “unique vision”. Thus setting mankind free forever thereafter from any other destiny then their own. The High Council of the Divine Trinity after making man with their combined greatest attributes; the build and likeness of the Titans (the father), the minds of the reptilians known as the Sol for their fire burst eyes of (the Son), and the spirit essence of empathy and emotional reasoning from the light beings known commonly to us more modern Earth fellows as (the Holy Ghost). They would send the seeds of their creation across the cosmos in dehydrated form for symbolism encapsulated in a seed-like pod. The pod would then sprout when contact was made between it and muddy soil. Thusly, making man inevitably from mud. The first man would sprout unaware of his cosmic bonds and origins. He would grow physically, mentally, and spiritually independent. He would one day evolve into the superior of his creator.

The “Gods” were immortal as in the legends passed down by the Observers who came down to Earth long ago to accompany the seedling and passively watch to record its progress for the scribes. Generally speaking the Observers were non-involved, although on a few occasions they have had to interfere due to interference from other outer worldly beings hoping to exploit the resources of the little blue ball and manipulate the will of man to their own will. These beings would commonly assume the societal roles of gods and deities throughout the world with much ease. These also included the three separate races from the Belt. Each who all made their own lasting mark on mankind. Sometimes the influence of outside forces became so great that the Observers had little choice but erase entire civilizations and continents time and time again. It had to be that way if the experiment and prophecies were to have any hope of becoming fulfilled. They erased many of the other predators, early hybrids, and such as a result while maintaining the superior core genetic specimens.

The Anunnaki were jealous over the attention, praise, and destiny attributed to their arrival in the cosmic scheme of things so to speak. Being the generous and loving older siblings they were the Anunnaki granted early primitive man access to advanced primitive tools in exchange for idol worship, sacrifice of their egos to their new overseers will, and tribute of precious mineral ores and animal sacrifice. The High Council of the Divine Trinity was portrayed as evil false gods who wanted to kidnap mankind for their own means. They were told of the beautiful Niburu—a place grander then the birth place of man and Anunnaki alike—the Belt of Orion. According to some myths some ancient men in prehistory were sent to various locales in the heavens via a heaven's gate or light bridge such as the one developed recently by Peist or previously by the ancient Maya. They were sent every so many millennium to gauge mankind's progress and capacity for knowledge - both linear and nonlinear. They looked to see if man held yet the insight mentioned in ancient texts. Each time was almost as disappointing as the last.

The beings in the texts were said to be immortal creatures who could not die naturally of any known causes. Instead, they could however be killed by either one of their own kind, by themselves,

or by some other inhabitant of the belt. Other than that they were immortal. The funny thing too is that since things had gotten so tense for so long that no one had managed to lived long enough to find out just how immortal they really were. Someone always got mad at someone else, or disappointed in themselves and typically this happened in about a 10,000 years if their life was lived recklessly. The general life expectancy was 400,000 years at which time it was generally accepted as a good time to pass on. Though there were a few thousand or so over 1,000,000 who have managed to not drive themselves or their neighbors crazy and to hide and thrive. At least one such creature is rumored to have survived an astounding 6,000,967,342,463 years in utter seclusion in deep space and is said to continually chase expanding space to keep informed on the progress of the universe. It is presumed dead by many and worshipped by few. No one remembers the beginning. No one knows the end....

Shaken but still fumblingly from a total spiritual and informational overload Peist regained his bearings and realized they were no longer alone. Ed smiled at Peist and knew too what he knew. They had somehow stumbled upon the ultimate destiny of mankind and haphazardly fulfilled it. They were greeted by a few elders who had remained in a few hibernation chambers that had survived the last air-raids ages ago. They had been awakened when the stones were cradled as a final test of humanity. There was Titan, Reptilian, light orb, Anunnaki deserters, an Iggu too who all rose to the occasion. Peist quickly wanted the quiet and normalcy of his old studio basement once again. The High Council of the Divine Trinity quickly regained composure as if without skipping a beat. They waved their appendages and the world roared as ancient gears turned for the first time since being built. Blue electricity began to shoot from the fingertips of man.

The two were beckoned to the center of the platform on which they had landed. Ed had a genuinely worried look upon his face. Gus was doing flips. Peist suddenly found the composure of a great actor preparing for their lifetime Emmy or Golden Globe. He approached the handles that had arisen from the floor through the machine work and grasped them firmly. At once, that slight look of worry vanished from his face. The worlds roared louder than ever. An elder approached the now arrogantly happy Peist who was now wearing his famed invention that had gotten him so far. The stars aligned as gravity rifts of unimaginable magnitude shifted the stars into their proper order and balance without destroying entire worlds. Peist began to glow with a bright blue energy as Ed watched helplessly. The sky broke and fire lights consumed the horizon. The elder extended his arm and removed the man's glasses choosing to investigate the view himself. Upon doing so he too began to laugh. He touched Peist on the penal gland after the exchange of a brief nod and Peist exploded into pure light.

