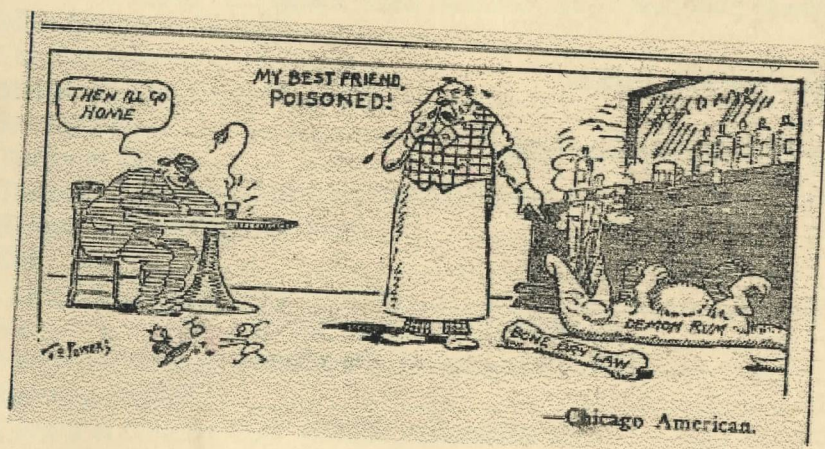


# BARROOM TRANSCRIPTS

featuring  
**Tony Straub**



CRAPHOUSE PRESS

\$9.95

# **BARROOM TRANSCRIPTS**

## **featuring Tony Straub**

**By Rich Stewart and Tony Straub**

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Printed in the United States of America

Library of Congress Card Number: 00-191952

ISBN 0-9704312-0-1 (paperback)

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**Rich Stewart, Editor**

**Tony Straub, Associate Editor**

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**BARROOM TRANSCRIPTS**  
**COMPILED BY: RICH STEWART**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Introduction .....	1
Barroom Quotes .....	2
The Catholics and the Protestants .....	3
Mike .....	4
The Hangman's Noose .....	6
The Handgun .....	7
The Boot .....	8
Police Seek Killers of City Store Clerk .....	10
Incident at Duke and Liberty .....	11
Takin' Care of Business .....	13
Tony's Revenge .....	14
The Bow and Arrow .....	17
The Conspiracy .....	18
State of the Mind .....	20
Indian Cigarettes .....	22
Ten Foot Flames .....	24
The Youngest Terrorist in the World .....	25
Something about England .....	30
More Shit about England .....	32
The Can Man .....	35
Shooting at 200 Block West Vine .....	36
Suicide City .....	41
The \$400 Meal .....	42
The \$400 Ambulance Ride and The Bankrobber .....	44
Religion and the Cigarette Patch .....	46
Tex .....	47
Grant Alley at Four in the Morning .....	50
Ma and Pa .....	51
Newspaper Account of the McFly Shooting .....	53
Shooting at McFly's .....	54
Coming in from the Cold .....	55
Toasted to the Max .....	57
Tony Beats the Bartender .....	58
Tony Eats the Bartender .....	59
Tony Defeats the Bartender (The Blue Room) .....	60
"I'm Gonna Kill Ya, Tony!" (Part 1).....	61

"I'm Gonna Kill Ya, Tony!" (Part 2) .....	63
The Ring .....	64
Slashed Bicycle Tires .....	69
Four Moves in One Year (Part 1) .....	71
Four Moves (Part 2) .....	72
Four Moves (Part 3) .....	78
Four Moves (Part 4) .....	81
Four Moves (Part 5) .....	83
Four Moves (Part 6) .....	85
Luckee's Elbow (Elbo after '74) Room .....	86
Colorful Tavern May Become Focus of Film .....	88
Some Crap about Tree Stumps .....	89
Murder to Satisfy Jealousy .....	91
Ass-Kickin' on Filbert Street .....	93
If all the Chinese Would Jump Up and Down in Unison, They Could Create a Tidal Wave so Devastating, Every Person in America Would Drown .....	95
They Ripped up the Bathroom .....	98
The Other Side of the DMZ .....	100
They Ain't Goin' Nowhere .....	102
Another Mike Story .....	103
Married in Sneakers and a T-Shirt .....	105
The Check's in the Mail .....	106
Skinhead Encounter .....	109
Escape from Reality .....	110
Icing on the Cake .....	111
The 900 Number .....	112
Unfriendly Taxi .....	114
The Spy House .....	116
Butcher-Knife-Totin' Tammy .....	121
1970, August Tenth .....	123
Three DUI's .....	129
Tightening Up in Houston .....	133
The Original Lancaster Bar Fly, 1975 .....	137
One Last Chapter on 'The English Girl' .....	139
A Guy Like Me; I Don't Give a Fuck .....	140
Joy at O'Halloran's Irish Pub .....	141
Spy House Epilogue .....	148
Radio, Radio .....	149
I Known Her Two Days .....	151
The Ghosty Mystery Story .....	152



The Eyes are the Mirror of the Soul .....	153
The Disappearing TV .....	154
Uzi's Version .....	155
Ready, Steady, Go .....	158
I Was Wearin' My Mother's Clothes and She Didn't Like It .....	160
You! You! You! .....	164
Tony Stubs his Toe .....	166
Voices Tell Me to Kill People .....	167
Confrontation With Ismail .....	169
Faces Lookin' in the Window at Me .....	170
Lightning Strikes (Not Once but Twice) .....	171
You're Runnin' Your Own Program, Tony; You Can Leave Today! .....	173
MODE Interview .....	178
The \$15,000 Settlement .....	180
My Pillow was a Piece of Plywood .....	185
Urban Renewal .....	187
The Leader of the Pack .....	189
They Make Violins Out of These Trees .....	191
Lancaster's Desperado .....	192
Three-Star Review .....	194
Sidekick Magazine Review .....	196

## INTRODUCTION

Barroom Transcripts is a collection of short stories that were recorded during 1999 and 2000 at various 'impairment centers' in or around Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Included are autobiographical transcripts of the notorious Tony Straub as well as conversational transcripts of others, though some people's names have been protected.

It's a journey along the edge, with one foot out and one foot in the grave most of the time.

—Rich Stewart



## **'BARROOM TRANSCRIPTS' QUOTES**

*'For a quart of Ale is a dish for a king.'*

**Shakespeare — A Winter's Tale**

*'Me and two other guys were sittin' there drinkin' a quart of beer on a Sunday mornin'.'*

**Tony**

*'I just wanna go to jail so I can get some action.'*

**Joy**

*'I know you're playin' a game. And the game — to play the game — a white man plays the game. To play a game.'*

**Buggy**

*'Tony, let's you and me commit suicide today.'*

**Cathy**

*'DON'T YOU TURN THAT FUCKIN' THING DOWN!'*

**Old Joe Blow Crackhead**

*'You have to swirl life in your mouth like a good lager beer.'*

**BC**

*'I was barred there for about seven years.'*

**Jack Groovy**

*'Everybody's got their own sense of nonsense.'*

**JS**

*'We were lookin' for the whoremaster and we found him.'*

**Girl 1**

*'Yeah, the TV got stolen ... ripped off.'*

**Uzi**

*'That was a bathroom ya dial 911 for.'*

**Dancin' Dan**

## THE CATHOLICS AND THE PROTESTANTS

Hi, this is Tony Straub. Let me tell you a little story. I was twelve years old at the time. The Catholics and the Protestants hated each other in Tremont, Pennsylvania; Schuylkill County. Well, I thought I would do something about this. Every year during Fourth of Ju-ly they had a carnival downtown, on the main street. So, Tony Straub thought that he could scare the Catholics.

Overlooking the town was three mountains.

A couple of days before the carnival I went to top of the highest one. I built me a cross about ten feet tall and wrapped it in white rags. On the day of the carnival I waited. When it got dark, I went up to the mountain, set it up and lit the cross.

I scared every Catholic in town. They were all scared, like black people are scared of crosses and they all knew I did it, but they couldn't prove it. They all got nervous and scared. I guess they thought the devil was comin' or somethin', that they better head out of town or that the Protestants were after 'em. One of the two.

I used to go with a Catholic girl. I wasn't allowed in her home because I was a Protestant. I was about 16 or 17 then. My mother would've left her in my home, but she wouldn't have felt comfortable.

All that's changed since then.



## MIKE

Mike, 38 years old, is dyin'. He's livin' down south right now at a place where they take care of people with cancer. He got it from eatin' out of garbage cans. He was a garbage rat. He's got garbage cancer and the bacteria from the garbage is eatin' holes all through his insides. There's nothing the doctor's can do for him, or so they say. He'd rather eat out of garbage cans than eat in a goddam gorgeous dining room at the Hilton Hotel. So he's payin' for it now.

One time him and me were at 'The Center' and they had plenty of food on the table to eat and there's Mike, rootin' through the garbage. He picked something out of the garbage and heated it up in the microwave. If he had a nice dinner in front of him, he'd go for the garbage can first.

I remember him and me were campin' out about ten years ago, in the woods by the railroad tracks between Harrisburg Pike and Armstrong. I used to call it 'Destitute Village'. That was our campsite. So, we're walkin' into town along Fruitville Pike. We got into Stumpf Baseball Field. A lot of homeless used to sleep there, too. I went for water. The first thing Mike did was go for the garbage cans. He got some pancakes.

He says, "Tony, you want some?"

I said, "I don't think so, I'd rather have water this mornin'." And there he went. He just ate it up like he was in a Hilton Hotel.

Another time we took this girl out to the campsite. Mike just got his welfare check and I was broke. We got a couple bottles of whiskey, a case of beer and some chicken. There, Mike built a fire and started cookin' up some chicken.

I looked around and said to Mike, "This girl's drinkin' all our booze and eatin' our food."

Then I go, "Mike, come 'ere a minute. This girl's got to take her clothes off before she eats any more of our goddam food! You take her in the back of the tent there, in the woods and you tell her what's goin' on."

So he did. Then he went back there with her. He came out.

"She said, OK, Tony."

I said, "OK."

I was just kiddin' around. I wouldn't get in her pants to save my life. Them pants was nasty. So we ate and drank. Now Mike had a habit of leavin' beer cans layin' around.

I said, "You pick-up those goddam beer cans or there's gonna be trouble." Tony has a litter-free campsite.

He said, "OK, Tony, I don't want no trouble." So we ate and drank some more. We were all drunk.

