

# THE PORNOGRAPHIC FLABBERGASTED EMUS

*by Wred Fright*



**Previously in The Pornographic Flabbergasted Emus:**

A college student named Ted Abel moved unexpectedly into a house occupied by other college students--Alexander Depot, Funnybear, and George Jah--who also happened to be in The Pornographic Flabbergasted Emus, a rock and roll band. It wasn't long before Ted joined the band, playing out at The Grasshopper, the biggest DIY dive in the city of Rock where all the Roll State scenesters like former rivals now pals The Our Things hang out. As if the band and college weren't enough to take care of, now that their other housemate Jess is moving out to live with mumbling and bumbling art school head Professor O'Please, the band/housemates also have to find a replacement for her to help them pay the rent but neither Funnybear's neighbor girl sidekick Antigone nor George Jah's girlfriend Karen Tinseltown wants that gig . . .

**Introduction**

Welcome to the fourth installment of the serialized novel The Pornographic Flabbergasted Emus! I hope you enjoy it! This issue includes three chapters--numbers 9, 10, and 11, carrying us over the halfway point of the novel.

The third issue was released in February 2003 at a zine exhibit/event called Page Me/Zine-O-Phobia at Spaces art gallery in Cleveland, Ohio, so thanks to Christa Donner and the rest of the Spaces folks who put it together. The response to the third issue was swell. Thanks to everyone who read it, and to Marc Parker of Zinethug.Com and Artnoose and Stefano of Zine World for their thoughtful and kind published reviews.

Thanks to Michael Dee (mp\_escuela@yahoo.com) for the great cover image! I'm responsible for everything else herein.

Cheers!

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## #9

## A Good Band Is Hard To Find

b/w

## Examination Extermination

"I tune up and down the radio dial,  
But nothing I hear makes me smile!"

**Intro--Theodorable**

It's finals next week, so of course we're FINALLY throwing a party right when we should be studying most. I tried to veto the idea but Funnybear just said, "Son, the only thing you need to study on a Saturday night is beer-drinking. Then you'd learn that college writing assignments are a lot more fun when you're drunk. Now go write me a paper on that theme and get me another beer from the fridge while you're at it. Burp!"

So the Emu Congress overrode my veto and then did some beer bongs. And so goes the future of industrial civilization and its critics. The whole world seems to be drunk on something, if not alcohol then television, oil, technology, greed, sex, or what have you, and they get upset, indeed consider it an affront, whenever somebody insists on remaining sober. However, I haven't given up on scholastic achievement this weekend completely as I'm trying to party while I study or study while I party. I'm not sure which, though clearly the ratio is in favor of partying as the two activities aren't a very good combination in the way that peanut buttering and jellying or rocking and rolling are. At the party, as we play a very quiet set for our guests to celebrate the return of our equipment and practice space to the house, inbetween songs I'm trying to finish up the last story in a Flannery O'Connor book, but I can only get a paragraph or two read before Funnybear counts off the start of the next song. Then I have to drop the book back on top of my amp and start strumming and singing again.

I wouldn't recommend this method of literary scholarship but I do manage to finish the story and thus the book by the end of our set, even though the audience kept chanting "Nerd" and trying to pour beer on me to disrupt my concentration.

"Nerd" by the way is said to have been coined by children of all ages author Dr. Seuss in his 1950 book If I Ran The Zoo, before it was adapted by teenage slang to cast derision on those who actually enjoyed learning.

I bet none of our guests know that. So there!

After our set, one of our guests, I think she's one of Jess's friends

because she's dressed in thrift store chic like most of Jess's friends and quite fetching, also like most of Jess's friends, with her pretty brown hair and glasses, comes up to me, and says, "Are you reading Flannery O'Connor?"

"Yeah, uh, yes, it's for my American Lit class."

"That's cool, I like her because my name's Flannery too."

An interesting conversation is about to rise and then hopefully converge but Insane Ishmael bumps into Flannery with his huge blue backpack full of pharmaceuticals, beer, cameras, jars of peanut butter, and who knows what else, and says, "Oh, sorry, dude."

He sets down the backpack, digs in it for a few seconds, pulls something out, and says, "Let me make it up to you. Want some beef jerky?"

Flannery declines and Ishmael offers it to me but I also take a pass so he eats it himself. He says to me, "Dude, I liked your set. It was all quiet and I could actually hear the words for once."

"Yeah, we didn't want Officer Trahan to show up and close the party down so we avoided the usual feedback and guitar squealing at ridiculous volumes."

"It was cool, dude. Except in the one song you said, 'I don't got nothing for you.' I don't think that's right Ted, that's not proper English, and you're an English major. How can you be a role model for the sound of young America if you're using the double negative, Ted? You don't want to tread down the same bad grammatical path The Beatles trod when they sang 'She Loves You, Yeah, Yeah, Yeah,' instead of 'She Loves You, Yes, Yes, Yes.' That's just not right. It's in Leviticus I think. Thou shalt speak correctly or God will come kill you."

"Actually," I say, "The double negative's been part of the English language from the very beginning. It's used for emphasis. Every English speaker knows that 'I don't got nothing for you' means 'I really don't have anything for you' not 'I have something.' The whole idea that two negatives equals a positive only gets imported into English when prescriptive grammarian busybodies from a couple centuries back incorrectly imposed mathematical logic onto grammatical logic in their self-appointed policing of the language. Unfortunately, the mistake keeps getting passed on and on so much that the double negative is actually avoided in most standard educated varieties of English especially written English, which is a shame because its avoidance strips some of the functional vitality out of the language. Fortunately, many nonstandard but alas less-socially prestigious varieties of English stick closer to the true roots of the language and speak as their Old English forerunners did in regard to the double negative, which is why it pops up in a lot of blues, country, and folk songs."

"Dude, thanks for the history lecture," Insane Ishmael says, "But I was just kidding."

"Oh, sorry, I've just been studying for my linguistics class a lot."

"Ah, studying," Insane Ishmael says, "I knew something was wrong with you. C'mon let's get drunk. Then you'll be back to normal and won't turn down no beef jerky when someone offers it to you."

### **Verse--Funnybear**

Funnybear is still drunk in the morning so it must have been a good party. Some guests are still asleep in the living room since Funnybear was a good host and insisted that no one drive home if he or she'd been drinking. Particularly she'd since Funnybear was most insistent on party guests staying over when talking to a female, but it looks like all the girls had designated drivers or walked to the party, since it's only dudes asleep in the living room.

Funnybear wakes them all up and kicks them all out. Who wants a bunch of sausage savages in their living room on Sunday morning? Not Funnybear. Men stink, bring on the dancing girls.

George comes down to breakfast wearing a coat. He says, "I can see my breath, can we turn the heat up?"

"No," Funnybear says, "I want to spend my money on alcohol, not on stupid things like natural gas."

"I'm turning it up," George says, going to the thermostat, "I can't study with hypothermia."

"We'll go study at the library. The heat's free there."

George sits down at the table, "You're actually going to study?"

"Some people keep the sabbath, I keep finals week holy. I figure why work hard for fifteen weeks when you can just contain the misery to a single week."

"Well, put a hole in your holy, did I tell you about our big break?"

"You might have, I don't remember much of last night."

"Well," George says, "Get this, somebody brought Keith Knipples of Knibbled Knipple to our party and he liked us. He told Alexander that we were the best band he's seen since The Swiss Misfits broke up, you know the band where everybody dressed like the Swiss Miss cocoa girl and then played Misfits covers. Anyway, he wants us to play a war protest in the middle of finals week on campus to showcase for the rest of his band, and if they like us, then we get to open for them at their show next weekend."



**"There's a war?"**

**"There's always some idiots fighting somewhere."**

**"Huh," Funnybear says, "Why is Knibbled Knipple playing around here anyway? Aren't they on a major label?"**

**"Oh, they're here recording. I think they want to tighten up and get some street cred by playing smaller places in their hometown. Who cares? This is a big gig."**

**"Why us though?"**

**"He said a good band is hard to find."**

**"A good anything is hard to find, a job, a friend, a beer. Better hang on to it if you find it. Unless it's a beer in which case you should drink it as soon as possible."**

**"Just think, maybe we'll get signed."**

**"Yeah," Funnybear says, "Too bad we can't do it."**

**"What?" George says, "Why not?"**

**"I told you I keep finals week holy."**

**"But if we get signed we don't have to worry about finals ever again."**

**"We aren't going to get signed, he probably only picked us because he knows we'll play for peanuts."**

**"Funnybear! This is opportunity knocking!"**

**"Sorry, opportunity, no solicitations."**

**George just looks at Funnybear. Funnybear believes the right word is "dumbfounded."**

**"Oh, well does that mean you aren't going out drinking with the Happy Hour Hos tonight too?" George says, recovering, "You made plans with them last night."**

**"Um, I did?" Funnybear says.**

**"Yeah, you tee-heed with them all night and they said that you're one of the girls now. They also said that they'd give you a makeover tonight, whatever that means. You do know they all just broke up with The Our Things."**

**"Well," Funnybear coughs, "I guess for the sake of the band, I can sacrifice and play the war protest."**

**"For the sake of the band," George says, "Of course."**

**Chorus--Theodorable**

**I thought reading a book while playing a gig was bad, but now thanks**

to George I'm reduced to actually writing a paper during a show. I can't believe I let him talk me into this. Zand from the Grasshopper called us up at eight in the morning and said he forgot a bunch of out of town bands were coming in tonight, and could we open for them?

George of course said sure, it'd make a good tune-up for our big war protest/industry showcase tomorrow night.

I said, "Are you crazy?" but I must be the crazy one because here I am at the Grasshopper jotting down notes on aspects of existentialism in Richard Wright's Native Son and William Faulkner's The Sound And The Fury.

It's actually not that bad though because since there wasn't time to hang fliers, there's no one here except us, Zand, some Grasshopper regulars, and the out of town bands, which seem to be mostly one guy. Let's see, there's Astroglide, which is the one guy with a keyboard, then there's Sacred Hearts Auto Club, which is him with a female singer who plays the keyboard too, then there's Rage Against Dabney Coleman, which is him with another guy who plays guitar, and then there's Black Squirrel And Freaky, which is him with a guy who just raps over the beats.

Funnybear asks Alexander why the guy just doesn't have one band.

"Probably so he can get paid four times," Alexander says.

"Yeah, but four times zero's still zero," Funnybear says.

"You've been studying again, haven't you?" Alexander says.

When I'm not listening to such Socratic dialogue, I'm actually getting some work done.

Then Flannery shows up with Jess.

If music isn't the enemy of scholarship, then romance surely is.

Verse--Alexander Depot

I get home from taking my European history final all ready for a nap. I had been up all night cramming and now it's sleepytime. Nobody else is home but I find some blonde high school kid reading volume one of Karl Marx's Das Kapital in the living room. I say, "Who are you?"

He says, "I'm John X. I've been here since the party last weekend. I was sleeping in the kitchen closet when Funnybear threw everybody else out."