Ed screamed!!! His roar rivaled that of the now accelerated hum of the ancient world machine. The Iggu came to Ed with a crown of pure sound and handed him a scepter of solid gold. The air became crisp and fresh and the horizon became filled with smiling faces. Ed's hands shook. He could understand the greater good, but he missed his friend and fought with everything to not weep himself to pieces. Instead he chose to honor the spirit of his great friend who had inadvertently transformed a homeless ex-military stuntman spaceman adventurer extraordinaire, into the king of the next era of mankind. Probably not quite what Peist or the ancients had in mind. Or was it? After all who honestly had a better heart then ol' Ed? Nobody that's who. As Peist passed on to whatever laid on the other side as he laughed saying “it's okay, it's okay—I get it!” and waved goodbye as laser like bright blue beams of pure energy began shooting through his every orifice before vanishing. There were no screams.

...AND EVERYTHING WAS WHOLE, HAD PURPOSE, & HEART ONCE MORE. MAN WAS AGAIN FREE TO USE HIS HANDS, MIND, AND HEART TO DO THE MOST MARVELOUS THINGS HE COULD IMAGINE. HE WAS AGAIN FREE OF THE BURDEN OF SIN WITH THE PASSING OF THE PEIST. EVERYTHING WAS PURE. ONCE THE PLANETS WERE RUNNING PROPERLY, THEY MADE A SONG WITH THE STARS FOR EVERY MOLECULE IN THE COSMOS TO ENJOY... IT WENT HUUUUUUUMMMMMMMMMMMMM — WILLIAM DANIEL THOMPSON

HOW TO BE AN A (OR LESSONS WE CAN LEARN FROM)

I grew up with an older brother who was an asshole. He was a bully, but I'm no victim. My little brother and I would team up and fight back, but of course, in true asshole form, my older brother would somehow turn the whole situation around and make us feel like morons. He was good. Even to this day (I'm 44) I think he's always up to something. And it grieves me to say this, but it looks like being an asshole is beneficial to doing good business-wise. Dammit.

My wife grew up under the thumb of an asshole as well. But, that's not the point. The point is that as a parent, I truly want to raise my kids to be awesome. I want them to be good friends, trustworthy, generous and the opposite of self-serving. This is turning out to be quite difficult, even with both of us parents being the opposite of assholes. The opposite of a contemptible, irritating person. The opposite of someone who is detestable and obnoxious. The opposite of someone who doesn't treat others with respect. I have four kids, all very different in their preferences and nuances, which is awesome and keeps things interesting for sure, but all of them at one point or another, and some more than others, end up doing very asshole things to each other. It's very frustrating...and sad. So, I thought I'd unpack for you instructions on how to be an asshole (or how not to be an asshole, depending on your way of perceiving things) all from watching how my kids treat each other. But rest assured that each of these things can be transferred to adult workplace, social gatherings and online communications.

1. Always joke And by "joking" I mean "lying". For example, tell someone that something of theirs is broken and watch them hopefully cry, but surely scramble to see the item in its broken state to mourn over the loss. One up on this could be to hide the item in question in the first place, elongating the panic and ensuing flurry of emotions as they use up precious cartoon time looking for the craftily hidden item. Suggested items to hide could be the last puzzle piece, their wallet, their Halloween candy, one of their shoes or the check they just got for their birthday. Something that happened the other day at my house was one of my kids logged into the other kids Minecraft account and burned down their house. The reason given was because they thought it would be funny.

2. Be Annoying. Especially when the person to be annoyed is in a "defenseless" position, for example, sleeping in late, working on a puzzle, doing homework or strapped into a speeding vehicle. Possible suggestions would be to poke them with a newly sharpened pencil, threaten to shoot them in the face with a Nerf gun, sing the wrong lyrics to a song and always take their seat when they leave the room. Other things to do to be annoying are: Kick/trip them when they walk by, turn off lights when they are still in the room, agree to a certain job, but then when the time comes, convince them that they should do the job instead, at least this time. One thing my older brother would do (and it worked more than once...I'm telling you, he was good) is he'd suggest a "punching contest". He'd say, "Let's see who can punch the softest. You go first." Dammit.

4. Never admit blame. The two statements in your repertoire **3. Double standards.** Demand someone stop doing something, but when you do that same thing, and someone asks you to stop, don't stop. In our house, that "thing" in singing. Could be a cartoon theme song, or a song they heard on the radio, or even a made up song. And they don't have to be in the same room either. Many times have we heard one of them yelling from the complete other side of the house, "STOP SINGING!" Only to walk in later singing that same song. The one-up to this is if you are the person who is being asked to stop singing, keep singing (maybe even louder) until the person rages. You know what I'm talking about. They are half crying and half turning into the Hulk. Doors start slamming, screaming gets higher pitched, fists and items start flying. A fiendish smile is icing on the cake. "You touched it last!", and "You are closer!" Worked wonders for my older brother, but never for us. He'd just tell us to "shut up and do it!"