Then we all got in the tent. She was naked. I was on one side of the tent with all my clothes on. Mike was naked. He was eatin' that thing out. He was havin' a garbage time. She had a garbage trap, too. She pulled them pants down and you could smell that garbage comin' out of there. But he was just lappin' it up like a lap dog.

So he's tryin' to stick his thing in there, right? Well, I'm watching this, layin' back and relaxin' and Mike couldn't get his thing up. But he's poundin' away on it. And poundin' and poundin'. And me and her laughin' and laughin'. And laughin'.

We were laughin' our guts out, 'cause Mike couldn't get it up. He tried to get it in her, but he drank too much whiskey. So he got angry with *me*. Then he took a swing at me 'cause he was angry with his own self, because *he* couldn't get it up. So I got out of the tent. I slept outside that night. Everything was fine the next morning. He just couldn't get it up. That's his problem, not mine. No way I'd throw my thing in that garbage hole.

But that was Mike.

I ended up takin' care of the beer cans, too.



## THE HANGMAN'S NOOSE

I got it with me, in my bag, just in case of an emergency. In case somebody attacks me or tries to destroy me, I can get in my bag real quick. It's got eight rings on it. I didn't have enough rope to make the thirteen. But it works. It will work. Most guys strangle their old ladies with extension cords. I got the real thing.

I heard that twice over the news in the last couple of days, where guys kill their old ladies with extension cords. They don't know how to make a hangman's noose and make it right.

I used to camp out at the County Park. I been campin' there for the last fifteen years. I used to hang about three around my campsite and one on my tent. I used to hang my Air Force flag on the front of it, to show everybody I was in the military and nobody ever bothered my tent at all. I used to have a lot of nice stuff in it.

My tent's like a little apartment. It's real neat and tidy. I hung all my food on a rope high off the ground, so the animals couldn't get to it. I got all my personal possession's in there. I'd leave for four or five hours at a time, maybe eight hours at a time or maybe a whole day. But I always come back and everything's there. I use the hangman's noose as a warning.

Stay out of my camp!

Do not terrorize my home. This is my home right now. For the present time. Do not fuck it up! Or your ass is mine.

## THE HANDGUN

If you're ever gonna pull a handgun on somebody, you better use it. This is not a game. The game's over, when you pull something out. You better use it. The game's over if you don't use it. Somebody's gonna get killed. And that's the name of the game when you pull something out like that.

He might have one on him, too. Me or you. That's the name of the game right there. It's dangerous. Someone pulled a handgun on me one time. I spit in his eyeballs and took it away from him.

See, if your standing really close, like, maybe three, four feet away from each other and he pulls it on you, just load your gums up and your tongue and hit him straight in the eyeballs. He will blink. Immediately. His eyes are closed. The handgun's yours. It only takes a second, 'cause it shatters your eyes for a second or two. You will close 'em. And then you're in darkness. And you got the upper hand.

That's the best way I know to take a handgun from somebody.



## THE BOOT

I was drinkin' that day. I came home. I was livin' at my brother's: Larry Straub. Asshole. God rest his soul. In hell. I came home and we had a verbal argument, as normal. I'd been livin' there for four years and never had a key to the joint. So, I decided to go to sleep that night and he was in the living room.

It was the living room, my bedroom, the bathroom on both sides, his bedroom and the kitchen. He was in a wheel chair but he could walk. So he wheeled himself into my bedroom about a half hour after I was sleepin' and grabbed one of my cowboy boots. It had an inch and a half heel on it. Hard as steel. And he hit me in the face with it. Twice. He startled me. Big time. I took the boot away from him and proceeded to beat his head in. With the boot. Now, it's my turn. Then the blood started comin' and I got very scared.

So, I run his ass into the goddam bathroom and put his head down on the sink and poured cold water on it. We had to call 911. He went to the emergency room, by ambulance and I went back outside and had a quart of beer. Then the cops came around. They didn't say anything about the fight but they poured my beer out. I don't know why they did that, I was on my own property.

Then I tried to get in the door of the house while my brother was at the hospital, but the door was locked. So I go around the back and I smashed out the window. I reached in and I cut *myself*, on the wrist and *I* started bleedin'. So I got in the house and turned around and looked, here comes the cops.

I said, "HO-LY FUCK! What the fuck do they want now?" I'm bleedin' pretty bad, holdin' my right arm at the wrist.

I run the fuck out the front door up the street to the armory up there on Queen Street and go down one of those stairwells. I sit down there holdin' my arm and *I'm bleedin'*. All they did was follow the blood trail. They seen me sittin' down there. So they took me to the hospital. They had to suture me up. So in the meantime they charged me with a felony: aggravated assault. So I got out on my own recognizance.

But while I was up there at that hospital, some skinny-assed-cop started givin' me a hard time. I told that skinny-assed-motherfucker to shut his fuckin' mouth. That little son-of-a-bitch was makin' me angry. The girl that was with him, the woman cop, she was laughin'. She was laughin' her ass off, when I called him a skinny-assed-motherfucker. She

laughed like hell. He *was* a skinny-little-assed-motherfucker, too.

So I didn't have no home then. I had no place to go. I was locked out. All my possessions were in that home. So I slept out on the concrete for about three or four days. Finally I tapped on the door and asked Larry to hand me my campin' equipment. And he threw 'em out the door, all over the place. He was pretty angry with me. I don't know why he was angry with me, he started the fuckin' shit. So I headed for the woods that summer. I enjoy the woods. This happened in June. September rolled around and I got an apartment on Lime Street. More on that later.

## **POLICE SEEK KILLERS OF CITY STORE CLERK**

[The following appeared in the Lancaster Intelligencer Journal, 5/24/96.]

City police were actively seeking several suspects early this morning in the day-earlier slaying of the manager of a convenience store during an apparent holdup.

Teams of detectives and officers were organizing to pursue specific suspects, according to police sources. The action came after a day of intensive police effort to solve the latest - and deadliest - in a continuing string of store robberies in the city.

No information on the suspects was available and no one was reported in police custody at press time.

A witness reported seeing four youths running from the store immediately after the shooting.

XXXXXXX X. XXXXX, 38, of Ephrata, was found dead by city police about 12:30 a.m. Thursday after they responded to a report of a shooting in the area of the Uni-Mart convenience store at North Duke and Liberty streets, police said.

XXXXX, who was working the night shift after the scheduled clerk had called in sick, was found behind the counter of the small store. He was bleeding profusely from his wound, said a witness who had heard a shot and went into the store to investigate.

Tony Straub, a neighborhood resident, said, "I was leaving the bar (Q's Duke on Liberty Bar and Grill, 1002 N. Duke St.) when I heard this shot. I saw four kids running out of the store. They were all wearing gray hooded sweatshirts."

"They ran out the front door, went around the corner of the store, and through an alley between the buildings."

He crossed the street and entered the store to check on the clerk. Seeing XXXXX he quickly returned to the bar to call police.

"I found him lying on the floor with blood all over the place. He was flat on his back. I saw a trail of blood. He must have been at the counter and tried to get to the phone."

Police are investigating the case as a criminal homicide and have not yet determined that robbery was the motive. ...

## INCIDENT AT DUKE AND LIBERTY

I was singin' Karaoke that night. A Wednesday night. Three bars had Karaoke on Wednesday nights back then and I built up a pretty good following. My first show was at the Library in the Brunswick Hotel. But there wasn't too much goin' on, so I went down to the Catalina. The place was packed. I sang Dylan; 'Knockin' on Heaven's Door', like I usually did, but it was strange because of what happened later.

I met this blond there and we went to Q's bar. I always stay there 'til about one o'clock in the mornin', but at 12:15 I was tired and she was up singin'. I wanted to go home with her, but I was too tired. So I walked out of the bar that night at 12:15.

At 12:16 I heard a shot and I turned my head. And here, these four monkeys, with hoods on, young teenagers -- I could tell by the way they ran they were young -- ran out the door.

I said to the guy livin' in the room above Q's bar, "Did you hear that shot, guy?"

He says, "Yeah."

I said, "I better check on the store clerk there, 'XXXX', see what's goin' on."

Somethin' ain't right here. So I walked across the street. I was a little scared, because I didn't know if somebody else was in that store yet.

I walked in and I started seein' blood and then I seen him. He had a telephone in his hand, they shot him in his jugular vein and there was blood everywhere. I only looked at him that one second. I knew he was dead. I busted out of there and went over to Q's bar and told the barmaid, Roxanne to dial 911, that this guy's been shot over there.

Dave, the owner called the cops and about two minutes later they were all there and I told 'em what happened. If they would've listened to me that night they would've caught 'em that same night. But they had to check my story out first. Procedure. Cop procedure.

Then the next day a local TV station did an interview, but I told 'em they'd have to 'black me out', 'cause I was afraid they'd come after me.

I said to the TV crew, "I'm broke, it'd be nice if you guys brought me a beer."

But they said they couldn't do that. Cheap motherfuckers. That was the Fox network, Fox, channel 43 in York. They wanted to photograph me outside of my home with the house number on it, too.

I said, "I don't think so. They ain't even caught 'em yet and you guys



wanna put my face all over TV? They'll be comin' after me."

I'd have to sit in my house with a handgun on my belt. But I guess they figured they'd have another story. So we went inside the house and did a 'blackout'. But everybody in town knew who I was anyway, by my voice and my hairline. Shit! Everyone knew me anyway. But them guys didn't know me. They lived in my neighborhood, too.

Seven months later they went to trial. We got the shooter first, on a Friday, January tenth. The thirteenth, Monday, the other three. The shooter got life imprisonment without parole and the other three got life imprisonment with possible parole. These kids are just fifteen, sixteen, seventeen years old.

That was an ordeal for me, too, because two weeks after that happened -- I was in Vietnam and when I seen that blood on XXXX, I got a flashback from Vietnam and I had to go to the hospital for two weeks. I was at the VA and all that shit went out of my head then. It's my safe haven up there.

So they paid for what they did. Now they're little girls, up at the penitentiary, gettin' fucked up their assholes every day of the week. They are gettin' reamed. I bet ya they got 'em dressed like women. They were waitin' for 'em. That's the truth, too. I talked to a guy. They're waitin' for them young punks to come up there. Young pussy.

Yeah, them guys are sorry they pulled that trigger. Now their trigger's bein' pulled. That's life: What goes around, comes around, guy.

## TAKIN' CARE OF BUSINESS

I get fucked up so many times. I never get caught by the law. The law don't bother me. I get wasted sometimes and I always make it home. I don't cause — *try* to cause any problems. But problems arise around me all the time. And I take care of it. I take care of business. Nobody gets hurt. I tell it like it is. Like Dancin' Dan that one night. He was terrorizin' me.