"And you've been here the whole time since then?"

"Yeah."

"And nobody's noticed you?"

"Well, they have, but since everybody's too busy studying for finals, nobody's talked to me, they just think I'm a friend of another housemate's."

"Do you know anybody here?"

"Yeah, I know who everybody is. I've seen you guys play at the Grasshopper before."

"But do you know anybody here?"

"Well, no. Wait, I know Antigone."

"Antigone doesn't live here."

"Well, I'm kind of squatting then, I guess."

"John X?" I say, "What kind of name is that?"

"It's my Socialist Working Families Party codename. Since I've chosen to divorce my parents, I've been using it."

"You divorced your parents?"

"Yeah," he says, "They're capitalist pigs. They keep making me work as a male model for department store underwear advertisements and then stealing the surplus value of my labor."

"You were their capital?"

"That's right. They birthed me for a long term investment, and groomed me to be a commodity, but the bloodsucking vampires can't even wait until I mature. They're real mean and they tell me I'm a penalty for not an early enough withdrawal so I have to work to make up for it. I was tired of being exploited so I ran away from home."

"Where's home?"

"Two blocks over."

"And you've been living here since then?"

"That's right," he says, "I'm out of underwear too. Can I borrow some of yours? I need to make some money so I can do laundry so I can make more money so I can finance the revolution so I can overthrow this evil imperialistic corporate capitalist system that forces innocent children to wear tighty whiteys in public."

"I'm going to take a nap now," I say.

Note to self: Hide underwear.

### **Chorus—Theodorable**

Backstage at the protest rally, Funnybear is disappointed that there's no imperialist war machine to ride. He thinks it's like a roller coaster or something.



"But there's signs up about it and everything," he says, "Look at that one there, 'Once Again, They're Revving Up The Imperialist War Machine.'"

"It's just a metaphor for the military-industrial complex, Bear," Alexander says, looking up from reading his book on the history of the twentieth century.

"You think they'd at least have a tank or something we could ride in," Funnybear says, "They could paint the peace symbol on it and take it for spins around the neighborhood. Kids would dig that."

"That would be a good brainwashing tool. Maybe because it's December and the protest is indoors they didn't bring the peace tank this time," Alexander says, "Anyway, the only cymbals you need to worry about are the ones on your drums. This is a big gig."

"Some big gig, we're only playing three songs," Funnybear says, leafing through some antiwar pamphlets.

We're doing two covers, Black Sabbath's "War Pigs" and Bob Dylan's "Masters Of War," and one original, a song Alexander wrote called, "Nerve Gas Is A Gas." We're the only band on the bill and close out the protest. All the other musicians are folksingers and the protest is mostly speakers against the war.

"Yeah," I say, "But if we play them well we get to open for Knibbled Knipple this weekend."

"Isn't there something wrong," Funnybear says, "About playing a protest rally as a showcase? What's the T.S. Eliot line? Something about the greatest treason being doing the right thing for the wrong reason?"

George comes up with Karen. They're both disheveled from apparently following the advice of make love, not war. "Is it time to play yet?" he says.

"Not yet, Jah," Alexander says.

"Like, these antiwar people have no fashion sense," Karen says, "At least the army knows how to color coordinate. Like, how do you expect anyone to listen to your message if you look like shit."

"How come Keith Knipples got us to play here anyway?" Funnybear says, "Why didn't he just have his band play?"

"Their record company is probably owned by some multinational conglomerate that also owns companies that build bombs and guns and landmines so the conglomerate probably thinks war is good for business and is only interested in artists who make combat rock," Alexander says, "Knibbled Knipple knows who puts food on their table at the end of the day."

"He told me that one of the guys couldn't make it so that's why he asked us to fill in," George says, "He also said that they're trying to change

the system working from the inside out."

"Well, not making their music suck would be a good start,"

Funnybear says.

"Sshhhh!" George says, "What if he hears you? He's a really nice guy. Don't hurt his feelings."

"So, no matter how nice he is his band still sounds like disco with distortion on it," Funnybear says, "They blow chunks."

"I'd have to agree," I say, "Still, they do have nice hair."

"He said the record company made them sound like that," George says, "He said the new stuff's better since they're producing themselves."

"Yeah," Karen says, "But who does their hair?"

### **Middle Eight—Keith Knipples**

**Kent, Karl, and Kip—what do you think?**

**Kip says, "They absolutely stink!"**

**Karl says, "Fresh sound! You found them where?"**

**Kent says, "That look! Who does their hair?"**

**They can be our opening act,  
And they don't cost much, that's a fact!**

**I go tell the boys the good news,  
On our next bill is the Emus.**

### **Verse—George Jah**

Well, I think I survived the examination extermination. Between that and all the shows this week, it's a wonder I'm still alive. It's a good thing I quit the Coffee Catheter or I probably would be dead. They kept wanting me to become a manager. No fucking way. I know that scam. They put you on salary and then make you work twice as many hours so you end up making less an hour than

minimum wage. I told Donna to stuff her muffins. Besides I'm going to be a rock and roll star anyway. I can't be serving coffee to yuppies every morning when I should be writing the songs the whole world sings instead.

There's stuff I need to do around the house too. We've neglected cleaning during the finals frenzy, and it's snowing so the walk needs shoveled.

Fuck that though.

So I'm walking around trying to find something interesting to do because with no job and school out I'm not used to having free time again when I find a note from Jess on the dining room table. It reads, "Hey guys, I guess this is goodbye. I'll write to you soon. Adios, Jess. P.S./ The high school communist can live in my room for the rest of the month since I already paid the rent."

High school communist? What high school communist?

I go knock on Jess's door and some blonde, young kid answers, carrying a copy of volume two of Karl Marx's Das Kapital. He kind of looks familiar. I think I've seen him somewhere before. I say, "Hey!"

He says, "Hi, George, my name's John X."

I say, "Did Jess explain the chore rotation to you?"

"Ooh, no."

"Well, it was her turn so I guess that makes it your turn. We do it on a monthly rotation. So if you could wash the dishes, clean the house, and shovel the walk, that'd be great. I'm sure we'll get along fine."

"Ooh, o.k."

"Also, communists never have any money so how are you going to pay the utility bills?"

"Ooh."

"That's o.k., I need an intern. If you do that, we'll call it even."

"I'm not into that kinky stuff," John X says.

"No, this isn't like being a government intern," I say, "You just need to like cook me meals and carry my amp and stuff."

Wait, I don't want to fucking pay this kid's share of the gas bill by myself. "Actually, you can be everyone's intern. It's a new program we have here at Emu Industries," I say.

"O.k., I guess."

"Great, well the first thing you need to do in your new capacity is go to the video store and get me a horror film. See if Zombie Golf is in. If not, then get Bowling For Blood. Then when you get back,



shovel the walk."

"Ooh, I don't have any money," he says.

I dig my wallet out. "Here's some money and my video card. I want all my change back and the receipt. If you do a good job, I'll let you watch the movie with me. O.k.?"

"O.k.," he says, "Wait!"

"What?" I say.

"I, I, I don't have any underwear."

"I don't understand, is this some kind of communist thing like 'Workers of the world, you have nothing to lose but your panties?'" I say.

"No, I just need to do laundry."

"Hmm . . . actually I have to do some too, so take my laundry and yours and go to the laundromat after you shovel the walk."

"But I don't have a car! How am I supposed to get it there?"

John X says.

I swear you just can't get good help nowadays.

### **Chorus—Theodorable**

Maybe it's because school is out for the semester or maybe it's because their fans don't know where the Grasshopper is but there's actually not that many people at the Knibbled Knipple show. The place is still jammed though, just not with people, but with all of Knibbled Knipple's equipment. They have a giant light show, a huge soundboard, tons of musical instruments, and stacks of gigantic amplifiers. They must think they're playing a stadium show or something.

Their manager is walking around outside the Grasshopper talking into a cell phone. His name is Tanny Minor, he's from L.A., and he is a walking music industry stereotype, wearing his sunglasses at night and acting rudely to everybody. He's also still dressed for California and not December in Ohio and his teeth are chattering, as blue as his lightweight suit. He flew out specially for this gig I guess to hear the band's new material live. "Who booked us into this shithole? The band? Are they insane? Am I working with crazy people? Why am I working with crazy people? Can you bump up my flight? It's freezing here! How can people live here? Do they like being cold and bored? Who promoted this show? Fire them! There's no one here, not that there'd be room for them anyway. Dammit! Can't I find somebody with some fucking brains? Get me a limo and get me out of here! Call me back! I've got to go back inside before I get frostbite! Ciao, baby!"

Tanny misses our set since he goes out to find a bank machine and

doesn't come back until we're done. We don't miss him much, and he probably doesn't miss much either as the set just goes o.k. We have to set up on the floor because the stage is all taken up with the Knibbled Knipple equipment and there's yet more of their equipment down on the floor so we have no room to move around even down there. As a result, our set is pretty subdued. The fact that everyone ignores us except Keith Knipples doesn't help either. I never realized how much our energy fed off of the audience. The only feedback we're getting is from our amps, and without connecting to the audience, we're just sound and fury signifying nothing (as there's a whole lot of Shakespeare going on in my head still from finals).

After all, we could have stayed home to play for ourselves. As it is, it feels more like we're playing with ourselves up here.

So we're all shook down after the set, but we have a good experience compared to what happens to Knibbled Knipple. First, it takes them like an hour after our set is done for them to start due to technical problems so we get to watch their small army of roadies and equipment technicians scurry here and there swearing at one another. Then they finally start playing, and it actually sounds pretty good. Looks pretty good too as movies play behind them and all the crazy lights flash on and off.

For thirty seconds or so anyway. Then the fuse blows and the Grasshopper plunges into darkness. Flashlights pop on and then there's a bunch of stumbling around in the dark as Zand and the Knibbled Knipple crew try to get the show started again. Zand gets to the fusebox in the back finally and it's all systems go again.

For the next thirty seconds anyway. Then the fuse blows again.

This happens five more times before Knibbled Knipple unplug all their light equipment and half their sound equipment and are able to complete a song. Without all the fancy special effects though, they sound like your average bar band.

Their hair still looks good though.

At least until Keith Knipples freaks out and starts smearing condiments into his. While singing, he climbs to the top of one of their giant amplifier stacks with the deli tray from the rider, and starts delivering a rambling monologue while pouring mustard and ketchup over his head from those little packets that came with it. I had to go pick up the stuff on the rider for Zand--Well, somebody had to do it. It didn't arrive there by magic--so I'm a little upset to see Keith just wasting it. Knibbled Knipple didn't even let us eat or drink anything from the rider stuff and then they just nibbled on it and now Keith is stripping and sticking the lunchmeat on his bare chest.