should be, "I didn't mean to..." and "It was an accident." Use these statements in any situation where you are being blamed for something. Someone gets shot in the eye with a Nerf gun, anything gets spilled, your fist hits another person's head, someone gets pushed off the trampoline or anything breaks. I keep trying to explain this concept to my kids, but the logic escapes them. "I didn't mean to hit you that hard!" "I wasn't aiming for your head." WTF! Also, if something happens to you, make sure and always start your explanation with someone else's actions that resulted in what happened to you. Fall while skateboarding? "She left her bike on the sidewalk and my skateboard wheel got caught on it!" Slam face into door jam? "He was in my way so I had to force my way past!" Fall off the trampoline and hit your head on a shoe? "They wouldn't stop jumping, so when I tried to push them off, they got out of the way and I fell off and hit my head on her shoe."

5. Suck up to authority. Make sure to remind the authority (parent/grandparent/supervisor) what the offending party has said or done in the past so that the full consequence can be given. But pour on the sweetness and downplay the severity to try to get out of consequences, throwing a tantrum if necessary (slam doors, leave in a huff, start crying, etc.) Always keep tabs on who is grounded, who can't have treats and who is supposed to be in time out anyway.

6. Fake apologies. When you're "sorry" actually means "Please don't tell me!", or "I'm just saying this because they told me to." Or "You are a big baby!" Adding a "You can hit me back!" or "I'll give you my cupcake if you don't tell!" is a plus, but always take back your promise of a cupcake, and make sure and tell on them if they actually take you up on hitting you back.

7. Demand fairness. Especially when it's something you want, but if you don't care for the item in question, pick a favorite person and advocate aggressively, making sure you are still kinda getting what you want. Always be the one to pour/cut AND the first to choose. Hoard the jalapeño chips even though they are for everyone. Hide them so no one even knows they are in the house. Then when



SSSHOLE FROM MY KIDS)

people want some, be the one to give them out, precisely measured and counted out. And of course, less than you would give yourself. We're talking about your version of fairness here.

8. Hold hostages. When you don't get your way, make sure everyone suffers. Hide the remote if they don't want to watch what you want to watch. If you can't have ALL the jalapeno chips, ruin it for everyone by making it an epic battle every time, then the parents will never buy them again. Make sure you react horribly and dramatically when things don't go your way so people around you are afraid to not let you get your way.

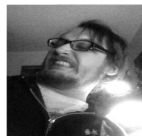
9. Be there. Make sure you are present when someone is accusing you of something so you can interrupt with your version. In fact, rush to get your version heard first, that way your version will seem more plausible and truthful, even if it's complete bullshit. Remember, details and feigned regret make for a more convincing argument.

10. Blackmail/Threats. "If you win, I won't play chess with you anymore." "If you don't get me a drink of water, I won't play on the trampoline with you any more." "If you tell on me, I'll just tell them you were the one that broke that window last summer." On a few occasions growing up, one of us three boys had done something bad. Maybe it was breaking something, not cleaning up a spill on the floor, leaving the refrigerator open, etc. We'd all stand there denying it to my dad, who was yelling at us, knowing it was one of us. We'd end up all three getting sent to our rooms in trouble. So, my older brother would call us into his room, being all responsible and pretending that he was a cool big brother, that we could confide in him. He'd say, "Hey, I just want to know who did it."

And then when my or my little brother would admit to it, he'd turn on us and suggest we go admit it to my dad, still pulling the "cool brother" act, he'd convince us that it was the right thing to do. Sure we were idiots, but he was good. Real good. I can't tell you how many times he figured out a way for us to tell him what we got him for his birthday. And now that I'm thinking of it, why the hell did I give him anything for his birthday! (Bangs head against keyboard)

Now, I'm sure there are many, many more (and worse) things that will fill our days as parents...our oldest girl is just turning 13. Hopefully we'll make it through this, and hopefully they will turn out OK. I guess we have to be OK with one or two of them turning out to be assholes, and hopefully the non-assholes won't end up feeling like victims their whole lives. Shit. Parenting is hard. Truth is, I see these things in adults that I've worked with. I've been in bands with them. I've stood behind them at the cashier. I've invited them to my house. I've unfriended them. I've cleaned up after them. I've avoided them. I may have even been one of them. I probably am one of them. So, if you are an asshole, then blame your parents. They did this to you.—JORGE GOYCO

KEURIG BLITZKRIEG



What the fuck are people doing with these damned Keurigs still? You've seen a coffee pot before right? They're those things that are wayyyyyy cheaper and make waaayyyyy more coffee with wayyyyy less of an impact on the environment. Oh wait, but it's not socially friendly in the I'm a big self absorbed entitled shit who loves showing off my writing skills in a Starbucks way. My bad.