He says, "Oh, are you gonna try to sing Karaoke tonight?"

Well that disturbed me, right? He did it about four times. "Are you gonna try to sing tonight?"

I said, "Why don't you get up there and sing, guy? Let's see how good you are."

And then one night I started wearin' my Indian stuff. I had a necklace I made with a feather on it. I walked into the bar and he made a comment about what I was wearin'.

And I didn't like it, so I said, "Don't you worry about what I'm wearin' guy. It's none of your business. Don't make any comments on me and by the way, the next time I see ya, I'm gonna fuck ya up! Is that all right with you?"

So the barmaid said, "Tony, you gotta leave."

I said to him, "You got me thrown out of this place and I didn't even get a beer yet." I walked away and turned around and said, "Dan, the next time I see you, I'm gonna fuck ya up!"

So I go down to McFly's the next night and he's in there. I see him when I walk in the door. He's rubbin' his hands. He's gettin' ready for me. 'Cause he's thinkin' I'm gonna fuck him up. I ain't gonna fuck him up. I'm tryin' to fuck his head up. His mind. Not fist wise. He had it all wrong. He was rubbin' his hands. He didn't say a fuckin' thing the rest of the night. He hadn't said a thing to me since then. That's fine with me. That's the end of Dan.

## TONY'S REVENGE

I was down in Texas back in the seventies. I worked two and a half years in Houston and I decided to come back home. I hung out for a while. I was a little worried about my kids. I had five, four children then and I hadn't seen 'em in all that time, so I came back to Pennsylvania.

I knew I was gonna get picked up for back support. She was on the welfare system, so she always had money. I knew I was gonna get caught, so I went to my father's home in Tremont.

I ended up roamin' around my dad's house. My other brother was livin' with my dad and I went into his room while he was at work. I get to shufflin' around this closet and I reach my hand up, there was a little space up at the door jamb and I found a huge pile of money up there.

"WHOOAAAA! And I'm broke," I said to myself. "This is my dad's."

So I raked it all out and threw it on the bed counted ten thousand dollars!

I said, "My brother mus' be stealin' from my old man: his paychecks and social security checks."

He's stealin' from our dad. So I put it all back. About two or three days I was gonna go to Florida 'cause I knew the cops were gonna be after me.

I thought, "If I take any of that money, even though my brother's stealin' from our dad, he'll probably say I took it and I would never be allowed in the home no more."

They wouldn't arrest me. But I would never be allowed to go back. So I didn't take anything.

Well, the cops came after me about two, three days later and I went to Lancaster County Prison for non-support. Got out about three months later. I went to my other brother Larry, the asshole that died here about two years ago, the brother from 'The Boot' chapter. I hate to say that, but he was an asshole, plus a stone fuckin' faggot.

So I'm lookin' for work. I go back up to my father's house. I wanted to buy his car. He had an old car in the garage, mint condition. It was real nice, a nice Chevy. Stick-shift. It had a good eight-cylinder motor in it. It was a good car. But my other brother lived with him and he said I couldn't have the car. Well, OK.

In the meantime I'm trippin' around the bars. I used to smoke marijuana back then. Runnin' around with my nephew's son. I was the youngest in my family. My nephew's son, Rod was about seventeen and

he smoked. I hung around with him because he smoked. If my nephew would've found out about that, he would have come after me.

My sister owned a bar in the town called Klinger's Café. Her name was Helen, bless her soul. She was my oldest sister.

So that night me and Rod went up to the movie house. I got beer for all the kids. I was in my thirties back then and we went up to the movie house where everybody hung out. We were all smoked up, then this guy came up. He had real long hair.

I said, "HEY!, YOU LOOK LIKE A MOTHERFUCKIN' FAGGOT TO ME GUY!"

Well the guy got a little disturbed about that, I found out later. In the meantime, he kills the old lady next door. That night. She was the widow of a doctor. He stuck a broomstick up her ass, sodomized her, totally destroyed her.

The boy told his mother what happened and she went over and cleaned the whole place up, scrubbed everything, 'cause she was the old lady's care taker and she had a key to the place. So when the police got there everything was sparkled up with a woman layin' dead.

Well, the first guy they came after was me because this asshole said that he saw me runnin' downtown with blood all over my hands at two o'clock in the mornin'.

Make a long story short; four years later he confesses to another doctor in Fremont. He was a faggot, too. I was livin' in Marietta then. I got remarried. My wife's name was Tina. The cops were at my house one day. I was at work. My wife called me and told me the District Attorney and the Reading cops were there, bla, bla, bla.

I come home and I said, "I need a lawyer."

They said, "You don't need a lawyer, he confessed."

I said, "OK."

Now they're on *my* side. These motherfuckers were hauntin' me for four years. They were watchin' me for four years, constantly. They used to make me nervous. My name was all over that fuckin' paper. Then it went to trial.

The stupid Reading cops did not get the guy to sign a confession. So he had a Philadelphia lawyer. He got off. Scott, free. I went to the trial, testified and everything.

But he's got to live with it for the rest off his life. He tried to get back to Tremont but nobody would -- I don't know what happened to the kid.

But in the meantime, while these four years were goin' on, I decided to



go to Tremont to scare the little boy. 'Cause he upset my life *real* bad. *Real* bad. So I took a bus up to Tremont. I go up to my old man's house, got my brother's shotgun. Then I went down to this guy's house and blew all the windows out of the top story house. Then I walked up to my dad's house, went the fuck to sleep and the next day I went home.

I wanted to scare him a little bit. Let him know Tony Straub was around. I didn't want to hurt anybody. I just blew the fuckin' windows out. I never got caught or anything. He upset my life, because they were tryin' to burn me for that, because of him.

They told me that he was a psychotic and what psychotics feel in their mind, is when they do something, they don't blame themselves. They put it on someone else and that it goes out of their mind then. Like they never done anything. That's how the police explained it to me. So that's another story.

I don't tell that to too many people, 'cause those were bad times for me. I remember my father said to me, "Tony, you didn't do anything did ya?"

I said, "Dad, you know me better than that. I wouldn't hurt nobody in this town. I came up here to buy your car. That's the only reason I came up here, not to kill somebody."

This interrupted my whole family up there too, relations with my brothers, their kids. I can remember my niece Judy was at work and they were harassin' her about me.

I was accused of this, it got around about this motherfucker sayin' I'm runnin' through Tremont with blood all over my fuckin' hands and clothes, ya know? Psychotic.

She had to quit her fuckin' job, they harassed her so much. She had to leave her own job to get away from them people. But I had a lot of people that knew me when I was growin' up there. You know I used to get in shenanigans, but murder, that's a different category.

When I was in Vietnam I had a license to kill over there, that was me or them. That's a different story. War's a different story. Society -- that's -- you go by the rules and live by the rules. If you don't, you know where you're goin'. Clink. Clink, clink. Not in my campsite.

## THE BOW AND ARROW

**Tony:** We had *all* kinds of booze and me and this girl were up at my apartment for three days and we drank all this shit, runnin' around the house nude and shit. I got my bow and arrow out, pulled it off the wall. I had an aquarium there, right? I pulled that motherfucker back, a sixty-five pounder. Ssssst. POOF! I'm pickin' up glass for two fuckin' weeks!

**JS:** Why did you do that?

**T:** I don't know, I get nuts like that on whiskey.

**J:** In your house?

**T:** In my fuckin' house!

**J:** Where did the water go?

**T:** It was a terrarium. I got fake snakes in it, spiders, a turtle --

**J:** Nothing's living.

**T:** Nothing's living.

**J:** It's just like a --

**T:** Everybody walks in my apartment -- Is that alive in there? Noooo. Everybody gets scared, the snake; I got him wrapped around with his head stickin' up. One fuckin' time I pulled that bow and arrow back, drunk, and shot it at the window.

**RS:** At the window?

**T:** Yeah, at one of them windows. I hit the screen. I didn't pull it back hard. Arrowheads. Razorpoints.

## THE CONSPIRACY

[BC walks in. Earlier in the week Tony runs into him at the public library.]

**Tony:** You know what I was tellin' you when I seen you at the library?

**BC:** Yeah you were doin' some research.

**T:** I got all that research shit.

**B:** You got a helluva lot of information there.

**T:** He knows all that shit.

**B:** That's the place to get it.

**T:** He already knows all that shit. But I want to know about it. What were you lookin' for at the library the other day?

**B:** Oh yeah, shit, what was I lookin' for? It was some construction information. B.O.C.A. is pretty much a nationwide building code and I wanted to look up some code information but they didn't have it.

**RS:** You know about construction too, Tony? Right? You're gonna sabotage the job site aren't ya?

**B:** My job site?

**R:** No, where Tony was workin'.

**T:** They underpaid me a hundred dollars. So I'm gonna take a hundred out of their ass.

**B:** They underpaid ya a hundred dollars?

**R:** What are ya gonna do?

**T:** Fill his fuckin' electrical pipes up with marbles and concrete and rocks.

**B:** How about a little acid?

**JS:** What do you mean marbles?

**T:** Yeah, I got a whole bunch of marbles at home. When they run that fish tape in there? Oh yeah, somebody fucked up, they messed up that coupling. They didn't get it quite tight enough. There's a fuckin' rock in there, a little tiny rock. It'll fuck up the fish-tape in a heartbeat and they gotta tear the fuckin' wall apart and redo it again. And then you need a man to fix that.

**B:** That'll cost 'em more than a hundred.

**T:** Yeah, just one pipe. All you got to do is slip one marble down the pipe.

**R:** What other acts of sabotage?

**T:** I'd like to burn his trailer down with lighter fluid -- sssst. The whole trailer goes up. All the blueprints gone. A disaster area. That'd put 'em back three months. A credit card to get in the door, right? Shhhht. Go in his trailer. Put all the blueprints in one spot. Spread it out with lighter fluid. Shut the job down for a couple of days. I don't know if I want to do that shit. I might get in trouble.

**R:** Yeah, that's arson man. And conspiracy for talkin' about.

**T:** They caught that guy burnin' all those churches down. They finally caught 'em. All over the Eastern Coast -- remember that guy in the log cabin? In the mountains? He was settin' all those bombs off. The Unabomber. The professor. If it wasn't for his family, he wouldn't of got caught.