"Nibble on these nipples! We're all meat!" he screams, "They grind

us up and fuck us and use us. We're just commodities to be bought and sold. Like rock and roll! Like war. Old rich people sending young poor people off to die for some bullshit. Why don't they go fight if they want to! The politicians and the rich fucks who run the corporations that profit from the war can have a steel cage wrestling match and kill one another if they want to settle their differences violently. Leave the rest of us alone! Let us just sit around and listen to records by The Mekons! I want peace! I'm willing to fight for it too! No more singing like the hippies. Fuck war, let's dance! Fuck dancing, let's fuck! I'll fuck for peace! Let's have babies together and share everything. No more fighting! No more marketing death and destruction! I don't want to play aggressive music, soundtracks for murder anymore! I want to sing silly love songs and fuck for peace!"

The band has stopped playing at this point but Keith doesn't seem to notice. He pulls out an ax from somewhere and starts chopping up the remainder of the deli tray. It splatters off around the stack of amps and we all back up so we don't get sprayed with ax-diced tomato and vegetable dip. Then when the deli tray is gone, he starts in on chopping up the stack of amps he's standing on.

Back from his quest for the bank machine, Tanny Minor yells to the roadcrew to stop him, "We haven't recouped the cost of those amps from royalties yet! Stop him!"

Keith Knipples is wildly swinging an ax one-handed ten feet up in the air. Nobody tries to stop him.

The ax finally gets stuck in the side of the amp stack and Keith falls off from his last chop's momentum and dangles in the air from the ax handle for a couple of seconds, then he plops onto the stage. Now that Keith is axless, the roadcrew bum rushes him but Keith's still hanging on to the microphone, and yelling, "No coke! No blow jobs! No horse! No groupies! Sex, drugs, and rock and roll isn't rebellion, it's the new bread and circuses! You're playing right into The Man's hands! I want freedom and participation in power is freedom and power comes, I'm sad to say, from the barrel of a gun!"

At this vocal cue, Keith pulls a gun out of his spandex pants and the roadcrew backs off. He spins around holding the gun in one hand and the microphone in the other. Everyone backs up, and people start sneaking out the door of the Grasshopper. "Oh, now you'll listen," he says, "It takes a fucking gun. That's the kind of people you are. You'll listen to violence, but ignore peace. Baa! You're sheep! I should shear and fuck you all."

He turns the gun on the audience, what's left of it anyway. "Is this what you want to see? Is this what you paid for? You wanna see a real killer



set, huh?"

He takes the ammunition clip out and throws the gun and it on the floor. "Well, fuck that, no more guns in our videos! From now on no more tough guy macho shit! All right, who wants to fuck for peace with me? C'mon let's do it, you fucks! I love you all."

Keith Knipples then passes out, his head landing in some American cheese from the deli tray with an audible squish! We start to applaud slowly then everybody's cheering, glad not to have been shot.

"Holy shit!" Tanny Minor says, "This is great! Did anybody get that on tape! Can he do that every night! That's better than G.G. Allin! We'll make millions!"

### **Coda—Theodorable**

So Knibbled Knipple fires Keith. They say they've told him before that he can either get drunk or take drugs before a show but not both. We hear that Keith gets a new band going quick though. Nobody's seen them yet but George and I are out Christmas shopping and run into Keith at the mall. We duck into a giftshop to get away from John X's carping about capitalist superstructures and superstores and there's Keith. He's wearing a suit and there's no mayonnaise nor even mousse in his hair. It's his parents' giftshop where they sell greeting cards and angel figurines and he says he's helping out with the busy holiday season. We tell him we're sorry to hear he's not with Knibbled Knipple anymore but he says they blew chunks anyway and he's glad to be done with them. He says his new band's art rocked out and kind of sounds like Dean Martin fronting The Sex Pistols. They're called Clam Cram and their big prop is a giant clamshell onstage, which opens up to reveal the band. At the end of the show it closes back down again and the band disappears. Keith said we could open for them sometime, and we said we'd love to, but wouldn't you know it, we've all got a big exam coming up so we're too busy studying. Maybe another time. Another lifetime, that is. Then we back out of the store slowly waving our hands in the air like we just don't care. It's only rock and roll, The Man, but John X tells us that's the new opiate of the masses. We make him carry our bags back to the car, but tell him not to look inside since we bought him some new underwear. Boxers of course for a street fighting boy. The ones with the Marx Brothers on them were hard to find. The Knibbled Knipple cd wasn't though. The rack was full of copies and it was half-off full price at the corporate chain record store.

We studied economics in college. We still didn't buy it.

## #10

Hurry Up And Wait

b/w

I Was A Teenage Anarchist

"I was in such a hurry to get somewhere,  
And all I did was wait and sit on my bum there!"

**Intro--Funnybear**

Every other band in town is out on tour meanwhile Funnybear gets to sit at home on the couch for the holidays flipping through magazines from the coffeetable. "Why aren't we on the road?" Funnybear asks Alexander, who is leaving for the holiday break.

"I don't know. We haven't been taking our Jack Kerouac vitamins," Alexander says, zipping up his coat.

"Very funny. Did you know that just about every band in town is touring right now? The Our Things are heading down south, These Fags Are Pissed are heading west, and Leave It To Elvis are going to Canada."

"Canada? In the middle of winter?" Alexander says.

"They figure they'll be less competition," Funnybear says.

"Didn't they change their name again too?"

"Yeah, to Whore 54, Where Are You?" Funnybear says, "Sorry, I forgot. I'm so bored here my brain is starting to decompose."

"It could be worse, you could be playing shows with our old buddy Jon Lenin. He's taking his solo project to New York I hear," Alexander says.

"Son, solo projects suck down more ass than toilets," Funnybear says, "They should pass a law that a solo project has to put a warning label on fliers and cds that says, 'These are the songs I wrote that are so horrible no one will play them with me.' But I guess just calling something a 'solo project' tells people that already so o.k. maybe we don't need any additional legislation."

"Well, glad we solved that crisis," Alexander says, picking up his bag, "What are you going to do once you have the house to yourself?"

"Well, John X is still here so I can't walk around naked, but at least I'll have somebody to talk to," Funnybear says, "Why did everybody have to leave so quickly anyway? The closest thing to nirvana I can think of is college without classes but at the end of a semester everyone flees like Godzilla's on his way to squash the town."

**"I always thought the closest thing to Nirvana was Mudhoney myself," Alexander says and heads out the door, "Have a good break! Merry Christmas! See you on New Year's Eve!"**

**The winter wind slams the door shut behind Alexander, and with it also on Funnybear's prospects for fun over Christmas. There's nothing so quiet as a college town on break, Funnybear thinks. Funnybear thumbs through some more magazines and then thumps them down on the coffeetable and sighs. This is like waiting in a dentist's office when the dentist is dead. Life in a ghost town.**

**What to do? What to do? The existential question. Maybe Funnybear will go collect plasticware from various fast food restaurants around town. Maybe Funnybear will go find some pornography stocking stuffers. Maybe Funnybear will play the drums.**

**Funnybear knows! Funnybear will do all three and make it a solo project!**

#### **Verse—Theodorable**

Bukowski's Books and Beers is a pretty fun place to Christmas shop, but I bet it'd be even more fun if I could get drinks at the bookshop bar and wander around the bookshelves soused like everyone else. Maybe tonight at the Coinmonster, Infidels, Februarys, and Flaming Dick and Hot Dog show in Youngstown I can drink. For now, alas, I just have to content myself with getting intoxicated on the words of authors such as John Kennedy Toole, Douglas Adams, Thomas Love Peacock, and P.G. Wodehouse.

In fact, I'm browsing through (i.e., reading) a Jeeves story by Wodehouse when a couple of middle-aged guys bump into me. They don't say excuse me or anything, so at first I think they're drunk, but it turns out that they're actually tee-totalers in a hurry to get to a display stand for the latest book in The Great Snatch series, which is a fundamentalist Christian fable about the end of the world.

"They were all sold out at the Christian bookstore," the first guy in dark blue slacks and a yellow polo shirt with a fish on it instead of an alligator says.

"I'm surprised this place even carries it," the second guy in dark blue slacks and a yellow polo shirt with a fish on it instead of an alligator says.

"Yes, I'm sure when we all one day just blast off into space not many people from here will be joining us," t.f.g.i.d.b.s.a.a.y.p.s.w.a.f.o.i.i.o.a.a. says.

"Yes," t.s.g.i.d.b.s.a.a.y.p.s.w.a.f.o.i.i.o.a.a. says, "They'll have to



suffer through the great tribulation that follows the rapture.”

“Yes, I can’t wait,” t.f.g.i.d.b.s.a.a.y.p.s.w.a.f.o.i.i.o.a.a. says, “All the people at work have been getting on me because I told them that I didn’t care about the environment since this world will be destroyed by God anyway. When I disappear in the middle of a meeting, that’ll show them.”

“Yes, the new earth will have a perfect environment so why go to all that fuss for this one,” t.s.g.i.d.b.s.a.a.y.p.s.w.a.f.o.i.i.o.a.a. says, “That’s why when I change the oil in my car, I always toss the old stuff in the river. I litter too. As long as it’s not listed as a sin in the Bible, I figure it’s all right to do. Saves me time anyway.”

“Yes, you might even be able to bring about armageddon sooner that way. Similarly, when I hear a politician talk about peace I figure he’s just a deluded fool or possibly The Antichrist, so I always vote for the candidate I think is most likely to increase military spending,”

t.f.g.i.d.b.s.a.a.y.p.s.w.a.f.o.i.i.o.a.a. says, “As long as he’s pro-life and pro-death penalty, of course.”

“Yes, of course,” t.s.g.i.d.b.s.a.a.y.p.s.w.a.f.o.i.i.o.a.a. says, “I always make sure he doesn’t go for that United Nations foolishness either. Getting all the people of the world together to fight poverty, disease, war, death? Why bother? My money’s on the four horsemen of the apocalypse. At best, the U.N. is a hopeless cause; at worst, it’ll bring about one world government under Satan.”

“Well, let’s get going, the rapture could come at any time and I’d like to finish this book before it does,” t.f.g.i.d.b.s.a.a.y.p.s.w.a.f.o.i.i.o.a.a. says.

“Do you think when we get swept up in the air to meet Jesus, we’ll still have the clothes we were wearing on or do those get left behind too?” t.s.g.i.d.b.s.a.a.y.p.s.w.a.f.o.i.i.o.a.a. says, as they wander away, “What does it say in the book about meeting the Lord naked . . .”

Wow! That was really interesting! A handful of Bible verses gathered together out of context combined with St. John tripping his balls off in The Book Of Revelation to create a modern mythology/ideology that justifies selfishness, laziness, apathy, nihilism, ignorance, and irresponsibility. If people two thousand years from now based their lives on a random selection of books from this bookstore, I doubt they could come up with something so dumb. I guess I shouldn’t be surprised as these are the same people who call themselves Christians but only follow the teachings of Christ that are convenient for their modern lifestyles. Kick the moneychangers out of the temple? Hey, don’t rock the boat if you can’t walk on water! Just do what you’re told and buy a Jesus t-shirt!