I hate Keurigs, they are stupid and a waste of precious plastic we could using for more important things like making more fake dog poop. "Oh well, you can make only a cup at a time, that's why I like them." I'm sorry you like them because they cost more and do less!?! And you're telling me you don't want an actual just in case shit hits that fan and I need to get something done coffeepot over a one shot disposable piece of unneeded pretension? What's that? You have the refillable cups? Fuck you. Buy a coffeepot. Fuck it, splurge buy a Mr Coffee pot woo. The creator of the damned Keurig said he even regrets inventing the damned thing because it's so wasteful and unnecessary. You want one cup of coffee for now? Use less water. You want a different flavor buy a different brand of grinds or use different teas in the filter. And wahlah! goodbye shit product.

I know a lot of you are going to tell me, "well Will you know it's like it has its advantages to me." You know? No I don't. Buy a coffeepot. Dust off your old coffeepot, clean it—they last forever. This last month I heard six different people bitching about their broken Keurigs and getting them repaired. To which I say, when was the last time you heard of someone's coffeepot breaking? Answer: not too often. They're meant to be handled by men, and clumsy men so many can be dropped no prob. Oh you got a glass one? Don't drop it. There ya go, so now you all can go home and break the shit out of your Keurigs and thank me later. Just put em in the landfills where they belong. You'll feel soooo great and liberated once you do.—WILLIAM DANIEL THOMPSON



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ASK CREEPY HORSE

Recently Valentine's Day has passed and the day of my birth is quickly emerging on the horizon. These leave conflicting emotions. You see, holidays just aren't my thing. With my tin foil hat on, I

believe they are just a materialistic concoction to garner even more monies to make already fat cats even fatter. I don't need a holiday to tell me I need love or to show love with expensive stuffed gorillas and cheap shitty chocolate in a heart shaped box. Nope. The person I'm with will know how I feel about them 365 days a year with my telling them so and the little things I'll do for them because they are special. If I'm going to get away with this rhetoric I'm spewing, you have to be on board.

Love is a very volatile and fragile thing in my history. If you can read this while playing Willie Nelson's "You were always on my mind", this will better add to the tone I'm setting.

A couple years back I was a completely different creature. Then I lost everything and I mean everything. I can't even lie. My life turned into a fucking country music song. I lost my truck, my dog, the love of my life and every single damn thing I owned. I was flung back into the world cold, naked, wet and frail. The next couple years found me a struggling and barely surviving vagabond. A ne'er-do-weller good for nothing louse wandering the streets spewing my heartache and probably whatever I had imbibed. I was broken and bent and distorted and probably stomping around with a scowl on my face. I hated life. I hated you. I hated your mom and everyone in a ten mile radius.

Then that got boring so I decided to run a stint as a hermit. Ah, the days of sitting in my stink smoking bong after bong marathoning Netflix. It can be pretty therapeutic. I think everyone needs a nervous breakdown every once in awhile. Just listen to your friends and don't stay there too long. Finally I got to the point where I wondered what outside looked like. With evolved mole eye squint from months of literal and figurative darkness, I ventured out into the light. Damn that shit was bright. It hurts the eyes you know. So I went back inside. But I didn't stay there. With the aid of friends and gas station wine runs, cute baby animal videos and finding out my apartment was being demolished, I made a return to society.

Then. It happened.

I was at a show watching one of my favorite bands when someone walked in that took my breath away. You could have literally played that Berlin song and filled the room with fog as it was exactly like a scene from a movie. Recognizing the person, they looked up at me and in that moment, I melted. I had seen them a couple times before at shows. The first time I ever met them, they made fun of me and I didn't like them. The next time I saw them, ugh fuck. This person? Okay, I'll play nice. Then we ended

up talking about music snob stuff. Fuck, guess they were cool. But This time? Those eyes looked up at me and I froze. I motioned for them to join me on the couch and talk with me and low and behold they fucking did. I was smitten. As we talked on the couch inner me was coaching me. "Make eye contact and don't say anything stupid. In fact, keep your mouth shut. Okay maybe the blank staring is a little creepy but try not to give it away that you have a crush on them. Oh my god, you have a crush on someone!" I can imagine I looked like a sociopath as I stared intently in their eyes not making a sound with a half opened mouth smile as this conversation played out in my head.

Yep. The months that followed I was apparently 14 years old and would heave sighs of relief every time I received a message from them. Then just as soon as we finally come forward and profess our feelings for one another, life decides to remind me something. Love hurts. Didn't you learn anything before?

I was internally like Smeagol and Gollum debating falling in love again. What makes this worse is that this person is the dream person. The unattainable nymph we chase after all through our pre pubescent years only for them to turn into a tree right as they get within our grasp. Here before me finally and they aren't turning into a fiscus. Nope, they want to be there and all I can do is shrink back and recoil in fear. But, they waited me out and I finally got tired of waiting for yet another shitstorm to be provided by life and wash away anything that can be good.