## STATE OF THE MIND

**Tony:** I spend about, if I have the time, I spend two, three hours at 'The Center' during the day. I help prepare the meals and help everybody out. The meals only cost 75¢ for 'em. I get it for nothin' because I do the dishes. Christ, I'm workin' there two, three hours.

**BC:** That's a good thing to do.

**T:** Tryin' to help somebody out.

**B:** Sure, help anybody out when you can.

**T:** Yeah, it always comes back on you.

**B:** Well often, when you help somebody out, you have to think who are you really helpin', them or you? I mean, it makes you feel good, so you're helpin' yourself. Yeah.

**T:** And it's good for the soul.

**B:** It is.

**T:** One time I was readin' that if you're depressed, it picks you right up out of it. Out of a depression.

**B:** I mean, if your feelin' a little down in the dumps go help somebody.

**T:** Everybody gets depressed.

**B:** Sure they do. It's just like the weather.

You got cloudy days and you got sunny days.

**T:** You find that low, then you got to pick yourself up.

**B:** Yeah.

**T:** If you stay on that low, then you're gonna wind up in the hospital, eventually. 'Cause nobody can tolerate you and you can't function. Depression will put you in a function that you can't do for yourself anymore.

**B:** Yeah, ya know like people who are manic-depressive.

**T:** Manic-depressives are very sharp people. Ernest Hemingway was a manic-depressive and Winston Churchill was a manic depressive. Brilliant men. And there's movie stars. What manic-depressive is, is it comes from genes in your family, mother or father. And it just floats into your system and you'll have it the rest of your life. Most people take lithium. And it's a mood swing, it keeps you at an even level. So you can live your life as normal. Manic: When people get manic they get racin' thoughts in their

mind. They get a fuckin' thousand racin' thoughts, at one time and you can't handle it. So you got to go to the hospital and do somethin' for it. 'Cause you can't function that way and that's the way it is. Depression: You go in a depression and all you want to do is sleep, 24 hours a day. What kind of life is that? To sleep 24 hours a day. Get up to eat and sleep. Get up -- if you're in the hospital, you get up, eat, take care of your self, take a bath and go back to sleep. Now what kind of life is that. It ain't no life. They have anti-depressants that'll pull you out of that shit, too.

## INDIAN CIGARETTES

**Tony:** What the hell are you smokin' J?

**RS:** He smokes those Indian cigarettes. (American Spirit).

**TS:** Ohhh, they're good. Real good. They're expensive, too. Real expensive.

**JS:** They're no more expensive than any other cigarettes.

**T:** Not now. Before they were. They were like three dollars. I used to buy 'em up in Lebanon. I used to go to that shoppin' center when I was at the VA Hospital.

**J:** What branch of the service were you in?

**T:** Marines and Air Force.

**J:** Marines?

**T:** And Air Force

**J:** How were you in the Marines *and* the Air Force?

**T:** I went in the Marines first, when I was 17. I was still in high school. I graduated. And then I went on active duty, Paris Island.

**J:** What year was that?

**T:** 1955.

**J:** '75?

**T:** '55 and I did a three-year tour. I went to Ft. Benning and I went to jump school, survival school --

[Someone walks past the table.]

-- I'll tell you some stories about that motherfucker. He fucked up a lot of young girls, big time. Then I did two hitches in the Air Force. Eleven years. I was a helicopter pilot in Vietnam. I went to three years of college. Why I get into all this shit, I don't know. All I want to do is be happy. And I got to deal with all these fuckin' dodos in my life. You know it's nice when you can deal with street people, your mind can deal with street people. You're real top shelf when you can deal with that. You can be in any kind of category any time you want to. You got to be real fuckin' sharp for all that shit. I used to work at 'The Studios' and everybody thought I owned the fuckin' place.

**R:** Is that right?

**T:** Yeah, they come up to me and say, "Tony, you own this place?" No.

It's my cousin, the one with the glasses on. All the time. Every fuckin' party that was up there, "Tony, you own this place? Looks like you belong to this place." Yeah, everybody thought I owned the fuckin' place. That's nice. A pastor come up to me one night. Came from Connecticut. Standin' there he says, "You look like you belong to this place." I said, "I sure do." "You own it?" I said, "No, my cousin." And then we started talkin' about Pastor 'So and So' and Pastor 'So and So'. He knew all these guys. He has a church up in Connecticut. I wish I could remember his name. J, can I have one of these cigarettes?

**R:** Take a couple of 'em Tony, he don't care. Just take the whole damn pack while you're at it.

**T:** Might as well.

**R:** You know what that is Tony? That's an Indian cigarette.

**T:** Yeah. Natural tobacco. They're good, too.

**R:** Yeah, and good for ya!



## TEN FOOT FLAMES

**Tony:** I was livin' in Columbia, South Carolina. I had about four children in the house. And my next door neighbor moved out. A year before I put tar down to hold the linoleum down in their kitchen. So they moved out and they said I could have the linoleum and I could put it in my house. But I had to clean the tar off of it. Now I did a stupid thing, I went over to the gas station with an open container and got two gallons or a gallon of gasoline. And I poured it all around there to soak it up. But there was a gas water heater in there and me and my old lady were down there scrubbin'. All of a sudden it went, PUOFF! Flames shot ten feet high in the air. She ran into the fuckin' closet, right? She was burnt to the max. She was on fire. Her whole fuckin' arm was on fire. So I'm thinkin' about my wife, right? But before that, the kids were at the door. I said, "We got to work and we don't want you to bother us 'til we clean this up." So I locked the door. The apartment was empty. All of a sudden we got ten foot flames in the house, right? In the kitchen. So I'm thinkin' about my wife. I go to open the door. But the door's locked. And I couldn't get the door open, so I busted out a window to get her outside --

**THE ENGLISH GIRL:** That's an awful story, Tony!

**T:** Shut up a minute! I rolled her on the grass. She had third degree burns on her ankles. She couldn't walk for about two fuckin' months. That was a sad situation. She could've died in that corner.

**TEG:** So did you roll her to put it out?

**T:** I rolled her on the grass. I burnt the grass up. In the meantime the cops were there and I told 'em about the open container, ya know? She was down for about two weeks. Couldn't walk. Third degree burns on her ankles.

## THE YOUNGEST TERRORIST IN THE WORLD

**Tony:** That fuckin' little monster!

**The English Girl:** Tony!

**T:** You know the little bastard.

**TEG:** Donna's child.

**T:** Donna's devil.

**TEG:** No, no, no, no, no, no.

**T:** I used to go with his mother and one time we were over at her house and that fuckin' boy -- I was tryin' to use the bathroom and he was in there antagonizin' me. I couldn't use the bathroom. Remember that time he fucked your computer up.

**TEG:** Well it was my husbands, not mine.

**T:** But he fucked it up.

**TEG:** I don't care.

**T:** You don't care but he fucked it up. He fucked her computer up. Then she got mad at me 'cause I had to restrain him. I said, "Fuck y'all, I'm goin' home. I don't need this bullshit with this kid all day long, terrorizin' me." All I wanna do is drink a beer at your house and get in your pants. That was my goal for the day.

**TEG:** I heard that the little boy threw a screwdriver at his mum. She ducked and it went straight through the window. Smashed the window. Yeah, he's naughty.

**T:** While he was in that home there with all them alcoholics, his mom was the only girl. About ten alcoholics in there. And one time the cops came over there and one says, "Huh? We're at the 'OK Corral'." And they arrested everybody.

**RS:** For what?

**T:** They all had warrants out for 'em.

**TEG:** No.

**T:** Yes. They took everybody to jail.

**TEG:** You're kidding.

**T:** They took everybody out of that house. Ten of 'em.

**TEG:** Ten people?

**T:** Ten people.

**TEG:** Oh no, no, no, no

**T:** Yes.

**R:** What kind of a house is this?

**T:** A little box. A cardboard box.

**TEG:** Where?

**T:** Don't question me.

**R:** What else did the kid do?

**T:** Well the little monster's runnin' around there one day --

**TEG:** It's not his fault.

**T:** We're not talkin' about that. Keep your lips sealed darlin' before I put fuckin' super glue on 'em. Then they will be tight darlin'.

**TEG:** Promise, promises.

**T:** So they were all around there drunk. A couple cases of beer, everybody all fucked up. The kid decided to get -- the stuff you spray with bugs --

**R:** Raid.

**T:** Raid. He got the Raid -- this one guy was sittin' there drunk, right? Ssssst. Right in his eyeballs. And that hurt. All that alcohol. I said, "You better flush them eyeballs or you're gonna go blind." He did that to me, too. He put -- what's that stuff you put on your throat when it's sore? Chloriseptic? Sittin' at someone's house one night, right? This stoned, alcoholic, skinny-assed-motherfucker's house. He looked like death warmed over. I drank some of his alcohol sittin' there watchin' TV. And all of a sudden I got choriseptic in my eyes. He sprayed it in 'em. I blinked my eyes --

**TEG:** He doesn't know any better.

**T:** Aw, they hurt like hell.

**TEG:** I'm not surprised.

**T:** WILL YOU KEEP YOUR FUCKIN' MOUTH SHUT? "*I'm not surprised.*" So I went to the kitchen and flushed my eyes at least ten, fifteen times before my eyes came back. It hurt. So his mother and I go up to our bedroom --

**TEG:** [Begins to interrupt.]

**T:** I told you to use super glue. We were up in the bedroom and started watchin' TV up there. He gets under my bed, right? Wait 'til ya hear this story -- he gets my cigarette lighter fluid under the bed. We didn't have

much storage space there, so I put a lot of shit under the bed. He's under there and he gets my can of lighter fluid. Me and her made a toast. He poured lighter fluid in our drinks, I found out later. We drank it, right? Then me and her both passed out. All that lighter fluid was down my fuckin' stomach. I couldn't eat for two days after this. It hurt the whole lining of my stomach.

**TEG:** Look, you saved money on food.

**T:** Later I woke up. I said, "Fuck this, I'm gettin' out of here." I went over to Q's bar, right? And I sang that night, right? With lighter fluid taste in my mouth. I couldn't even flush it out for about two days. I had a taste on my lips for two days, and on my tongue, and my stomach. I couldn't eat for two days. That little motherfucker was tryin' to kill us. He seen that on TV, where they put lighter fluid -- wha' do ya call it? Firepower. Ya put it in your drink. He seen that on TV. He could've killed us. He could of burned the linings on our stomachs out. We could've died. So one night I was sleepin' with his mother. We already banged it out, right? Well, we went to sleep, right? He gets up. Goes to the kitchen and gets a frying pan. I wake up. After he hits me in the face with the frying pan. He seen that on TV, too. The Three Stooges. Cartoons. And this little motherfucker burned me on my hand with a cigarette. I still got a mark. I was so fuckin' drunk I didn't feel it. I wake up the next mornin'. It hurt. He put a third degree burn on my fuckin' hand. I'm sleepin' and he's doin' this to my hand. That guy -- you put a cigarette in an ashtray, you put a cigarette down and that guy's got it in his mouth. You lay a beer down -- this guy's only five years old -- lay a cigarette down, lay a beer down, he's got it in his mouth, he's already drunk.