I need a beer before somebody nails me to a bookcase because I said

people should be kinder to one another. Nope! I'm still underage and can't get one! I can't wait to be 21!

### **Chorus--Funnybear**

**It's the winter solstice. The shortest day of the year. Time to sacrifice virgins to the forces of darkness.**

**Nah, c'mon virgins, let's go to the thrift store instead.**

**So Funnybear brings Antigone and John X to Retail Resurrection to help Funnybear get stuff to smash at Funnybear's solo gig on New Year's Eve. John X has never been to a thrift store before. He calls it the graveyard of capitalism. Oodles and oodles of items nobody wants anymore.**

**"That's not true," Antigone says, pulling a white dress off the rack, "They're just waiting for a good home."**

**"Yes, but then what?" John X says, "Eventually it'll end up in a landfill."**

**"So what?" Antigone says, putting the dress back.**

**"So what!" John X says, "It's a waste! Some of this stuff will never decay! It'll just keep piling up until the entire Earth is one big garbage dump!"**

**"That's not true," Antigone says, looking through some belts, "We'll just shoot it up into space or something."**

**"Good idea," Funnybear says, "The sun would make a fine incinerator."**

**"Oh, yeah," John X says, "An asteroid belt of trash. That'd be great."**

**"Well, there's no asteroid belts here," Antigone says, picking up a belt, "But this one with the buckle shaped like a cat is pretty cool, and it's only a quarter!"**

**"It's a new century," John X says, "We've got to get better at thinking about the consequences of our actions."**

**"Blah blah blah," Antigone says, "We already are. Look at us, we're recycling by shopping here. Just think, everything in here has a history. Who did this cat belt belong to? What was he or she like?"**

**"I bet they liked pussy," Funnybear says, "Meow!"**

**"But we're still shopping, and that's the problem," John X says, "If we were all anarchists, this society wouldn't be so consumerist."**

**"So, now you're onto anarchism?" Antigone says.**

**"Yeah, communism was too hierarchical and authoritarian," John X**

says, "It stifled individual freedom too much in favor of collective equality."

"Did you see the book section?" Funnybear says, "I bet they have some Emma Goldman."

"Where?!" John X says, looking around wildly.

Funnybear points out the books and John X runs off.

"And he doesn't like shopping, huh?" Antigone says.

"Nope, just shoplifting," Funnybear says, "Underneath all his concern for the environment, I really think that it's the paying money part that he objects to most in shopping."

"Creep! Well, let's hurry up and get to the records before he finds them and beats us to the good stuff," Antigone says.

"Don't panic, it's impossible to shove a vinyl album down your pants," Funnybear says, "I tried it once but, ahem!, I already had twelve inches down there!"

"Twelve?" Antigone says, "Dude, were you using the metric side of the ruler by mistake again?"

Is it dark outside yet? Nighttime's the righttime to sacrifice a virgin.

Verse--Alexander Depot

Every year since I went away to school, I come home over the holidays and catch up with my high school friends. It's great seeing them but each year I notice that it's harder and harder for us to talk with one another because we really don't have that much in common anymore. Especially the last couple of years, it seems like we have the same conversation reminiscing about old times that we just had the year before. For some of us, such as me, this is our last year in college. Jobs, marriage, children, those things all await us, and who knows where we'll be after this year. We might not even be able to keep up this little holiday visit tradition once we graduate, and that's pretty much all that holds us together now. We've changed. We're not the same people we were; we just have the same names and use the same bodies.

Well, almost the same bodies . . .

It's funny, when we were growing up we were in such a hurry to get out of our school and our little community. We couldn't wait to leave. It seems like we were waiting for our lives to begin. And then when we actually did leave, I think we wondered why we were in such a hurry. But by then it was too late, even if we did write the



occasional letter to one another the first year or two away, our friendships had been left behind too, the type of crazy teenage anarchist friendships I don't think anyone ever really has again after high school. I feel this way especially about Jimmer, because unlike the rest of us, even Phil who went in the army--Phil in the ditch, ha, ha, ha--Jimmer didn't go away. So even if the rest of us went to different places, we still went through similar experiences and feelings being away from home and could relate to one another about that at least, but none of us could really relate to Jimmer anymore. It wasn't like he didn't grow up. He did, but he seems to have skipped ahead from being a teenage anarchist straight to being an elderly reactionary.

I'm still trying to pretend he's my pal though as Jimmer and I are on a beer and ciggies run in the new Drugstrip that just opened up, the first one around here. Jimmer's never heard of it.

"You mean they give you 10% off if you show the cashier your nipple?"

"That's their gimmick, Jimmer," I say.

"That's sick! Even if you're a chick?" Jimmer says.

"Even if you're a chick, Jimmer."

"What happens if you flash 'em both nipples?" Jimmer says.

"Well, you don't get any further discount, but you might get a public indecency charge."

We're passing a display rack of American flags with reindeer on them instead of stars, for the patriotic Christmas yard display person I guess. "I tell you what's indecent," Jimmer says, "That flagburning."

"Flagburning?" I say, "Did someone came up on your porch and burn your flag?"

"No, but I'd kick their ass if they did," Jimmer says, "I'm talking about those protesters who burn the flag and then say it's freedom of speech!"

"Well, it's America," I say can you see, "You can say and do whatever you want as long as you're not hurting someone else. I guess as long as it's your flag, you have the right to do with it what you want."

Jimmer stops in front of the coolers, our destination for beer. "Whoa, whoa, whoa! What they teaching you at that university? That it's o.k. to burn the flag my dad fought for in the war?"

"Your father fought for the people of this country, not a symbol, Jimmer." I say, "The flag's just a piece of cloth. It's what it represents that matters. Freedom, Justice, Fair Play, Progress, Individuality, Diversity, Democracy. Only kings and dictators want people to worship a flag."

"Well, then kings and dictators got the right idea then," Jimmer says, "This country's getting out of control anyway. We need some law and order."

I get some beer out of the cooler and try to change the conversation because I don't want to hear any more false patriotism (i.e., an American who thinks saluting the flag means more than understanding or supporting the Constitution, much less living according to the ideas and principles behind it), "How's it feel to be able to drink legally for once?"

"Shit!" Jimmer says, "Ain't nobody can tell me what I can and can't drink!"

All right! That's my boy! Americans are just anarchists who vote!

"So who'd you vote for in the last election anyway?" I say.

"I didn't," Jimmer says, "I don't want fucking jury duty! Anyhoo, I tell you who else needs to learn a little respect for the flag. Them foreign fuckers who are always burning the flag outside our embassies. We should drop a fucking nuke on them the next time they try that shit."

It's hard to believe this guy's actually supposed to be my friend. "Yes, Jimmer," I say, "I'm sure killing them would make them like us lots and lots."

"See," Jimmer says, "I knew we'd agree when it came down to dropping the bomb! America's Number One! USA! USA!"

Oh, Jimmer, I miss you even when you're here.

Note to self: To keep my middle class illusions of the wisdom of the majority alive, don't have any more political discussions with members of the American working class. They're fucking idiots! It may not be such a bad thing then that no one in charge actually cares what they think anyway.

### **Chorus--Funnybear**

**"High school's just there to teach us how to obey orders so we'll**

make good cannon fodder and employees building up the rich people's shit," John X is telling Funnybear and Gao Miao over dinner. Funnybear invited Gao over since he's still in town over the break because his home is in China. Plus Funnybear thought it would be entertaining to see John X meet a real communist. But so far it's been more symposium than slapstick.

"But isn't American high school to teach you how to think for yourselves and make wise choices as educated citizens in a democratic republic?" Gao says, reaching for another slice of pizza.

"That's all propaganda," John says, "It's all about brainwashing kids into docile sheep so they can fleece us later."

Funnybear dips some crust in garlic sauce, "Son, what's a sheep's favorite type of architecture?"

Gao actually falls for it, "A barn?"

"No, baa-house!" Funnybear says, "Get it! Bauhaus!"

John X throws his crust at Funnybear. "See, son if you hadn't dropped out of school, you would have gotten that joke and ewe'd be laughing right now," Funnybear says, dipping the crust.

"Fuck high school!" John says.

"Hey, my high school sucked too," Funnybear says, "I just made the best of it by reading books that actually were interesting in study hall."

"It's not even the books and classes that are so bad, it's the fucking people," John X says, "I don't know who's worse, the teachers and administration or the students."

"But isn't anarchism predicated on human nature being inherently good?" Funnybear says.

"So?" John X says, "What's that got to do with revolution in the classroom?"

"Well, if people are naturally good, then why are they so crappy in high school?" Funnybear says, wiping his mouth with a napkin.

"The system, society, corrupts them," John X says, talking with his mouth full.

"Well, how did that get corrupt in the first place?" Funnybear says, "I mean if human nature is good, why didn't things stay that way?"

"Ah," Gao says, "You're asking what is the origin of evil. Where did it come from?"

"Exactly," Funnybear says, "Please pass me another slice."

"Maybe we need to ask some other questions before debating whether human nature is naturally good or evil," Gao says, putting a slice on



Funnybear's plate, "Perhaps we should decide if there is good and evil, or even if there is a single human nature at all. Perhaps a stable self, a fixed identity, even in an individual much less an entire species is nothing but an illusion."

"That sounds more Tao than Mao," John says.

"Actually it's just Gao," Gao says.

"But animals even if they have individual personalities have a general nature, don't they?" Funnybear says, "I mean cats act like cats and dogs act like dogs. Why would human beings be any different?"

"But there are mean dogs and nice dogs, aren't there?" Gao says, grabbing a slice, "Since we are speaking of good and evil."

"But they aren't blank slates, tabula rasa, for conditioning to determine entirely," Funnybear says, "There's some hard wiring underneath, some instinct, dare I say, a soul. And that would be the nature of the beast, present in mean dogs and nice dogs. And we're beasts too, though we fancy ourselves beyond cats and dogs, and sometimes even beyond good and evil. I would argue that human nature is inherently corrupt like the founding fathers of America thought--'If men were angels, we wouldn't need a government'--and like the Christians think--original sin. Like Jonathan Swift said, human beings are not naturally rational, only capable of using reason if they apply themselves."

"But most people are good," John says, "Look at us, we're sitting here sharing a meal. Mutual aid, we're helping one another. That's the type of evidence anarchists base their conclusion that human nature is good on."

"Then how do you explain your parents?" Funnybear says, "Why did you run away from home?"

John stops chewing. Assfuck! Funnybear thinks, why did Funnybear say that?

Fortunately, Gao's from another country, and doesn't notice the awkward moment so the conversation continues, "Perhaps, it is yin and yang, one cannot exist without the other. Can we have good without evil? What makes something good? Would we evolve as individuals or society without something spurring us on? How else to reach nirvana but to rise above the evil in the world?"

"So suffering is good?" John says.

"No, I wouldn't say that, though some would," Gao says, "It's just part of, how do you say?, the deal."

"Speaking of suffering," Funnybear says, "We're out of pizza."