I'm an entirely different entity now. What was before has died, decomposed and not even a skeleton remains. The world is a different place and I see with different eyes. I'm beyond the person before I only daydreamed of being. As a new year in my life arises I find myself in a new relationship. I'm also abandoning a near 19 year career for something completely different, abandoning the musical tastes and lifestyle I had professed since the tender age of 12 into something far more evolved and discerning.

Life will only laugh if you tell it you have plans.

I'm learning to play an instrument. I'm learning to sing. I'm learning to let go and live. I'm learning to love. Never in my life could I have anticipated so much change convening at the same time and have been comfortable or remotely okay with that. That shit would have scared me shitless. Now, it's desired.

So to you reading this, there's more than a single day of red roses and broken promises. Live life like everyday is Valentine's Day, like everyday is your birthday. Don't be afraid to fall in love and get hurt and love again. Go out and do the things that scare you. Don't be afraid to fail because you just might win. Or you just might fail. Either way, knowing is far better than guessing and hanging on to shoulda, coulda, woulda.—CREEPY HORSE

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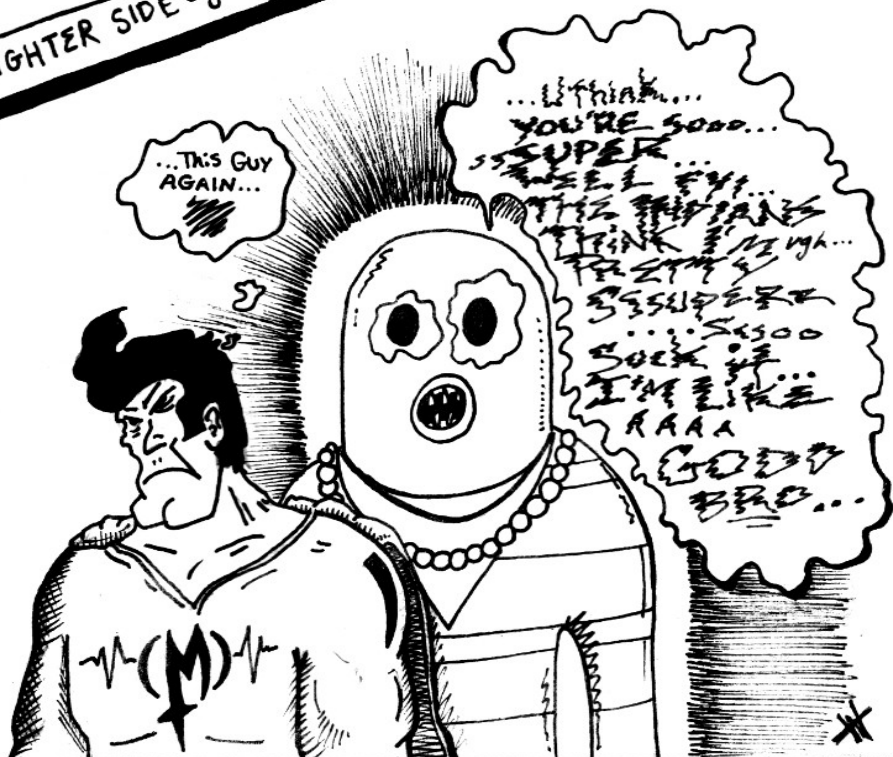
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RECORD REVIEWS



Led Zeppelin

Physical Graffiti: Deluxe Edition

This deluxe edition is from the fourth such remaster series of the Zeppelin catalog. There have been other trots through the master mixes in 1990, the late '90s and the mid '00s. Most likely if you own a Led Zeppelin CD you have one of these other passes at remastering and they've probably done you proud. So why would you want to shell out more cash for an album you already own?

Let's start with the packaging. This time around, there's plenty of extra photos in a real swell booklet that expands the inserts from the vinyl that were woefully left out of the CD reissues. There is a bonus disc of rough and alternate mixes that, I hate to say, really is superfluous. Except for the alt version of "In the Light" there's really not anything revelatory or all that different. I'd rather have the inclusion of live material from the 1975 era, like the inclusion of LZ live in 1969 with the first album's reissue. It's cool to hear once, but then you will never ever listen to this bonus disc again. So I'm not doing a good job of selling you on this one, no?

It's the remaster itself that sells this 3CD set. I've had the late '90s pressing of *Physical Graffiti* as well as one of the '70s vinyl pressings and I've always felt like this album, as well as to a certain extent *IV* and definitely *II* suffered from a muffled remaster. It is well-known that the first 15 years of CD masters were often culled from masters made specifically for vinyl or cassette. Both formats have limitations that either compress, radically EQ or alter the noise floor so much that tape hiss is nearly as prevalent as the music. This round of remaster really opens this album up. The top end is back. You can hear each guitar overdub separately. No longer do they mesh together. That is revelatory for songs like "Houses of the Holy" that have a crap-ton of guitars piled on top of each other. Where I really feel the most improvement is in the drum separation and top-end detail. John Bonham's drums are topky for the first time and have crisp highs for the first time. I live hearing the plate reverb on the snare in "The Wanton Song" that I never noticed before.