**TEG:** Terminator.

**T:** Yeah, the Terminator. I was gonna send him over to fuckin' -- what's that country? Iraq? Saddam Hussein? He could be a terrorist. The youngest terrorist in the world.

**TEG:** He doesn't mix with children his age. He doesn't know any better.

**T:** I used to go by that house to see if he was alright. I like the kid. I liked him. He's bright. That's what I liked about him. He's so bright, for his age. He needed those Ritalin pills to calm him down. The boy could not help his situation. I was comin' from -- a funny situation I run into, all the time. I'm walkin' from Neffsville to Lancaster and come across a crossroad and a guy stopped. I banged on his window and I said, "Goin' in town?" He says, "Yeah, I'll give ya a ride." And guess what? He was



a counselor for Attention Deficit Disorder kids. He was tellin' me about all these children. He said he had one in his office one day and a kid stabbed him with a pencil or a pen, right in the eyes. That's a woman that drank alcohol when they're pregnant and did drugs. You don't have to do drugs --

**TEG:** [Tries to interrupt again.]

**T:** Be quiet. They don't have to do drugs but alcohol in the fetus? For a nine month period?

**TEG:** May I talk please?

**T:** Not yet. And then it -- the child comes out that way. It's not his fault. It's a fuckin' shame. A real fuckin' shame.

**TEG:** May I talk now? OK? Thank you. Now basically my opinion is: When you have a child like this, he doesn't know any better. His mum drinks. We all drink. And not that I know of -- she doesn't take drugs.

**T:** No, she don't take drugs.

**TEG:** But, drink is a drug.

**T:** Biggest drug in the world. What are *you* talkin' about? I love you. Don't wanna be like you, though. I wanna be like you, but I don't wanna be.

**TEG:** Thank you.

**T:** I love you.

**TEG:** Thank you. And the thing is --

**T:** She got nice lips, don't she?

**TEG:** Tony, I'm talking, if you don't mind. So what I think is, he doesn't know any better. His mum as I've been told recently, goes out on the evening and takes the child with her and he doesn't know any better than drinking and smoking. He doesn't know anything else. What's a child supposed to do?

**T:** Drink and smoke.

**TEG:** He doesn't know. If you teach him something else a child is nothing, then it's lamange (?) before you put the information in.

**R:** Then it's what?

**TEG:** Lamange. (?)

**R:** What's that?

**TEG:** Lamange. (?) Nothing.

**T:** That called lamange? (?)

**TEG:** Lamange. (?)

**T:** Yeah, I never heard that before.

**R:** It's a French word.

**TEG:** It's not, it's English.

**T:** Sounds French.

**R:** Sounds French.

**T:** Sounds French to me, bitch. I knew I'd get ya goin' on that one honey. You ain't a pistol. You're a fuckin' witch, from England. You rolled over here on your fuckin' broom. You didn't ride on a 747. I'm only kiddin' ya, darlin'.

**TEG:** I know, I know.

## SOMETHING ABOUT ENGLAND

**Tony:** I've known this girl for years.

**RS:** Is that right?

**T:** Yeah, four or five years.

**The English Girl:** You can tell.

**T:** She's always callin' me on the phone.

**TEG:** He has a similar number to my husband's work number.

**T:** She wakes me up at eight o'clock in the fuckin' mornin'.

**TEG:** After I make coffee for my husband in the morning.

**T:** You get his ass out the door, then you're callin' me.

**TEG:** No, no, no, it's not like that.

**T:** Then you want me to fly over to your house and get into trouble.

**TEG:** It's not my fault, you have a similar number to my hubby's work.

**T:** Hubby. I wish you'd stop that.

**TEG:** It's the truth.

**T:** Hubby, hubby, hubby. The little fuckin' squirt. He ain't even that high. What is he, about three foot tall? Shit, that little fuckin' punk from Vietnam. Gooky. Ya married a gooky. Ya married a gooky for a certain reason, too. To supply your life. Ya want a ticket. *"I want to be an American citizen. I'm gonna marry a fuckin' gook."* And now she's got all these problems.

**TEG:** Americans want me to become American and I said no. Because basically what I'm thinking is: I'm legal here, right?, in America. So the thing is, if I become an American citizen, then I have to have an American passport, obviously. Then I'm only allowed in England, my own country for six months? I don't think so. That country belongs to me.

**T:** You and Princess Diana. Yeah. Wha' do ya think about that whore? Huh? Wha' do ya think about that fuckin' whore-bitch? Huh? Got an alcohol driver down the fuckin' highway, stoned to the max, pro'bly he's on crack, too. Kills her butt. Where's she comin' from? Miss Charity? See her in a nursing home. See her with the poor. What's her pussy thinkin' about? Can't answer that one can she? Now prince Charles got a new 'hubby' out of the closet, who he's been --

**TEG:** You're winding me up. Please Tony, don't do this, I'm hurt.

**T:** So he's been messin' with her the last thirty years.

**TEG:** Her name is Camilla Parker Bowles.

**T:** And he had that gorgeous, gorgeous Princess Diana. I loved her to the max. She was gorgeous. She did something for the English people that had never happened.

**R:** Wha' do ya think she did, Tony?

**T:** She helped the poor. Dedicated to it.

**TEG:** Maybe before she married Prince Charles -- and don't put her down -- although she's dead now.

**T:** I ain't puttin' her down.

**TEG:** She was very nice, indeed. Listen, I'm tellin' ya something: If I had the millions she had, I would help people too, yeah.

**T:** Le' me give ya a peck on the cheek.

**TEG:** Don't bubble me up.

**T:** She tastes pretty good, too. She tastes salty, like a fish.



## MORE SHIT ABOUT ENGLAND

**Tony:** Get your credit card out, darlin'.

**The English Girl:** I don't have a credit card, it's my husband's card.

**T:** I guess they're gonna lock you in fuckin' jail tonight to pay the bill. Me and Rich are walkin' the fuck out and leave you sit here. You deserve another punishment today ... hangin' around that gook all night.

[Server comes to the table]

**TEG:** Could I have another beer please? Thank you.

**T:** You didn't finish that one.

**TEG:** I'm tryin my best, OK?

**T:** Well wha' do ya want another beer for? Ya goddam alcoholic. She bought us some wine coolers the other day.

**TEG:** It was Saturday and I arrived in Philadelphia -- to America from England -- Heathrow, Thursday night. My hubby picked me up, from the airport. It took two hours. He was driving the car, one of his vehicles. He was upset. Big time. It takes two to have an argument. Maybe I was --

**T:** But he had no right throwin' hot coffee on you, and burnin' you. That's simple assault.

**TEG:** They gave me bandages; the ambulance women. They gave me bandages and then they said, "Take the bandage off and pour cold water on," which I did. It was really painful, but it's pro'bly my fault.

**T:** You're a battered woman. You love it. Have I ever laid a hand on you, honey? No.

**TEG:** Not yet.

**T:** I never will.

**TEG:** Thank you.

**T:** Did your father beat you up?

**TEG:** No.

**T:** Did your mother beat you up?

**TEG:** No.

**T:** Did your sister beat you up?

**TEG:** No.

**T:** Did you have boyfriends that beat you up?

**TEG:** No.

**T:** How come you got this fuckin' hubby that beats you up?

**TEG:** I don't know. Can I speak? I think that basically -- because I have a Chinese friend in London and, well, he knows my husband -- I'm not doing anything wrong -- I sleep on the sofa -- 'cause my mum and dad are dead now and he sleeps in the bedroom. Tony knows that and I don't do anything wrong at all, ever. The cheapest ticket I could get from America was three hundred and two dollars, round trip, British Airways, which is a good flight --

**T:** She will never shut up until ya tell her to be quiet. She'll run her mouth from now to never.

**[Server comes back with the beer]**

**TEG:** I had a good teacher.

**T:** Hey Rich, she ain't bad lookin' for an English woman, is she?

**Server:** I think she's quite delightful.

**TEG:** Thank you.

**T to server:** Well ain't you cute.

**TEG:** Oh, by the way, British Airways, what they do is, at the end of the flight -- the tail wing is different colours all the time. Ya have to notice that.

**R:** Why do they do that?

**TEG:** When I'm finished being a doctor then I'll tell ya. But I'm not very good at -- apparently then -- geographical -- I passed my A levels, mathematically, but ya have to be ... but you have to be geographically good, ya know, you've got passengers on your hands --

**R:** To be a pilot?

**TEG:** Yeah, you got to be good.

**T:** There are a lot of alcoholic pilots too, man. A lot of 'em.

**TEG:** Tony!

**T:** A lot of 'em do drugs, too.

**R:** Uppers.

**T:** Uppers. To get 'em goin'. All they do is punch computers and hope the fuckin' flight takes 'em there, right? It's all computers. They're worried about that in the two thousand year, too.

**TEG:** I have decided, that I won't fly again until I really have to. I'm not leaving the United States.

**T:** Yeah, you're stuck with me.

**TEG:** I'm stuck with my husband and that's a horrible thing. Where were you last night when I needed you?

**T:** I was at the Village Night Club havin' a good time.

**TEG:** I was crying like no tomorrow.

**T:** You fuckin' deserve it.

**TEG:** Thank you. I guess I do.

**T:** Yeah, ya do. You're into that punishment shit. You want to be punished for somethin' you did in your childhood. Yes you did. You did somethin' nasty.

**TEG:** I don't understand things like --

**T:** What did you do, rape little boys --

**TEG:** No.

**T:** -- when you were young? Huh?

**TEG:** I'm not even allowed to talk about sex. Now I can because fortunately both my parents are dead. But when I was young I couldn't at all. You know when they were teaching the sex education in school, I'm not allowed to talk. When I come home to my mum and dad I read the newspapers and I watch Robin Hood on television. And study a bit then --

**T:** Robin Hood: Robbed from the rich and gave to the poor. Your little guardian angel, right? I can read your goddam mind woman.