### **Middle Eight--John X**

It was the night before Christmas,  
I was in a house but homeless.  
Even Funnybear had gone home,  
So I was left here all alone.  
Plenty of time to think and think,  
By now, Mom's made the eggnog drink.  
Under the tree's electronics,  
Nostalgia, pain of home, John X.

### **Verse--George Jah**

They still call it midnight mass but this year it starts at 10 o'clock and we'll be home in time for the tv news my Dad says. Dammit! I thought we would get home at 2 in the morning and we could do the whole Christmas morning routine then, so I could sleep in instead of being woken up at 6 in the morning by my sister who on Christmas morning still acts like we're seven years old and wearing the type of pajamas that encloses your feet.

O.k., so when I'm home in the winter at my parents' house I still do wear the type of pajamas that encloses your feet. They're hard to find in an adult size too.

But I'm not seven years old and opening presents in the afternoon works for me just as much as opening them up at the butterack of dawn. I mean it's not like they're going anywhere. Unlike my family, The Grinch is a fictional character; he's not going to steal our presents if we don't get up before noon.

Funnybear is right, they should have a holiday from the holidays. They're exhausting. When I get back to the Emu house, I'm going to have John X line up a marathon of horror movies from the video store for me. Watching other people get tortured, now, that's relaxation! Hey! At least it's not me for a change.

So off we go to church, to Saint Genesius's, the one time a year the entire family goes together, and the one time of year I go at all (I usually manage to duck Easter--the year Father Burroughs talked about how he was looking forward to death so he could be with Jesus instead of having to suffer through watching The Pirates lose another baseball season did Easter Sunday in for me forever. I guess I found the usual cliched spring rebirth of life talk more comforting.).

The place is jammed already when we get there. They're really packing the punters in this year. I wonder if the priest gets nervous

before a big mass like I get nervous before a big show. They must be expecting a big money night too; there's twice as many ushers as usual, with collection baskets ready to go. I do the sign of the cross with the holy water and we cram into a pew near the statue of the Virgin Mary. That's why I like the Catholic Church, they give Jesus's Mom props.

The incense is smelling good. Oh, we've got to fold out the kneerest and do the kneeling thing. I always bang my shin on that fucking thing; I wish we'd just leave it up. Stand up, sit down. Stand up, sit down. Make up your mind. I hope Father Burroughs isn't drunk again this year. Last year, I thought he was bored and trying to get us to do "The Wave"; he made us jump up and down so many times. I can't imagine God cares whether we're standing, sitting, kneeling, or even squatting to take a poop. People treat God too seriously, and yet clearly God has a sense of humor. God invented farting for, er, God's sake.

I have to fart now actually. Oh, I'll have to hold it in. This sucks. I'm crammed between my father and my sister, and the church is so crowded there's people everywhere, even standing up. Waiting through mass is bad enough on it's own and now I've got flatulence to deal with too. Oh, hurry up! I don't think I can hold this in!

Oh, we have to stand again too and sing or something. Maybe I can sneak it out during an organ blast. No, too risky, wait until I'm sitting down and then I can maybe lift one cheek at a time and let it out silently.

We sit down again. Ahhhhhh! And not a creature stirred not even a mouse.

Oh, that smells bad. Oh, God, that smells bad. What did I eat? My sister's looking at me. My father's waving his hand in front of his nose. Somebody's coughing behind me. I know, I'll look at my sister and grimace.

Oh, don't act like Miss Innocent to me. You've laid some stinkers in your time honey. It's time to pay for those smelly sins now sweetheart.

Oh my God! Some guy in the row ahead is actually making people get out of the pew to let him out. There's a man with some strong faith. He'll be a martyr star someday. Christ was nailed to a cross and this guy can't even take a fart.

Admittedly, it is pretty bad. It's the Pope of Gas, but c'mon, I'm not the guy who said that even though God is everywhere,



we have to pretend he's only in this one building and pile up on top of one another to say hi.

Ah, the sign of peace and friendship, this is my favorite part. Hey! How come no one wants to shake my hand?

### **Chorus--Funnybear**

Funnybear thought the period before Christmas was quiet, but with John X back at his parents' house due to a Christmas miracle, it's like a tomb.

At least Funnybear can walk around the house naked now.

Funnybear doesn't though because it's too cold. Instead, Funnybear spends the days between Christmas and New Year's working on Funnybear's solo project. Alexander will be happy to hear that Funnybear has a new appreciation for programmed rhythms, but probably not so happy to hear that Funnybear will be using his keyboard for Funnybear's performance.

Funnybear's hit the point where Funnybear has no idea what day it is, what time it is, and what's it like outside when Antigone comes over for a visit. She's all covered in snow from trekking through a blizzard but she's all excited. She takes off her knit cap, mittens, coat, and moonboots, and says, "Dude, do you remember that record I bought at the thrift store?"

That seems like eons ago. "Yeah, the single from the power pop band," Funnybear says, "What was their name?"

"The So! It was great! So I decided to see if they made any more recordings," Antigone says.

"So?" Funnybear says.

"So, they didn't. That single's like over twenty years old and it was their only release."

"That's weird," Funnybear says, "It was just floating around the world like a message in a bottle, waiting for someone to pick it up and listen to it."

"Well, the one I got probably didn't even float that far. They were from Akron, dude," Antigone says, "So I looked them up in a search engine and found a website about them. It's run by the guitar player. The So were a local band back in the day and got caught up in the whole punk/new wave thing. They used to be called The Sos but everybody always pronounced it like S.O.S. and joked about them needing help or being scrubs so they changed the name to The So. Then people made fun of them and called them The So-So or The So-Sos. Then they released that single and found out

there was some band in Oregon called The So too so both bands changed their names. The Ohio band to An So and the Oregon band to A So. After that, they broke up."

"An so?" Funnybear says.

"So I emailed the guy and he emailed me back. I asked why they broke up when they rocked, and he says he went to college, the other guitarist knocked his girlfriend up, the bass player moved away with his parents, and the drummer went insane. But they all kept playing music even after that. The drummer did music therapy in the asylum, the other guitarist raised his kids to be a family band, the bass player joined the Oregon band, and the guitarist I emailed sang in a synthpop band--he said it was the eighties, he couldn't help it. And they all still play music to this day. In fact, the two guitarists play together in a band now, an acoustic type soft rock thing called Mellow Fellow. So I asked him if there was any chance I could get them to play at the Grasshopper with you guys and he said yes."

"So Mellow Fellow's going to play the Grasshopper with The Pornographic Flabbergasted Emus?" Funnybear says.

"No!" Antigone shoves Funnybear, "The So are!"

"What? I thought you said the drummer was insane?"

"All drummers are insane!" Antigone says, "Look at you!"

Funnybear doesn't know quite what to say to this.

"The guy from The So said they're all back in the area now and had been talking about playing a reunion gig anyway for old times' sake," Antigone says, "Besides, he said he's still got about a hundred copies of the single in his closet so he wants to sell them at the show. He has to keep hiding them from his wife who wants him to just throw them out."

"If he's had them in his closet for over twenty years, why doesn't he just give them away for free at the show?" Funnybear says.

"He said he's afraid people will just use them as frisbees," Antigone says.

"And they locked the drummer up for being insane?" Funnybear says.

"Oh, he's in a halfway house now. He can come and go, like so." Antigone says.

"Do the ladies talk of Michelangelo?" Funnybear says, thinking of the T.S. Eliot poem.

"Uh, no, I don't know but I'll take a guess and say it ain't so. You got any coffee?"

**"No," Funnybear says, "But I've got plenty of coffeespoons."**

**"So?"**

**"So, I've been collecting plasticware for my solo show. I've got a garbage bag full of them now. I can measure out my life and yours with them."**

**"Dude, sporks kick ass. Do you have any of those in your bag?"**

**Antigone says.**

**"Yep! I'll give you one if you come to my show."**

**"That'd be awesome. We always eat pork on New Year's Day at my house. This year I can eat it with a spork!"**

**"So?" Funnybear says.**

**"So?" Antigone says, "Pork with a spork, dude! That's like almost as cool as The So reuniting!"**

**"If you say so," Funnybear says.**

### **Coda--Funnybear**

**It's New Year's Eve and people are back in town, George, Alexander, Uncle Teddy, Karen, Jugsy, and some other people whose names Funnybear can't remember right now because Funnybear is drunk. Funnybear and them are all waiting to usher in the new year at the Grasshopper. It's sort of a solo project festival, since only the type of guys who have given up on ever having a date would book a show on New Year's Eve.**

**Funnybear will play after midnight.**

**Up right now is Karaoke Pectate, a guy whose entire performance is singing along to his own karaoke machine. He's pretty enjoyable and has good taste, currently crooning his version of Pulp's "Common People," but Funnybear wishes he'd hurry up so Zand can turn up the volume on the television in the corner. Dick Clark's counting down the old year. K.P. finally finishes his set with a stirring rendition of "Auld Lang Syne" and somebody passes out champagne for the toast. Funnybear makes sure to down Funnybear's glass immediately. Why wait? Somebody pours Funnybear a hurried refill as the crowd chants along to the t.v., "10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1!"**



## #11

January Jezebel

b/w

Do Re Mi The So

"It's cold outside and the snow's a mess,  
So let's sled off the roof into happiness!"

**Intro--George Jah**

"Happy New Year!" everyone at the Grasshopper yells, and starts kissing. I go to kiss Karen first, you know, because she's my girlfriend and all, but somehow I end up locking lips with Jugsy Carmichael instead. Then Jugsy pretty much sticks her tongue in my ear and says, "I'm looking forward to being your roomie," all sultry. The whole time she's breathing in my ear I can see Karen just glaring at me. Fortunately, Funnybear comes over and gives Karen a big smooch on her cheek, and almost knocks her over because he's drunk and can barely stand upright. By the time Karen's got him off her, Jugsy's gone off to guzzle her champagne and kiss the rest of the room.

I plant one on Karen and good but I can tell that I'm already sleeping on the doghouse sofa because she doesn't slip me any tongue. Instead I lick her teeth. "What did Jugsy say to you?" she says, through her clenched teeth.

"She said you're hot, and that I was very lucky to be your boyfriend, but if you ever decide to walk on the wild side give her a call," I say.

"Yeah, right," Karen says, "That bitch has got her eye on you."

She walks off in a huff and she must be really mad because she actually goes in the Grasshopper restroom. Most people take one look at it and decide to go outside and pee in the bushes.

Roomie? Since when is Jugsy moving in? I try to dope things out while I drink my champagne, and look cool. I watch Funnybear stumble on stage for his solo act. He drags out two video projectors, Alexander's keyboard, a garbage bag, and a microphone from the back of the stage. Alexander comes up and stands next to me. He says, "Jah, you're a braver man than I am. There's no way I would have let Funnybear borrow those video projectors you have on loan from the university over break."

"What?" I say.

"He asked to use my keyboard but I said no until he told me you were letting him use the video projectors. I figure one of those things alone are worth twice as much as my keyboard so I said if you have that much faith in him, then I should have at least half that much faith in him," Alexander says, opening a beer.