It's little details like these that emerge that really make picking up this series of Zeppelin remasters worth your while. I hate to recommend people to buy shit they already own (or in LZ's case can hear nearly any time on the classic radio dial) but if you are even a casual Zeppelin fan you will appreciate the sonic attention the new remasters unearth.—KELLY MINNIS



The Spoils

Have a Drink With...

Have a Drink With The Spoils is the latest from the Texas-based surf rock group. The eight tunes, all instrumentals except for a spoken-word intro to "A Test of Character," stick pretty close to the surf-instro formula with a punkish feel. And that's not a bad thing. Only two of the tunes venture over the three-minute mark as the band is obviously influenced by the good and short feel of punk. "Austerity Bomb" is the best example of that—a rocking minute and 44 seconds of fuzzed-up surf punk. As typical of the surf genre, there are covers: "Shockwave" and "The Ivory Coast" are both rousing versions that fit in well with the originals. The strongest (and best named) tune is the last cut: "The Ballad of Let's Just Be Friends." Of course, it's anything but a ballad, a blast of thrashing drums and guitars.—MIKE L. DOWNEY



Jose Gonzalez

Vestiges and Claws

It has been nearly a decade since Jose Gonzalez has released *In Our Nature*, his last solo album. His new release, *Vestiges and Claws*, has been roundly criticized for being a sort of *In Our Nature pt. II* which, in truth be told, a sort of extension of *Veneer*, his debut album. The argument is to the nature of an artist's trajectory. Should an artist who has staked out a certain territory continue to mine that territory or should that artist "challenge" his/herself and reinvent the sound and context every so often. If it ain't broke, don't fix it, yeah? In Jose Gonzalez's case, it's spare classical guitar and voice-driven folk music. Percussion is provided by stomping and slapping the guitar, maybe some claves, a synthesizer every so often to provide melody, etc. It is in the Nick Drake/Simon & Garfunkel school of folk music.

Vestiges and Claws follows that path exactly, right down to the recorded so hot it distorts quality. Opener "With the Ink of a Ghost" could be a shaming mirror to *In Our Nature*'s "Cycling Trivialities." "Stories We Build, Stories We Tell" has the same beat and vibe

as "How Long." You get the idea. This album is a near doppelganger for the one before it, AND the one before that. Except there are no winning reinterpreted covers on this album. The idea is that if you love an album so much that you want that artist to make another just like it. Jose Gonzalez did just that. If you want to hear his thing in another concept then dig up his work with side project Junip, which places his thing in the middle of a krautrock band (it's a winner too). Fans of Iron & Wine or other all acoustic fare would do well to give *Vestiges and Claws* a go.—KELLY MINNIS



John Carpenter

Lost Themes

Lost Themes, John Carpenter's new album of un-film related "songs", is a triumph for Carpenter's career and legacy as an artist. Few would argue Carpenter deserves his pedestal among the great horror and science-fiction filmmakers of the modern era. With *Halloween*, Carpenter propelled the story of the boogie-man in a brave new direction. (That film also gave Jamie Lee Curtis her big-screen debut, as well.) His films are broadly simplistic, atmospheric, and unforgettable. Once, as a labor of love, my wife, who dearly loves Carpenter's *They Live*, watched Carpenter's *Halloween* with me on a dare. She dozed off a few times, finally claiming the movie too boring to be scary. However, she later admitted to subconsciously looking over her shoulder for the next week. She also could not shake the sense of being watched. Carpenter was a master filmmaker even as a beginner, which is evident as his debut, 30 years after its release, still sends adult women, keys out and knuckled, skittering to their cars.

However, Carpenter has rarely received public recognition—outside of his geek fan-base—as a musician and songwriter. Films such as *Halloween*, *Assault on Precinct 13*, *Big Trouble Little China*, and, my favorite Carpenter score, *Halloween 3*, achieve their dreadful atmosphere's from Carpenter's scores. His music, when listened to apart from the imagery of the film, proves as simplistic as his film direction. Carpenter relies primarily on low-octave synthesizers and steadily building drum-machine beats. Pianos and the occasional odd percussion instrument find their way into Carpenter's film scores, but the synthesizer takes center stage in Carpenter's music. Listened to in isolation, viewers quickly realize how integral Carpenter's scores are to the success of his films.