**TEG:** I never did anything wrong at all. I wish I did. I didn't.

**T:** Well you feel guilty about that? You should've done somethin' wrong.

**TEG:** I know.

**T:** You're Miss Little Prissy Prissy, huh? Miss Pomperdickel, huh? Yeah, I'm gonna be so nice to my mother and father and I'm gonna think like I'm an angel. But the devil's inside of me. I wanna sin.

## THE CAN MAN

**[The guy who collects cans on the street with a shopping cart walks in the bar and orders a beer.]**

**Tony:** Oh, this motherfucker. I'll run him out of here.

**RS:** You know him?

**T:** Yeah, 'The Can Man'.

**[Turns to the Can Man.]**

Don't you say a goddam thing to me, guy. I'll fuckin' grab you by the hair and throw you out the fuckin' place. Don't even talk to me.

**[The Can Man drinks his beer and leaves without a word.]**

I was at the 'Breakfast Club', there on Duke Street, at the Church, where the homeless go for breakfast?

**Bartender:** Who goes there for breakfast?

**T:** Homeless people. I go to the Public Library at 9:00 in the mornin', read the morning paper. It's right beside the breakfast club. Then, at about 9:30 I go in there and eat breakfast. It's for all the homeless people in town. Well he was in there the other day. He smelled like piss from twenty feet away. You could smell it. He pissed himself the night before.

**B:** Who?

**T:** That asshole. He pro'bly wiped your seat out. Just by sittin' on it. He's a nasty dog, that one. That little fucker. He don't *even* want to talk to me.

**B:** He don't talk to you no more, Tony?

**T:** No, because I told him I was gonna fuck him up. I wouldn't though.

**B:** Tony, you're something else.



## SHOOTING AT 200 BLOCK WEST VINE

**Tony:** -- over on Vine Street, she lives over there. She came to my house at 12:30. She just came from the hospital. The cops brought her to my house. This other girl, a prostitute that just got out of jail? She was there too and she says, "Tony, don't let her in." I said, "Who is it? I didn't put the video security screen on to see who was down there. I just left her in. She came up. I knew her. We'd been out together and she told me all about this guy's -- these people were shootin' up there, 200 block of West Vine Street. And she was scared to go home. She was in her night clothes.

**RS:** Bedroom slippers?

**T:** Yeah bedroom slippers, night clothes. I thought it was a dress. Roses all over it, ya know? I thought it was a dress. She's still there.

**R:** Do those two know each other? Those two girls?

**T:** Yeah. See I used to have all the prostitutes up at my house. I'd get 'em off the street; "Aw, let's get a life girls, c'mon up." One girl cut my hair. Did a nice job on it. She's still in jail. And her girlfriend -- she took off with some guy last night. She prob'ly sucked about four, five dicks to get some money so they could smoke some crack. See I don't need that buzz. I'd rather drink. It's legal. Ya don't get into trouble.

**R:** It's more social.

**T:** It's more sociable. Right. Exactly. There's eighty girls in jail out there now out at the prison; 625 West King. Eighty of 'em. Bad girls. They don't know how to act in society, right?

**R:** Yep.

**T:** Get locked the fuck up. That's not my campsite. I ain't been locked up for thirteen years. Ya know, it's funny how things turn around. Two years ago when I saw that murder up over there? I saw all that shit comin' down? These cops blow the horn at me in the cruisers, when I walk around town. They're all on my fuckin' side. Before I was -- some years I was against the establishment of the United States, ya know? Rebellion. Now these guys are all on my side. All I got to do is walk up to the police station and say a few names -- detectives -- Tony Straub's here, I wanna talk to ya. They're all on my side now. I turned it around. The district attorney assistant, she said I did an excellent job on the stand for the Duke and Liberty shooting. That made me feel good. I got ten bucks for that whole bullshit.

**R:** Ten bucks?

**T:** Ten bucks. Five dollars per court appearance. Two court appearances.

**R:** Who does that? The county?

**T:** Yeah.

**R:** Christ, ya think the bastards could afford more than that. I guess the Lambert case wiped out the County Treasury pretty good.

**T:** Yeah,. So anyway, there were three lawyers at one time, raggin' me that time. Tryin' to change my story. Uh-uh, not this guy. The funny part about that is, when I made that statement January, two years ago and I went to the district attorney, right? And the detective? Ball-headed guy? You pro'bly seen him around town. I said it word for word in a paragraph five pages long. I didn't even miss a word. Not one word. She had it in front of me and I told her the story --

[Two of Tony's 'live-in' girlfriends just walk in the door.]

-- hey girls

**Girl 1:** Hey.

**TS:** Hey you pussy! Come 'ere!

**G1:** What are you doin'?

**T:** Where the fuck did you get to last night. I'm pissed the fuck off at you.

**G1:** What did I do now?

**T:** Huh?

**G1:** What?

**T:** What you ain't do.

**Girl 2:** Them's fightin' words.

**G1:** What?

**T:** I'll tell you then.

**G1:** What did I do?

**G2:** We were lookin' for you Saturday night, weren't we?

**G1:** I told him that.

**T:** I bet you were.

**G2:** We were.

**T:** Here's a friend of mine. Rich.

**G1:** Hi.

**R:** How ya doin'?

**T:** He did all the murals in here.

**G1:** Oh yeah.

**T:** What the fuck are you guys up to.

**G1:** Seein' what you're up to.

**T:** What?

**G1:** How long are you gonna be here?

**T:** What the fuck did you do to Harry last night?

**G1:** What do you mean what did I do?

**T:** Ya left with Harry last night.

**G1:** I left him over here at McDonald's.

**T:** Oh.

**G1:** We got a little herb.

**T:** Your shirt's still up at the house.

**G1:** Uh-huh. Is she still up there?

**T:** I washed your pants last night

**G1:** Is she still up there?

**T:** Yeah, sleepin'. She got to get that bullet out. She got shot by that .22 last night.

**G2:** I *heard* some girl got shot.

**T:** Yeah. She's up at my house right now.

**G2:** Who was it?

**G1:** Melanie.

**T:** Melanie. Yeah.

**G2:** Oh my god.

**G1:** She didn't go to the hospital yet?

**T:** Yeah. She already went. But they couldn't find a guy to pull the bullet out of her. I just woke her up at about 12:00, about an hour and five minutes ago. I said, "You get your fuckin' ass to the hospital, I don't want you dyin' of lead poisoning in my motherfuckin' apartment."

**G1:** Right.

**G2:** What time is it now?

**T:** Five after one. So what are you whores up to today?

**G1:** Seein' what your whorey-ass is up to.

**G2:** We were lookin' for the whore-master and we found him.

**T:** Oh, you found the whore-master?

**G2:** Yeah.

**T:** I bet you did.

**G1:** So how long are you gonna be here?

**[I Love Music by the O'Jays comes on the juke box.]**

**T:** Well, Rich got to leave at two. We're doin' a tape.

**G1:** Oh, OK.

**T:** A book: 'Tony Straub on the Microphone'. Ya know, I'll never forget that fuckin' night when Jackie was lap-doggin' you. You guys woke me up at 3:00 in the fuckin' mornin', "Uuuuuuuuh, uuuuuuuuh, uuuuuuuuh."

**G1:** That's it I'm out of here.

**G1 & G2 leave the bar.]**

**R:** Sounds like a pretty wild place with all those chicks runnin' around up there? Are they all from Water Street?

**T:** Yeah, Water Street girls. I bring 'em up.

**R:** Well, at least ya give 'em a home.

**T:** Got in trouble over it.

**R:** With who?

**T:** The landlady. "*We don't allow prostitutes here, Tony.*" Who's tellin' ya this, there, girl? That fuckin' maintenance man over there -- he don't like me; jealousy. He's got a fuckin' dog whackin' his dick every day. He ain't got no pussy whackin' his dick, he's got a dog to do it for him.

**R:** Is that a one or two-bedroom apartment?

**T:** It's a studio apartment; efficiency. Bedroom, living room combined.

**R:** Partyin' times up there.

**T:** Big time. We started out one night, back in December. Some guy from the apartment, a drug dealer -- I mean a runner from up the street, he was there. G1 was there. She was suckin' everybody's dick that night, for her room and board. We started at nine o'clock and finished at nine o'clock the next mornin'. We smoked crack all night long. We spent three hundred on crack.



**R:** In one twelve-hour shift?

**T:** A twelve-hour shift between five people. We smoked it all night long and drank all night long. Came by seven o'clock in the mornin' and I started makin' coffee. It's time to wake up.

## SUICIDE CITY

**Tony:** He had the same room I had. He hung himself. Before he killed himself -- he was there Christmas. I had the room all fixed up, you know my apartment looks real nice; television, stereo. He was there Christmas. He wanted to move back in the house. He wanted to live in the basement. But Norm wouldn't let him, cause he was so racked out with the FBI. He thought he was an FBI agent. He used to call Washington D.C. all the time.

**RS:** Right, he used to call Fort Knox and ask 'em how much gold they had there. One time he asked the owner of Oyster Bay Restaurant what the atomic weight of silver was. When the owner told him he didn't know, he tried to make an ass out of him, so the owner flagged him for life.

**T:** He finally hung himself. He was mentally ill -- a young boy, too.; 32, 34, 36. And his mother and father come over to the house to get his belongings. I was livin' on the third floor then. I took all his stuff that was on the third floor and put it on the second floor in the bedroom, in the closet; all his possessions. His mother and father came over -- we found out about it, ya know?, through the grapevine and his mother says, "Tony, you can have this." It was a radio. Everybody was upset about it.

**R:** It didn't happen at that apartment?

**T:** It happened up at -- I forget, I think it was on Lime Street, a couple more blocks up, where he committed suicide. And there was another guy -- Oh, Christ -- XXXX, I forget his last name. He jumped off the tower -- he jumped off the Prince Street Garage.

**R:** Yeah, I think I remember that.

**T:** Yeah, his name was XXXX. I met him -- he was obsessed by a woman. She was a black girl and I used to go with her. I went with her for about a year and he was so obsessed with her, it drove him totally insane. Then they found him at the bottom of the garage. That's a shame how ya get wiped out on women. Fuckin' women are FUCKIN' DIME A FUCKIN' DOZEN! Who's gonna get upset over some fuckin' nasty-assed cunt? I used to, though. Yeah, I was obsessed with that bullshit, too.