"Those are the video projectors from my room?" I say, "The ones Professor O'Please had to write a special letter for me to borrow? The ones that will cost me a semester's tuition to replace if anything happens to them?"

"Yes," Alexander says, "Didn't you say he could use them?"

I yell "Funnybear!" just as the lights go out and a horrendous sheet of white noise thunders from the stage. Then on the side of the stage a porn movie starts playing, and a couple having doggy style sex covers the entire wall. Then on the back of the stage another porn movie starts playing, a man giving another man a blow job. The guy's dick is about six feet tall when they show a close-up.

And that's not the only dickhead on stage. Funnybear starts screaming into the microphone as crazy drum rhythms start coming from Alexander's keyboard. On the back of the stage, the gay guys are replaced by a pair of lesbians fooling around with what looks like a double dong dildo and then going down on one another. On the side wall now, a man is all trussed up in black leather restraints and a woman is whipping him. With all this ass as background, Funnybear is thrashing around the stage, sounding like he's speaking in tongues. He grabs the garbage bag and whips it open at the audience and all this plasticware comes flying out, spoons, forks, knives, I think I even see a spork or two. Then Funnybear dives into the audience and starts rolling around on the plasticware, yelling into the microphone about mortgage rates and bunnies. He gets up and runs to the back of the stage and comes back with a stuffed animal, a big red rabbit. He must have bought it at a thrift store somewhere or had it since childhood because it looks old. He hugs the rabbit as the white noise and the beats stop playing. Then the videos start projecting cartoons with funny animals cavorting and soon both the side wall and the back wall both say "The End" on them.

After I'm sure Funnybear's set is over I go on stage to yell at him, but the owner of the Grasshopper, Zand, is already up there shaking Funnybear's hand. "That was pretty cool, man, I loved the movies," Zand says, "A good way to start the new year."

Zand looks down at the floor, "Hey! Where'd all this plasticware come from?"

## Verse--Alexander Depot

My new year's resolution was to stop masturbating. That resolution lasted all of about two hours and twenty minutes into the new year, or not long after the time Jugsy Carmichael officially became our new roommate. I'm lying alone in the dark in my bed with the covers off. I've got a nice afterglow it alone but that fades quickly because it's cold without the covers on. I fumble for some kleenex on the side of the bed and wipe up. I feel a little guilty, how can I face her in the morning? Should I confess? She might be flattered. No, if someone told me they were self-loving while thinking about me, I'd find that a little creepy. Best to keep it between me and my id. I pull my bottoms and the covers back up, and roll over into sleep.

We're playing at the Grasshopper. I'm behind my keyboard and we're playing some really cool new song. I don't think I've ever even heard it before but I know how to play it just fine. Cheering erupts, the place must be packed, but when I look up at the audience, there's something weird, it's all men and they're hooting and hollering at us like they're at a strip club. Horny, gross, desperate, sad, pathetic men. That stinks! I didn't want to be in a band only other men like. I was in a prog rock band in high school that was like that, and I quit just for that reason. I'd rather have all women like us than all men, or, best of all, a good mix of people.

I look at Abel, he's singing up front so I just see the back of him. He's wearing a mini-skirt and high heels. We must be playing in drag again. Then the song's over and he turns around. Abel's a woman! He's got bobbed hair and breasts! He's actually kind of cute. What the hell's going on? Did he have a sex change and not tell me? I look at Jah. He's dressed in drag too and wearing his see-through dress again. Boy, his fake breasts look more real this time. He looks over at me and blows a kiss. He's a woman too! I look at Bear and she's got long hair and winks at me! I look down at myself. I'm wearing a dress and I've got those, yes. I hike my dress up, and stick my hand down my panties to check for sure. Nope, nothing protruding, it's gone! I can put my finger in though. Ooh, it's warm and wet and squishy down there, that feels good!

Wait! What am I doing? I look out at the audience. They're all looking at me. None of them look me in the eye though.



They're all staring at my . . . quit that! I look over at the guys, uh, gals in the band.

I wake up. I have to pee and I have a morning missile.

### **Chorus--George Jah**

Funnybear pulled a slick one last night. He pretended that he was too drunk to understand me when I was yelling at him about using the video projectors without asking me for permission. He just held onto his stuffed rabbit and microphone and babbled incoherently until finally Jugsy walked him home. So Alexander had to carry his keyboard home through the snow and I had to go get my car to order to lug the video projectors back to the house, the entire time having to listen to Karen bitch about Jugsy, "When we lived in the dorms, she used to yadda yadda yadda . . ."

I knock on Funnybear's door. He doesn't answer. I knock louder. Ted comes out of his room, looking half-asleep in his superhero underoos, "What's the matter?"

"Oh, Funnybear's pretending to be asleep so I can't yell at him about the video projectors," I say.

"Well, just wait, he'll have to come out sometime," Ted says.

Karen comes out of my room, wearing one of my t-shirts, which goes down to almost her knees. She hugs me and leans her head on my arm, "Nothing happened to them, just let it go," she says.

Alexander comes out of his room. He's fully dressed already and looks at us weird. Then he shakes his head, sighs with relief and says, "Anyone want to go to breakfast?"

"I'll go," Jugsy says, she's just come up the stairs, she's wearing a bathrobe and judging from the way it clings to her, I'd guess nothing else.

Karen's nails dig into my arm and she squeezes me tighter. I almost yelp outloud.

"Can somebody show me how to use the shower? I'm having trouble with the faucets," Jugsy tee-hees.

Alexander and Ted almost knock each other out and fall down the stairs rushing to her aid. "Oh, you guys are so nice," Jugsy says, and follows them down, "I'm so glad Funnybear told me you needed a new roommate."

I think Karen actually growls and bares her teeth. She pounds on Funnybear's door. "Time for breakfast!" she yells.

No answer.

"Well, are you just going to let him get away with stealing your video projectors like that? What kind of man are you?" she sobs and then runs in my room and slams the door.

Great! That's another one I owe you, Funny.

### **Verse--Funnybear**

Funnybear would think that George would be happy that Funnybear got the house a new roommate but nooooo. And Funnybear would think that George would be happy that Funnybear tested out the video projectors for him before his video shoot but nooooo. Instead, Funnybear gets yelled at by George for both things.

Funnybear doesn't blame George though. It's all Adam and Eve's fault.

If they had just left everything alone, everyone would be living in paradise right now. Instead, Funnybear has to deal with ingratitude and narkiness, not to mention pride, greed, envy, anger, lust, gluttony, and sloth, although Funnybear really doesn't mind dealing with lust, gluttony, and sloth. How'd those make the list anyway? Funnybear would edit the seven deadly sins down to four or maybe replace the ones Funnybear likes with some better, um, worse ones like stupidity, selfishness, and cockblocking (i.e., when a dude's just friends with a chick and really has no chance with her but thinks he still has a shot so he doesn't let any other guy get close to her; e.g., both Uncle Teddy and Alexander when they're around Jugsy).

Get out of the way boys as it's clear to everyone but you that Funnybear's the guy she wants. Who can blame her? Funnybear's hot.

But back to Adam and Eve. Humanity wouldn't have any of these fucking problems if they had just been content to play with the animals and roll around in the grass and share the plants and have a good old time in Eden. How hard was that? Funnybear has no problem with questioning authority but if life was that sweet and the boss had said just don't do this one thing, Funnybear's pretty sure that Funnybear just wouldn't do the one fucking thing.

And that serpent, some people blame him for everything, but it's time to face facts and stop playing the victim. Get over it. Oh, don't get Funnybear wrong, the serpent's a creep and Funnybear would be happy to stomp a mudhole in his skinny gut, but Funnybear would have trusted the guy who set Funnybear up with getting laid and sniffing flowers over some animal who just slithers around in the dirt all day. What was Eve thinking?

**She apparently wasn't. That dumb broad!**

**Of course, in addition to later on being the mother of everybody, that Eve was probably one hot piece of ass back then so once she fucked up, Funnybear like Adam would have been tempted to go along with her and eat the fruit just to keep her happy and putting out. But unlike Adam, Funnybear would have used his brain to do some critical thinking. Hey! Funnybear's got plenty more ribs. There's more where she came from! Send Funnybear a postcard from the desert, bimbo! In the meaneternity, Funnybear will be petting the bunnies in utopia and waiting for Funnybear's new Godordered bride.**

**But no, Adam has to fuck up too and ruin everything for everybody. Nice going, dimbulb! As a result, now Funnybear is broke, has the sniffles, and it's cold outside.**

### **Chorus--George Jah**

There's an old rock and roll legend about Marianne Faithfull and The Rolling Stones. According to the legend, when they all got busted for drugs this one time in England, the cops broke in and found them having an orgy and Marianne Faithfull was lying on a bearskin rug with a candy bar in her cunt and Mick Jagger and Keith Richards were taking turns nibbling on it.

The story's so ridiculous I don't think it actually could be true and everyone involved in it has denied it throughout the years but I'm fascinated by it anyway so it's the basis of my next art video. I'm going to use one video projector to show candy commercials on one wall of my bedroom and the other video projector to show a film of men out hunting a bear on another wall of my bedroom. Then I'm going to play some sixties rock and roll music in the background and have Karen sitting naked on my bed reading some glossy magazines and eating a candy bar.

At first she said she wouldn't do it, but then I said, "O.k., I'll ask Jugsy then."

She agreed real quick after that, even though she said it was blackmail and manipulation and typical of a man. I said the free market economy's blackmail and manipulation too and none of the rich liberal feminists I was serving coffee to when I worked at the Coffee Catheter seemed to have a problem with that as long as they were the ones doing the manipulating. Gee, George if you don't work this shitty job and kiss my ass while you jerk my java, then you'll starve. I think you're being exploited. I'll send out a press release



denouncing this horrid free enterprise coercion. Here's several hundred dollars for your rent and tuition bill to tide you over until we can get you in therapy to teach you how to empower yourself and make better lifestyle free will choices when we alter society so it's not oppressive anymore.

Shit, most of them wouldn't even tip.

Anyway, I told Karen it's not pornography, it's just art. Okay, it might be erotica a little bit depending on how one feels about a naked woman eating a candy bar but I don't even think that fetish even has a name if it exists or else there'd be a website about it already.

I should know; I've looked.

I tell her the video shoot is more about how I'm interested in exploring the language of advertising, media images, primitive desires, rumors and legends, food commodification, sexual objectification, and how they all relate to one another.

Karen says that makes no sense. She says, "What does a bear hunt has to do with a candy bar and a naked woman?"

I say, "Bare and bear, get it? And primitive man hunting for food and then modern man just buying a candy bar out of a vending machine. And how the media uses images of women as sexual objects to sell products to men. And how pop music is commodified too and people aren't really buying the object, say a record, after a certain point but the image that's associated with it."

This stops her in her tracks, so I feel safe enough to add, "Plus, I think it's just going to look really cool."