This is the triumph of *Lost Themes*: without an attached film, apart from images and narration and Jamie Lee

Curtis in tights, this set of songs represents Carpenter purely as composer and musician. In these tracks, Carpenter cannot hide behind his actors or any visual camera trick to entertain or hold his audience. Here it's all music. And, even as just music, every track on *Lost Themes* still feels quintessentially Carpenter. The synthesizer remains primary. Bizarre bits of percussion and backing guitar tones swim in and out occasionally. Tracks like "Vortex" and "Fallen" and "Abyss" and "Night" feel movie ready. Dusty, dim-lit alleyways are walked by half-human / half- in dark sunglasses and a duster. Guns that shoot something other than bullets whip from holsters as the gun-slingers mullet whisks in the breeze like tall corn, also in the picture, where something lands on earth for the first time. The songs open with subtlety and grow into something large, audibly marching in visual and sonic urgency. Best of all, *Lost Themes* sent me back to Carpenter's film scores (can't get enough of *Halloween 3*) and to his films where I'm finding book-marked titles I just "never got around to." *Lost Themes* exercises the imagination and the memory in equal portion, feeding both the artist and the fan-boy, inspiring relentless production and hella fun consumption. For all this, I thank you, John Carpenter, though mostly I'm just grateful to you for Jamie Lee.—KEVIN STILL



The Juliana Hatfield Three

Whatever, My Love

I had high hopes for this album, based on the fantastic 1993 album *Become What You Are*, not to mention Ms. Hatfield's first LP *Hey Babe* and her seminal work with Blake Babies. But, sadly, the reality is not as filling as the promise. Lead off single "Invisible" is a super catchy pop song full of self-loathing and gender politics, meaning it is a typical Juliana Hatfield song. "I'm Shy" plums a similar vein but more successfully, as the song puts a very common relatable feeling into a rock context. That's no easy feat. "If I Could" has Juliana's great early '90s jangle guitar pop sound. It's one of those songs that sounds instantly memorable, like you've heard it before. If only the rest of the album came off this way.

The other ten songs on this album are all okay. Not terrible, not great. Kind of middle of the road material, a lot like most of Juliana's solo work from the mid '90s to present. Considering the original Juliana Hatfield Three were a more rocking outfit, I fully expected the band to come out with guns blazing ready to get it on. But the album is like any other recent Juliana Hatfield release, three killer songs and the rest filler.—KELLY MINNIS

CONCERT CALENDAR

3/5—Milk Drive, Sour Bridges @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 9pm
3/5—The Vintage Ramekins @ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm

3/6—Quiet Company (cd release), **Somebody's Darling, King & Nation** @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 9pm
3/6—Hazard Hounds @ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm

3/7—College Station Pub Crawl @ Northgate. 2pm
3/7—Author, The Feeble Contenders, Odd Folks, LUCA @ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm

3/8—HOLI 2015 Paint Party with **Nooze, Get Low** @ Simpson Drill Field, College Station. 12pm

3/12—Jerry Seinfeld @ Rudder Auditorium, College Station. 7:30pm

3/12—The Invincible Czars @ Rudder Theater, College Station. 7:30pm

3/12—Piqued Jacks, LUCA @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 9pm

3/14—Rock Away Cystic Fibrosis with **Andrew Duhon, Maybe April, TEAM*, Christopher Crow** @ Palace Theater, Bryan. 1pm

3/14—Chrome Pony, Sol Cat, The Jag, The Docs, Electric Astro-naut @ Revolution, Bryan. 9pm

3/15—Brazos Valley Derby Girls Open Bout @ VFW, Bryan. 6pm

3/19—SXSpillover with **Sparrows, The Ex-Optimists, Mutant Love** @ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm

3/20—SXSpillover with **Sibylline Machine, Civeta Dei, LUCA** @ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm

3/21—SXSpillover with **Gleason's Drift, Bonnet, The Inators, Lost Dog Street Band** @ Revolution, Bryan. 10pm

3/22—Altercation Punk Comedy BBQ feat. **Sniper 66, The Sharp Lads, 2 Fisted Law, Grizzly Band, The Stand Alones, The Wealthy Beggars, Jason Bancroft** @ Revolution, Bryan. 3pm