## THE \$400 MEAL

**Tony:** Ya know, there's a guy -- I told you about 'The Center'? I do volunteer work for the mental health people and the director over there. Some guy was harassin' her. He was puttin' 'FUCK YOU' on her car. And he was stalkin' her. And harassin' the shit out of her. And I seen him up at that breakfast club one mornin'. I said, "YOU! MOTHERFUCKER! You harass her one more time and I'm gonna get back in the fuckin' war zone and I'm gonna tear your motherfuckin' head off your motherfuckin' shoulder. Right now."

**RS:** What was his response?

**T:** Big eyes. He thought I was gonna do it right then and there. So in the meantime, the last week or two after that verbal conversation, when he seen me on the street he crossed onto the other side. He thought I was gonna tear his fuckin' head off his shoulders.

**R:** He knew ya meant business

**T:** You're fuckin' right. He didn't fuck with her again. So there was another guy harassin' her. About three years ago. He had a tape recorder, like you have there. Tapin' her conversations.

**R:** With her knowledge?

**T:** Without her knowledge. And I said, "Hey guy, what's goin' on man? Who the fuck are you? FBI man? CIA? What's your fuckin' problem around here?" So, I went outside. I was smokin' a cigarette. He said, "STAY OUT OF MY FUCKIN' BUSINESS, TONY!" I said, "FUCK YOU, MOTHERFUCKER! YOUR BUSINESS IS MY BUSINESS NOW! LET'S GET IT ON IN THE PARKIN' LOT AND SEE HOW TOUGH YOU ARE MOTHERFUCKER." And that was the end of that conversation. Then I'm thinkin' about it. So I take this girl up to Oyster Bay Restaurant. Remember when they used to have shrimp up there? Thursday nights?

**R:** Yeah, it used to get real crazy.

**T:** That's where I met you.

**R:** How did that come about?

**T:** We were comparin' leather jackets

**R:** OK.

**T:** And this girl says, "Blair, Blair, Blair; he's harassin' me, he's

harassin' the director." Now I'm thinkin' about this motherfucker, right? Thursday, Wednesday, Tuesday of that week -- Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday and I go down to 'The Center'. And I said to him -- I go up to him, "YOU. MOTHERFUCKER. YOU HARASS THE DIRECTOR AND THE PARTICIPANTS OF THIS ESTABLISHMENT, ONE MORE TIME -- YOU DO NOT FUCK WITH ANYBODY." Up! He jumped up in my face, right? I went, BOEF! I knocked him over the motherfuckin' place. Knocked him out. Everybody got all excited, right? I'm sittin' outside with Joe, that asshole. Cops came. They locked us up in the tank. I had two glasses of wine at a reception for a beauty shop. Two glasses of wine. That's all I had to drink that day and they fuckin' arrested us for public drunkenness and every fuckin' thing. Just because we had a little drink in us. And hanged us up in the tank, too. Four hours. So Mr. Blair was not allowed at 'The Center' no more. And he ain't been back since. Three fuckin' years ago. It cost me four hundred dollars that day. The director said, "I'll buy ya dinner for that, Tony." Cost me four hundred dollars and she's gonna buy me dinner and a beer. Oh well.



## THE \$400 AMBULANCE RIDE AND THE BANKROBBER

**Tony:** One time I was out on Columbia Avenue at The Villa Nova West with some people. We were drinkin' whisky before we left and I wanted to go out to sing Karaoke. It was a Saturday night. I ended up gettin' into an argument with the two girls I was with. I said, "Fuck you, girls, I'm not going in with you," and I tripped and fell in the parkin' lot out there. I hit my head and got knocked out. So East Hempfield police charged me with public drunkenness and took me in the ambulance to St. Joe's Hospital in Lancaster. So the Lancaster police charged me for public drunkenness. It cost me four bills that night. So Vicki, this bitch over here –

**RS:** The Lancaster Justice of the Peace?

**T:** Yeah, the Justice of the Peace. It was two hundred a piece, four hundred all together. So then this fuckin' Justice of the Peace at Hempfield writes me a letter: You got two hundred dollars to pay – *they're* chargin' me – I went over here with the Lancaster J.P. raisin' hell with her. I got out of the Lancaster fine 'cause they can't charge ya twice for the same crime. A month or so later I was livin' at the ten hundred block of Lime Street again. I'm walkin'. Fuckin' snow on the ground, so fuckin' high and shit. I walked from Lime Street to the Post Office and I had all my Christmas gifts. I got a quart of beer at Cassidy's. I walk up that alleyway there. A cop comes by, right? I had a hat on and I had gloves on. I'm fuckin' cuddled up. He recognized me from East Hempfield Township. They got a warrant out for my arrest because I didn't pay a fine. I was sort of hidin' out in that barroom there. For some fuckin' reason I went up around the corner. There was four cruisers waitin' on me. Aaaaaa! Yeah. Bup, bup, bup, bup, bup, bang, bang, bang; fuckin' police dog on me. I go, "What's goin' on guys?" They take me down to the police station. Some guy's robbin' banks around fuckin' town. And I know him too! But they think I'm the one or so they say. The one that robbed all them banks? He got out of it. Mentally incompetent to stand trial.

**RS:** They let him go?

**T:** Yeah. He goes up to the VA with me every once and awhile. His name's XXX.

**R:** I think I ran in to him at the Catalina bar. He was buyin' everybody beers, tellin' everybody he was with the Charlie Daniels band.

**T:** Yeah? So I'm down at the police station all cuffed up. He's robbin' a

fuckin' bank around town. Oh, he's out again. He robbed four fuckin' banks in town before they caught him. He walks in the bank and gives the teller a fuckin' note, right? To give him all the fuckin' cash. He robbed four banks and I think he got \$8,000. I know the girl he was livin' with. I used to go with her. They were livin' in Ronks. So, I'll get back to my story. They took me out to East Hempfield Township --

**R:** They got some fat fuckin' pigs out there.

**T:** Well, these cops are mad at each other. They don't wanna hear my conversation. So I said fuck it I ain't even gonna talk to 'em. And it's fuckin' pourin' down rain. Then I got everything settled. I'm payin' 'em twenty-five dollars a week. The one cop said to me, "Ya know, Tony, I don't have to take you back into town. I could leave your ass sit here if I want to." I said, "God, man and it's rainin', I'm sick, I got the flu, please take me into town." And he did. He dropped me off at James Street. At the bank. And he went back to his trunk and got all my shit out that I got at the Post Office. I got all these gifts and all this shit. I said, "If anybody sees me gettin' out of this car, they'll think I'm a fuckin' narc. I don't wanna hear that shit." He lets me out at the parkin' lot. So I went down to the Catalina.

## RELIGION AND THE CIGARETTE PATCH

**Tony:** I put a patch on the other day. I'm tryin' to quit. I had it on about three hours. It worked, but it made me feel funny; the nicotine. I'll keep on tryin'. I have to quit 'cause it's gonna ruin my health. I got good health and that's one thing that's gonna ruin me. It don't knock me out of breath or anything yet, ya know? But uh --

**RS:** I never took it up.

**T:** Fifty fuckin' years of it, man. Pastor John -- I told him about the patch. And I said to Pastor Ross, "Tony's tryin' to quit." I'm healthy as a lark man and the cigarettes, they're gonna kill me. Them guys love me to death, man. I can tell by the way they look at me. I'm a wild motherfucker but I got this other thing in my life. Religion.

**R:** Right.

**T:** But it's mine. My religion. I don't talk about it. It belongs to me.

**R:** Personal thing.

**T:** Personal. It's my personal thing. A lot of people don't know that about me. I was comin' down the elevator, when I was all dressed up. It was a couple of Sunday's ago and I told this girl on the elevator -- she sees me all the time, ya know? All dressed up, ready to roll. She thinks I'm a fuckin' wildman, right? Ya know? Fuckin' out after every fuckin' woman in town, ya know? They don't know the religious side of me though. I said to her, "I'm goin' to church." And she started laughin'. It made me angry at first, ya know? The laugh. I said, "Honey you don't *know me*." And off to church I went.

## TEX

**Tony:** This was back in December. This girl's out on the streets, right? I give her a place to stay. I'd known her about ten years. I knew her mother and her step father. I thought I'd give her a break. Let her stay at my nice little apartment, ya know? And she started fuckin' up right away, right? Her first fuck up with me was wearin' my clothes.

**RS:** Wearin' your clothes?

**T:** Wearin' my clothes. We're the same size, right? The bitch. Not askin'. Just wearin' 'em. After I'd go to work, she'd put my clothes on. And go out. That was the first fuckin' mistake. I need those clothes to go to work. I got to look nice. But she's wearin' it. I go to get something and it's not there. So I got that thing straightened out. No more wearin' Tony Straub's clothes. He has nice clothes. Buy your own fuckin' clothes. This ain't no fuckin' clothing shop. This is Tony Straub's apartment.

**R:** This ain't no Goodwill.

**T:** Yeah. Exactly. Second mistake: Leavin' my door open. "Ain't nobody gonna come in here, Tony." "Ya got to lock the doors on the way out, honey," Ya know? Second mistake. Third mistake: Come home at four o'clock in the mornin' and wake my fuckin' ass up. I got to go to work the next day. You don't give a fuck. About anything. Except fuckin' and suckin' dicks all night long. So you can smoke some crack-crack. So you can get cracked out. That's all you're worried about. That's the kind of girl she is. So I got tired of this witch. Bitch. I says, "You gotta go honey." "Can I spend one more night?" "No." Come by in the mornin' and get your clothes. So four o'clock in the mornin' she rings my security phone. "Can I come in Tony?" "Fuuuck you." No, le' me back this up. She did come in, I said, "You can't stay." "Well I'll go down to Jerry's." I said, "Jerry ain't gonna let you in. Goodbye." That was four o'clock in the mornin' on a Sunday mornin'. And then she comes back the next mornin' and got her clothes. So I didn't see her for about two weeks. Thank God for that. Now I might get some rest for a change. About two weeks later, here she comes and I'd forgotten about everything, ya know? Things pass by your mind, maybe things might be better. That's the way ya think. A couple days later she brings this asshole named Tex. Now have you ever heard of a black man named Tex? I don't think so. His nickname is Tex and he is a nut case. He comes into my apartment. She brought him there and all of a sudden I'm lookin' around. Where's Tex?