Then a few minutes later, while I'm still working on the lighting and setting up the video camera, she says, "I'm cold! How long is this going to take?"

I say, "I bet Jugsy wouldn't complain this much. How hard is it to eat a candy bar and flip through a magazine?"

She says, "You try it then."

I say, "O.k., I will, as soon as I get the camera set up."

I finish so I strip and show Karen how to run the camera. We start the video projectors and record player and start shooting. I figure I'll just show her what to do when she's on camera so I smear the chocolate from the candy bar on my chest and face as I eat it and flip through the magazine. It must get her hot because she comes over and we start making out on the bed, and one thing leads to another until finally at the height of the passion, for me anyway, she says, "George, promise me one thing!"

"Anything, anything!" I say.  
"Kick Jugsy out of the house," she coos.  
And she accused me of being manipulative.

### **Middle Eight--Jugsy Carmichael**

It's the middle of the cold night,  
Knock on the window, turn on light.  
It's Frankie The Face, my old flame,  
I raise the pane, "Frankie, you came?"  
He hands me roses, red in the white,  
"Won't you come out with me tonight?"  
He says, "I can't live without you."  
"Come home." I say, "Of course, my boo!"

### **Verse--Theodorable**

There's been a big blizzard and it's a proverbial winter wonderland outside so Alexander and I go out for some adverbial winter wackiness. We quickly build a snowman in the front yard and then go recklessly sledriding on our garbage can lids at the little hill down the block. Afterwards we leisurely take a walk and have a talk.

"So do you believe George when he says that his new year's resolution is helping people so that's why he bought Frankie The Face those flowers and brought him over here to woo Jugsy back and consequently out of the house?" I say, watching my breath rise in the air.

"Not for a second," Alexander says, tromping across the snow,  
"Karen had to have put him up to it"

"I used to like her hanging around because I thought she'd bring some of her friends over with her, but it seems like she's on a mission to drive all other women from George's vicinity, and consequently our vicinity too," I say, scooping up a snowball.

"Did you know she set up Jess with Professor O'Please?" Alexander says, knocking an icicle off a tree we were passing.

"No!" I say, throwing the snow ball at a stop sign and missing.

"Yes," Alexander says, climbing a mound of snow left from a snow plow, "Jess told me Karen just called her up out of the blue and told her O'Please needed a date for Jah's art show and it would really help Jah if O'Please was happy at it. So she started dating the old buzzard for Jah's sake and then found that she liked him."

"That makes me sick," I say, sticking my tongue out near a flagpole.

"Careful!" Alexander says, making a snow angel in someone's yard,

"That's dangerous! In any case, we should be happy Karen's not jealous of us at least. She seems to like the band. We just have to help her with her female problems."

I put my tongue back in my mouth before it touches and freezes to the flagpole and say, "She doesn't seem to mind Antigone though."

"That's because Antigone would hit on Karen before she would hit on Jah," Alexander says, fixing his earmuffs on his head, "Actually, come to think of it, she has hit on Karen."

"But Antigone acts like a teenybopper about that band we're going to be playing with at our next show," I say, spitting in the air trying to see if it'll crackle before it hits the ground like in that Jack London story "To Build A Fire," "What's their name, The Sofa?"

"The So. That's because she is a teenybopper. Even though she hangs out with us, she's still only in high school remember," Alexander says, shivering.

"Do Re Mi The So Lot Of Dough!" I sing, while pulling up my gloves, "What do you think about that? A band from twenty years ago reforming to play with us. Isn't that weird?"

"It's kind of cool. Think about how many bands there have been. I mean the old bands we hear about and that get played on the radio are probably only 1% or less of all the music that was out there at the time," Alexander says, buttoning up his coat tighter.

"Yeah, where do all the old bands go to anyway?" I say, pulling my skimask down.

"Where do all the old people go? They grow up and eventually die. A band's no different, it's just a group of people," Alexander says, stopping to tie the laces on his boot, "I bet if you ask around you'll find that a lot of older people you know were in bands at one time or another. Who knows, maybe your barber was a rock and roller at one time."

"Actually he was," I say, taking off my gloves and blowing on my hands, "He told me last time I went in for a haircut that he used to play saxophone and guitar in sixties garage bands."

"You're kidding!" Alexander says, tying the laces on the other boot, "See if he wants to come play some sax with us."

"I'm not kidding but I am cold," I say, jumping up and down, "I did ask him but he said those days are gone. He doesn't even own a sax anymore. He said he still liked playing but music was mostly a social thing for him and once all he and all his friends got real jobs and got married and had kids he said he knew it was time to move on. He said in order to sustain it he needed the support of a community and he didn't have that anymore. He



also said he and his friends didn't make any money at doing it either."

"The most hallowed tradition of the garage band continues, eh?"

Alexander says, trying to catch a snowflake on his tongue, "C'mon, let's go in and have some hot chocolate."

"Nah, I'll go in but I don't want any hot chocolate," I say, sliding on an ice patch, "Did you see all the acne George got? I asked him what happened and he said he thinks he ate too many candy bars while filming his new video, you know the one with Karen that he won't let us see for some reason."

"Please don't tell me any more," Alexander says, humming "As Tears Go By" and wiping the snow off his boots as he gets to our door, "I have an image forming in my mind of how I think he ate them that's disturbing enough already."

### **Chorus--George Jah**

The So rock for a bunch of fucking old guys. They're all balding and have beer bellies and don't look like much but their power pop music's a lot of fun. Everybody at the Grasshopper is dancing. They play first because they brought their kids and wives and stuff and so they need to be done at a reasonable hour. The Grasshopper and reasonable isn't something that goes together too well but they seem to be having a good time anyway. I guess the drummer's on medication now so he's not insane anymore as long as he remembers to take his pills.

Maybe we should get Funnybear on those too.

A couple of the guys from The So even stick around to see us which is a long wait because inbetween them and us Yellow No. 5, The Village Idiot, Armstrong's Secret Nine, and Macropus Rufus all play. We're the headliner, or in Zand's words, "the draw," so we get to play last. Whoopee! I'm half asleep as we take the stage but I guess we put on a good show, at least that's what The So guys say.

In the postgig quiet as Zand is cleaning up and we're packing up and the last few audience members are winding down their conversations and finishing their last drinks, I ask The So guys if they want to play with us again, and the one guitarist, the guy who sings the most, Bob I think, says, "Probably not. This was kind of a one shot deal. We pretty much just did it for Antigone. She's the first person in years who really dug our record and let us know she did so. It's nice to be appreciated, you know. It's not like we ever made any money at this so that's the payoff. It was a lot of fun though. We

liked you guys too. You remind me a little of Big Dipper."

He points with the hand holding a cigarette and a beer at the other guitarist, who I think is named Jim, "Our other band, Mellow Fellow, will play with you sometime though. It might have to be a different venue. This place might not like the soft rock stuff too much. Regardless, it's a cool scene you've got going here. It's good the kids have something to do in this town."

"How many records did you sell?" I say, putting my bass in the case.

"A lot actually, they're almost all gone. My wife did the hard sell since she says she needs the closet space," the guy whose name I think is Bob says, "Did you get one yet?"

"Oh, yeah," I say, pulling it out from my bag, "Your bass player gave me one earlier. I still have to get you guys to sign it though. Your rhythm section already did."

"Oh, yeah, it was good playing with those guys again," he says, "Hey Slim, you got a pen? Let's sign George's record."

Slim not Jim digs out a pen and they autograph it. Slim not Jim says, "Do you guys still get groupies?"

"Huh?" I say, as they hand me back the record.

"Because we never do anymore. I just figured it was because we were old," Slim not Jim says, finishing his beer and looking around.

"Maybe we don't give off the musk anymore. At least not me, I'm happily married," the guy whose name I think is Bob says, "He's divorced though. He's still out looking for tail!"

"No, it's not that," Slim not Jim says, throwing his bottle in Zand's recycle pile, which is in its usual postshow eminent collapse shape, "I was just wondering in general because we used to get a lot of groupies back in the day, but we were playing in the time before everyone knew about Aids. I don't mean to be personal but I just figured you're a young fellow in a band and you'd know and that way I'd be able to tell how much of an effect Aids had on the rock and roll lifestyle."

"I don't know. I'm sexually frustrated myself," I say, "I just eat candy bars."

"Hey!" the guy whose name I think is Bob says, "Did you ever hear about that time Marianne Faithfull and The Rolling Stones got busted for drugs . . ."

**Coda--George Jah**

Somebody asks me what my band sounds like and I tell them, "The Pornographic Flabbergasted Emus sound like The Pornographic Flabbergasted Emus sound like The Pornographic Flabbergasted Emus . . ."

I add, "And maybe a little bit like Big Dipper, but I've never heard any of their records so I couldn't tell you for sure."

Maybe we should put a record out so that twenty years from now some high school kid can find it and we can play a reunion gig too. That'd be cool.

I hope no one ever finds that video I made with Karen though. I'll have to think of another project. Professor O'Please would have a heart attack if he saw it.

That, and Karen said she'd castrate me if I ever showed it to anyone.

Wait, there's that rumor about Rod Stewart sucking off his whole band and having to get his stomach pumped. Maybe I can build something around that. Let's see, I'll get a bicycle pump and I'll need somebody to suck a milkshake through a straw . . .



## Yips!

### 1) The End Of Fiction by Victor Thorn

This is a big book, a nearly 600 page novel, like one of those tomes Stephen King (or Phillip Prince as he's known in this book) pumps out. This isn't your usual slim indie lit novel. I lived with this thing for days and it's some crazy stuff about the relationship between a repressed homosexual and his crazycool Bukowskiesque pal who's trying to get published. Very engaging. I particularly liked the parody of the mainstream book publishing industry. (Sisyphus Press, P.O. Box 10495, State College, PA 16805-0495 [www.victorthorn.com](http://www.victorthorn.com) [sisyphus1285@cs.com](mailto:sisyphus1285@cs.com) \$16 postpaid in the USA).

### 2) El Mucho Grande! Wrestler For Hire

Strangely, there's enough Mexican wrestler comics out now that they constitute their own genre. So far, all the ones I've read have been quite fun and Chris Yambar's El Mucho Grande continues the streak. I mean how can you not love a comic where the hero squares off against the ghost of Richard Nixon! Make Mine Mucho! (Airwave Comics, PO Box 746, Bethel, CT 06801 [cymbar@hotmail.com](mailto:cymbar@hotmail.com) \$6 postpaid in the USA?)

### 3) The Boondocks by Aaron McGruder

There's little motivation to read the funnies in the paper anymore. Thankfully, McGruder's comic strip about a black kid who's moved to the white suburbs is one of the reasons I still take a gander occasionally. Best in book form though so you don't get marred by the tripe that usually surrounds it. Great political commentary. (Check your local corporate newspaper or visit [www.boondocks.net](http://www.boondocks.net))

### 4) Idlewild

This Scottish band rocks! And they're touring the U.S. this spring! Yippie! And their latest album is finally getting released here! Double yippie!!