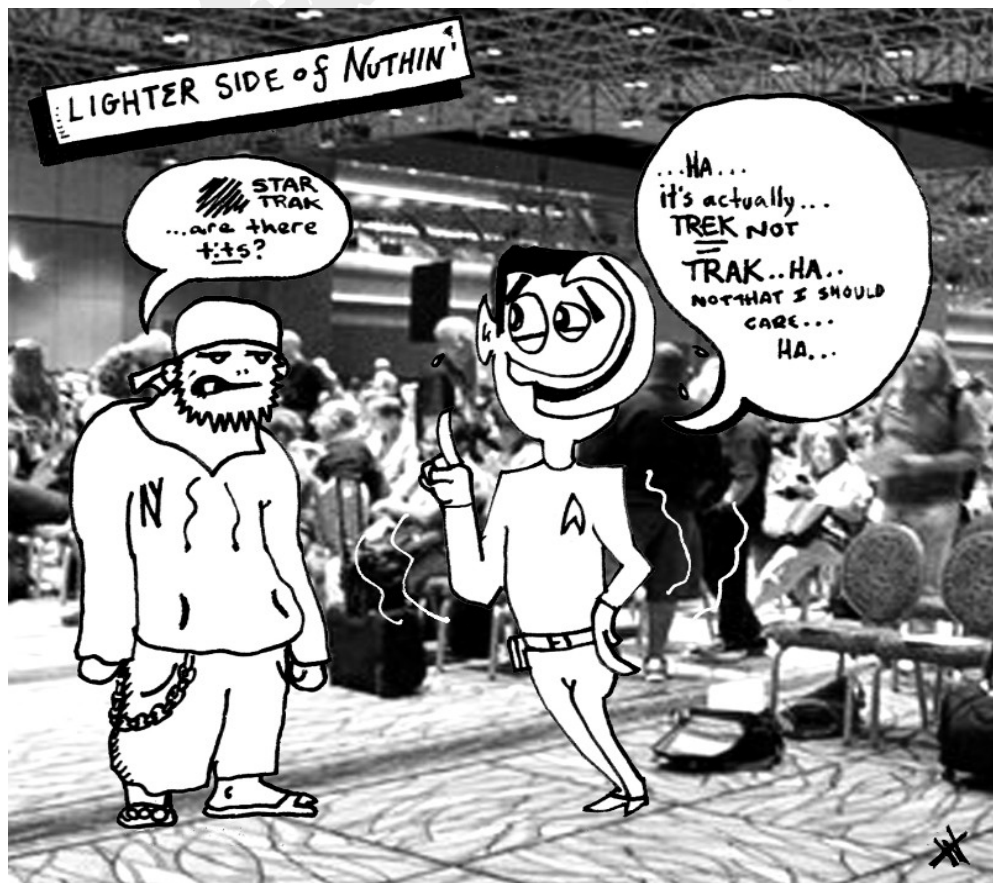
3/27—AggieCon 46 @ Hilton Convention Center, College Station

3/27—KEOS 20th Birthday Show with **Bret Baker, Claire Domingue** @ Grand Stafford, Bryan. 9pm

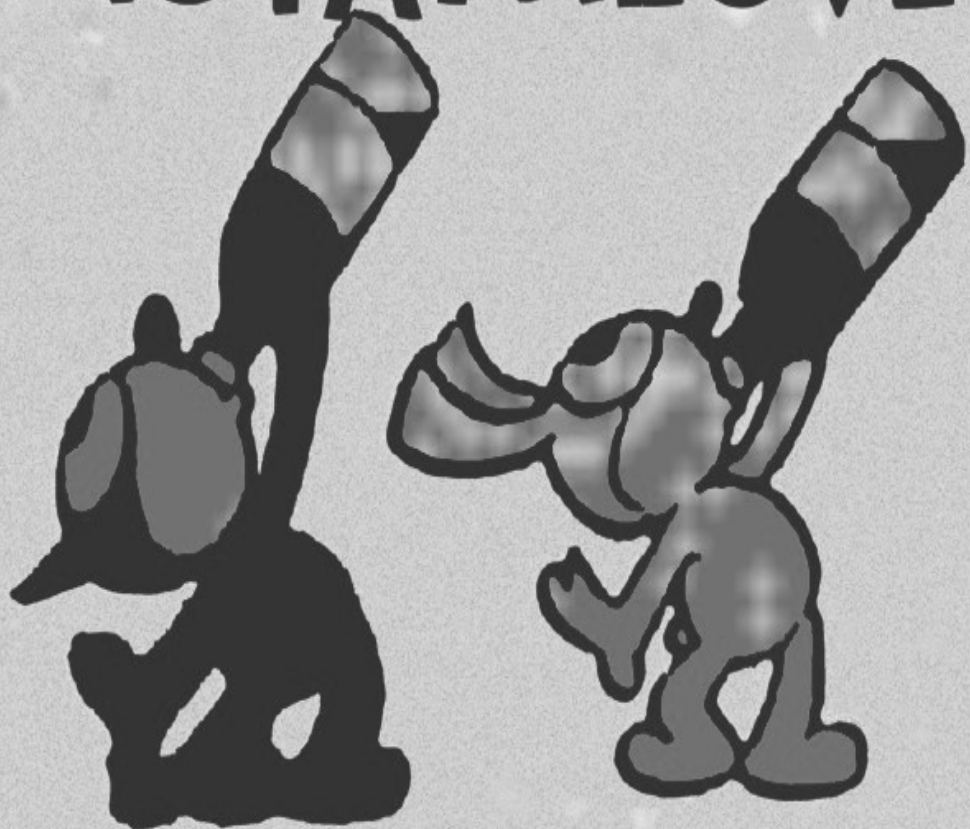
3/28—AggieCon 46 @ Hilton Convention Center, College Station

3/28—Riddle Gallery Soft Opening with **ASS, The Tron Sack, Mutant Love, DJ Skullbone** @ Riddle Gallery, Bryan. 9pm

3/29—Downtown Style Show @ StageCenter, Bryan. 2pm



SPARROWS EX-OPTIMISTS MUTANT LOVE



THURS MARCH 19th **REVOLUTION**
9PM \$5 suggested

PLUS IT'S MIXTAPE NIGHT!!!
mixtape night starts 8pm & runs
in-between band sets, bands start 9pm