### 5) The Essential Leonard Cohen

2 discs of vintage Cohen world weary folk rock. Good stuff!

**6) Mustard**

This condiment is quite tasty, from the proletariat yellow types to the spicier fancier brands. Yum Yum! Try a mustard spinach cheese sandwich today!

**7) Special April Fools Yip--The Bush Administration**

Boy, am I glad that the government's in such capable hands. I have such confidence in our elected and appointed officials in the executive branch that I didn't even buy any extra duct tape.

**8) 2004 Election**

Please please please, can we get people with brains and hearts in the White House and Congress? Kucinich (Prez), Dean, Nader, Jesse Ventura, Kurt Angle, Oprah, Springer, Al Gore's Clone, Bob Socha's cats, anybody, I don't care, damn near anybody has to be better than the current morons trying to run the country (and the world) into the ground. Even if you're an anarchist, please register to vote and do so. If it doesn't matter, than do it anyway, what's it to you? The rest of us who do think it matters are going to need all the help we can get with all the ratfucking (i.e., dirty electoral tricks, specialized in by Republicans since at least Nixon) that'll be going on, and we'll buy you a cup of coffee afterwards.

**9) Extreme Championship Wrestling: The Best Of The Dudley Boyz DVD**

Best DVD ever. Pretty strong words. But when you're inbred and you wear tie-dye, you don't have much to lose, you don't have much to look forward to, you don't have much to live for. But I'll tell you what, D-Von! Get the table and let's put somebody through it and all's right with the world!

**10) Spring**

My favorite season, spring has sprung! Birds singing, flowers blooming, women in skirts and shorts . . . not even paying taxes can dampen my mood. Well, not for long anyway . . .

**Yips! Are Good Things!**

## Zine Yips!

### 1) The Big Takeover #51

(249 Eldridge Street No. 14, New York, NY 10002-1345

[www.bigtakeover.com](http://www.bigtakeover.com) \$5 in the USA postpaid)

O.k., this probably doesn't qualify as a zine anymore since it has a circulation in the thousands and an issue is bigger than the phonebooks of some cities, but it started as one and I'm still fond of it. It covers "music with heart" via long interviews and thoughtful reviews. Their taste is great. This issue features stuff on Paul Westerberg, Idlewild, Pere Ubu, Mission Of Burma, Wire, and many more of my favorites.

### 2) Azmacourt #8

(Marc Parker, 1012 Townhouse Cir., Norman, OK 73069

[www.zinethug.com](http://www.zinethug.com) \$5 for "a nice assortment" of titles postpaid in the USA)

This zine cracks me up--surreal autobiographical comics, hilarious perzine rants, writing pisstake letters to medical corporations, and a picture of prairie dogs kissing! Even the boring parts of Marc's life make for interesting reading. What must it be like to live them?

### 3) Verbicide #6

(Scissor Press, PO Box 206512, New Haven, CT 06520

[www.scissorpress.com](http://www.scissorpress.com) \$4 postpaid in the USA)

This looks like your standard punk zine and in many ways it is, but what makes it stand out from the rest is its interest in literature. This issue features fiction, poetry, essays, interviews with literate punk rockers Henry Rollins and Lee Ranaldo, and even a script for a play. To paraphrase old Dr. Samuel Johnson, It's not that it's done well so much as just that it's done at all that amazes.

### 4) Cometbus #49

(BBT, P.O. Box 4279, Berkeley, CA 94704 [www.cometbus.com](http://www.cometbus.com) \$3 postpaid in the USA)

This is one of the contributor issues where a whole bunch of people besides Aaron contribute articles. These are cool but



never as good as the Aaron solo issues. This one is no exception and to boot Aaron seems to be in a really bad mood judging from his contributions. Still, it's worth a read. The usual poignant punk shenanigans.

5) **Good Little Girls #5 and #6**

(PO Box 10252, Pittsburgh, PA 15232 goodlittlegirl@angelfire.com \$3 postpaid in the USA?)

Nice to see a new Pittsburgh feminist zine picking up where Pawholes left off in the mid-1990s. Good distaff stuff. This editorial cooperative keeps things hopping with interesting subjects and good writing, plus that rarity anywhere, a good sense of humor.

6) **Wheelchair Riot #5, Keys, 513: A BMX Bike Story, Greintology, and Cleavageland**

(John Greiner, 373 Lear #52, Avon Lake, OH 44012 jgritty@hotmail.com \$2 each postpaid in the USA?)

Cool mini-comics from Cleveland. The prolific John has a veritable stable of zines and comics, some fantasy, some autobio, some indescribable.

7) **Donut**

(Roger Whiting, 17604 N. 39th Ave., Glendale, AZ 85308-3104 www.geocities.com/rbwmail \$3 postpaid in the USA?)

Just when I thought no zine could be weirder than Resident Occupant, along comes Donut, wherein Roger documents his travels to 77 out of the 140 Dunkin' Donuts in Rhode Island with a picture of the donut he purchased at each one. It only takes a few minutes to flip through, but the concept, the freaking concept baby! will boggle your mind for hours! I love it!

8) **The Whirligig #6**

(Frank J. Marcopolos, 4809 Avenue N #117, Brooklyn, NY 11234-3711 www.thewhirligig.com \$3 postpaid in the USA)

Cool litzine featuring some neoBukowski fiction and poetry from my favorite Cat's Impetuous Books photographer Cait Collins. Nice production job too! And 72 pages for \$3! Amazing for a photocopied zine!

**9) Christmas Party by King Wencas**

(ULA, PO Box 42077, Philadelphia, PA 19101

[www.literaryrevolution.com](http://www.literaryrevolution.com) \$3 postpaid in the USA)

Good mini-novel by the Underground Literary Alliance's Karl Wencas about a soulless corporate office's attempt to drown out the day and the year with beer and cheer. Lots of arm wrestling in this "zeen novel" and it's printed on Christmas colors--red and green paper!

**10) Zine Guide #6**

(Brent Ritzel, POB 5467, Evanston, IL 60204

[zineguide@yahoo.com](mailto:zineguide@yahoo.com) \$8 postpaid in the USA)

Brent sounds testy in the opening page. I hope he's not getting burned out like Gunderloy, Friedman, and Holland but if he is I'd understand. To put together this great resource for zines, a phonebook of zine publishers really, it must take a massive amount of work!

**Zine Yips! Are Good Zines!**

**Oh My Gosh, It's A Letter!**

*Hey there Wred!*

*Thanks so much for the latest edition of PFE. It arrived a few days ago and of course I opened it right away and read it straight through! Recently I quit my old job and got a new one that only requires me to work two (!) days a week, so I have plenty of time for laying around and reading. My favorite parts were when George had to stumble home, and meet Jessica's parents, wearing the see-through dress and also when Sweeter ran off with the Yodelers.*

*Thanks again,*

*Malinda*

Ah, shucks! I love my readers! But be careful Malinda, George Jah says that working 20 hours a day twice a week only seems like a good idea--he's tried it! He spent the other 5 days a week sleeping and his art show was a disaster! He's not sure about that reading stuff either, but it all sounds good to me!

## Merch Table

The next issue (#5) should be out by the end of June, but email me first to make sure. I enjoy trading with other zine publishers so it's usually a done deal but please email or write first to make sure. Otherwise it's \$3 postpaid. Additional copies of this issue, #3, and #2 are \$3 each postpaid as well. Issue #1 (32 pages) is available for \$2 postpaid. Get any 2 back issues for \$5 postpaid.



**Yeast?--Dick Bennett 7" Ep.** This puppy's on clear vinyl and has four songs on it: "Johnson Wants To Rant," "Generic Smokes," "Big Daddy Pane," and "Warm Fuzz." \$2 postpaid. There's less than 100 of these left and I'm hoping to sell them out before the tenth anniversary in 2004 so I can repress it and drag it around for

another decade.



**Yeast?/Porpoise 3 Split 7".** This one was sold out but then the P3 threw out about 50 of them so I dug them out of the trash and brought it back "into print." I only have 5 left but don't worry Mike Dee can still hook you up after I'm tapped out. There's three songs from each band and the record labels are cute. \$2 postpaid.

Pick up both Yeast? singles for \$3 postpaid! Wow! What a bargain! It must be 1994-1995 all over again!

Well-hidden cash, money orders/checks to "Fred Wright," or Paypal please. Prices are for those residing in the USA. If you're residing elsewhere, please write first and we'll figure something out.

Wred Fright

P.O. Box 770332

Lakewood, OH 44107

USA

wredfright@yahoo.com



**THIS IS A FICTION. THIS IS A SERIALIZED NOVEL. THIS IS THE FOURTH ISSUE. THIS IS ABOUT A GARAGE ROCK BAND CALLED THE PORNOGRAPHIC FLABBERGASTED EMUS. THIS IS QUITE SILLY. THIS IS \$3 POSTPAID.**

**"A GOOD BAND IS HARD TO FIND"/"EXAMINATION EXTERMINATION" IS THE NINTH CHAPTER AND CONCERNS THE BAND HAVING TO JUGGLE BOTH FINALS AND A BIG GIG. BASSIST GEORGE JAH EXPLOITS THE WORKING CLASS, DRUMMER FUNNYBEAR ACTUALLY STUDIES, GUITARIST THEODORABLE LEARNS WHY PEACE RALLIES SUCK, AND KEYBOARDIST ALEXANDER DEPOT HIDES HIS UNDERWEAR FROM THE COMMUNISTS.**

**"HURRY UP AND WAIT"/"I WAS A TEENAGE ANARCHIST" IS THE TENTH CHAPTER AND CONCERNS THE BAND'S HOLIDAY BREAK. ALEXANDER DEPOT LEARNS YOU CAN'T GO HOME AGAIN, THEODORABLE FINDS THE RAPTURE IN A BOOKSTORE, FUNNYBEAR WORKS ON HIS SOLO PROJECT, AND GEORGE JAH FINDS THAT MIDNIGHT MASS IS A GAS, GAS, GAS!**

**"JANUARY JEZEBEL"/"DO RE MI THE SO" IS THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER AND CONCERNS THE UPROAR THE BAND'S NEW SEXY FEMALE HOUSEMATE CAUSES AND THE REUNION OF AN OLD PUNK BAND. FUNNYBEAR BLAMES ADAM & EVE, THEODORABLE PLAYS IN THE SNOW, ALEXANDER DEPOT HAS GENDERBENDER DREAMS, AND GEORGE JAH EATS A LOT OF CANDY BARS.**

**THIS SHOULD BE PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER. THIS IS NOT REALLY PORNOGRAPHIC BUT DOES CONTAIN LANGUAGE SUCH AS THE WORD "KNIPPLE" WHICH MAY OFFEND SOME READERS. THIS IS COPYWRITTEN BY THE AUTHOR EXCEPT FOR THE COVER IMAGE WHICH IS COURTESY OF MICHAEL DEE.**