I go in the bathroom and he's got his clothes off. I says, "What the fuck ya doin' man?" He goes, "I wanna take a shower." I says, "This is my fuckin' apartment, not yours. You better get your motherfuckin' clothes on right now, guy and you can get yo' ass out my door. Promptly." He's takin' a shower in my home and I don't know the guy. He might have fleas. Or lice. Or rice. Or whatever. And he wanna use my towels and shit? I don't even know the guy.

**R:** 'Tony's Bathhouse'.

**T:** 'Tony's Bathhouse'. What the fuck's goin' on here? I says, "Hey dude, you got to fuckin' vacate my pad, man. No showers here today. This ain't no spa house." Heh heh, that was funny. So he left, right? Here comes the robbery: Tex comes back. The next day. Opens my door while I ain't there. I'm at work. He takes my television, my cable box, and three hundred dollars worth of jewelry. He took my medallion off the wall, my Indian medallion for: health, prosperity and happiness. Which I have all three of. He took my telephone. My hundred dollar answering machine and guess what? He needed a new fuckin' pair of boots. So he went in my fuckin' closet, took his shoes off and put my nice boots on; a two hundred dollar pair of boots and left his K-Mart fuckin' shoes there. He took my Timberlines and my Wolverines. I paid two hundred dollars for the Wolverines; insulated hikers and one hundred twenty dollars for the Timberlines. It was nice of him to let his shoes there for me, so I had a fuckin' pair of shoes. And he took my bow and arrow. That motherfucker. I'd like to shoot it up his motherfuckin' asshole. With one of them goddam arrows; razor sharps. I'd like to shoot it right up his motherfuckin' asshole. As soon as he comes out of jail I think I'll do it. So two days later black Tex is on the door. Bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, right? "Who is it?" "Tex. I got your stuff Tony, I'm gonna bring it back." He kind of startled me a little bit, right? So I left his black ass in, right? I'm sittin' on my bed. All of a sudden -- Tex must have been fucked up on somethin'. He must have been cracked out to the max or high on kerosene. 'Cause that motherfucker grabbed my radio, grabbed my four hundred dollar leather jacket, and my backpack. And out the door he went.

**R:** With none of your other stuff comin' back.

**T:** With none of my old stuff comin' back. He's out the door with the other stuff. While I'm sittin' there watchin' him. Shit. But I didn't know he was doin' all the shit. I knew he was takin' my radio. I said, "What the fuck ya doin', man?" And he pushed me back right? I was drinkin' that

night. I wasn't with it too much. I just woke up. By the time I got my pants on and my shirt and down the elevator to the garage door, Tex was goin' out the other door. By the time I ran to that door, Tex was gone. And ain't no use in lookin' for him in the dark. So I went upstairs and went to sleep. Next mornin' I wake up at six o'clock and went down to McDonald's to get some coffee. Guess who's in McDonald's? Tex. I said, "You motherfucker, if you don't bring my stuff back, I'm gonna kill your fuckin' ass." "Wait a minute, Tony. Wait a minute, Tony, I'll be back in a couple minutes." Now this fuckin' asshole went out of McDonald's and he was back in two minutes. Here comes my four hundred dollar leather jacket. And my backpack. And he gives it to me. I says, "You motherfucker. You better bring the rest of my fuckin' stuff back or you're goin' to jail." "OK, Tony. OK, Tony. OK." So in the meantime he beat up his wife that day and wound up in jail. And Tex is still in jail right now. Old Tex should of got out of Dodge while he still had time.

## GRANT ALLEY AT FOUR IN THE MORNING

I work at 'The Studio'. Well, I *did*. And one night I was comin' home after work at four o'clock in the mornin'. Comin' down Grant alley. A dangerous part of town. Ya got to carry two fuckin' six-guns and four fuckin' knives with ya, walkin' down that alley or a fuckin' sub-machine gun. Everybody and their brother gets mugged in that alleyway at four o'clock in the mornin'.

I'm as sober as a judge and I'm comin' home from work. They left two bottles of champagne for Tony that night, thank you. I put 'em in my backpack.

I'm walkin' down the alleyway and I hear, "Pop."

Than I felt this — what I thought was blood goin' down the crack of my ass. And I spun around. I didn't see anybody. I turned around. Then I realized what the sound of champagne corks made from all the parties up there. And that's what it was. The cork came out of the champagne bottle and it sounded like a gun goin' off. And all it was, was champagne, runnin' down my fuckin' asshole. Thank God for that.

## MA AND PA

**Tony:** Cathy calls me up and says, "Tony, let's me and you commit suicide today." I said, Shit! Why not? What else are we gonna do on a fuckin' Saturday afternoon? She comes over to the house, on north Queen Street; 408. I says, "Honey, how do you want to do this?" "I want to take a bunch of pills." I says, "Fuck that, if we're goin' out, we're goin' out. I'll get my huntin' knife. Two six-packs of beer. We'll go up to Chickies Hill -- I'd like to fuck for about an hour, drink a couple six-packs. We'll be ready by then. We'll jump off of" -- what is that? Chickies Hill?

**RS:** Chickies Rock.

**T:** "Chickies Rock. We'll jump off the fuckin' rocks. I'll get my fuckin' huntin' knife put it in my right hand and hold you with my left hand. And we'll jump off! You got enough of fuckin' nuts for that, Honey?" "Oh, Tony, we can't do it that way." "Well, why not?" "If you're gonna go out, let's go out right." So she wouldn't go along with that program. So we went to her place, up to the trailer fuckin' around. We ate supper. She keeps thinkin' about committin' suicide. Suicide, suicide. Pills, pills, pills, pills. So she took a whole fuckin' *handful* of them motherfuckers. I seen it. I said, "You better call your mom and dad, right now." So here comes mom and pop. Now they don't know Tony Straub. So we had to take Cathy to the hospital up there, one of them makeshift places they have up there. What do they call 'em?

**R:** Clinics.

**T:** Clinics. We took her to the clinic and then after the clinic -- oh, I got to bring this in to the situation. We're drivin' to the clinic. With Ma and Pa. And Cathy's in the back seat and I'm with Cathy in the back. And she's sayin', "Tony, Grampa, Grampa." I say, "Quit *worryin'* about *Grampa*." When she was young there was some abuse goin' on with Granpa and her parents knew about it. So the old man up front says -- old Pa up front says, "What's goin' on back there?" I say, "She's talkin' about Grampa." So -- NOW! Ma and Pa got the word that Tony Straub knows what's goin' on in this world, with Ma and Pa, and Granpa. Heh heh heh. That's pretty funny. I put that together pretty good. So he knows what Tony Straub knows and he don't like it. He thinks Tony Straub is gonna expose him in his town and he got worried about that. I know his head was worried that night. So we got to the clinic, then decided to take her to the Community Hospital. So Ma and Pa left. And Tony and Cathy



went to the Community. We got to the Community Hospital and Cathy was givin' 'em a hard time. She was all fucked up. I don't know how many pills she took. She was a mess and they were so glad that I was there to help control her. The doctors and nurses said, "Boy, I'm glad you're here, Tony!" Then she wanted to leave and finally we got her on the floor. We held her down; the doctors and nurses and myself. They start pullin' her socks off and here all these pills come rollin' out of her socks. There must've been a hundred fuckin' pills in her socks. So they took her up to ICU. They pumped the shit out of her. I stayed 'til four o'clock in the mornin', then I went home and came back the next day. I seen her in the mental ward and the next day I went to see her but I wasn't allowed to see her anymore.

**R:** Why was that?

**T:** Ma and Pa. Ma and Pa was scared that Tony was gonna shoot his motherfuckin' mouth off. I said, "OK." I knew what was goin' on, so I wasn't upset about it. So, Cathy got out of there and Ma and Pa put a PFA out on me. I was pissed. I had to go to court in front of the judge and all that shit. She wanted to talk to me up there, before we went into the judge. I was so angry about that. I would not say a word to her that I knew. That's where I fucked up. I should've found out what she was thinkin'. I haven't seen her since. Goodbye Cathy. End of that story, guy.

## NEWSPAPER ACCOUNT OF THE McFLY SHOOTING

[The following appeared in the Lancaster Intelligencer Journal; March 26, 1999.]

A man was shot in the leg during a brawl between two groups that started in a Lancaster city tavern late Thursday night, police said.

The unidentified patron of McFly's Pub, 10 S. Prince St., was taken to Lancaster General Hospital shortly after the 11:25 p.m. incident that began as a verbal dispute in the bar, witnesses said. ...

The shooting happened on the sidewalk near the entrance of the tavern after a physical altercation began inside, witnesses said.

Tony Straub, a resident of the apartment building above the tavern, heard the commotion from the sixth floor.

"I heard the yelling," Straub said. "It was very loud. I looked down and all of a sudden there was a fistfight. Then there were the gunshots and every body scattered."

Officers arriving at the scene arrested three men witnesses identified as being involved in the shooting.

Detectives were interviewing the suspects early Friday.

## SHOOTING AT McFly's

I was in my apartment. On the sixth floor at the Stevens House. I was sittin' at my table and just finished a quart of beer. It was my last glass and I was just sittin' there smokin' a cigarette, just ready to go to bed. I was tired from runnin' around all day.

Then I heard this commotion and -- I got a balcony there, I went out on the balcony and here there's about fifteen, twenty guys outside. And all of a sudden there's fistfights. They're crackin' each other down there. I never seen that before, like a big group like that, right? Fifteen, twenty guys. I seen four or five guys. Not fifteen, twenty.

So I went in and called 911. While I was callin' there I heard five shots. I said you better get your butts -- get them guys down here, gunfire's goin' and I hungup. I walked out to the balcony again and they all dispersed. Shhhhhht. Gone. I seen 'em gettin' in their cars and bla, bla, bla.

All of a sudden here comes the fuckin' troopers, two minutes late.

## COMING IN FROM THE COLD

**Tony:** I met her on the streets and she started comin' over to my house, my apartment. One night we went down to McFly's. We had a good time. And all this time I thought she was a hooker, right? So we're down at the bar. It was almost closin' time and this guy came in. She said, "Tony, can I go with him?" And this girl was into drugs, too. So I thought she was doin' a trick with this guy, right? I said, "Yeah, if you wanna make some money, ya know? Come back later." So this motherfucker takes her up to Manheim. Well, that night it was sub-zero temperature and he puts her ass out of the car in Manheim. He puts her out in sub-zero temperature. I don't know why, never did find out why. And this poor girl, with no gloves on. No hat. No scarf. No jacket on. She's walkin' home tryin' to get a ride. Finally the cops picked her up. This girl was close to hypothermia, right? Another story of cops bringin' a girl to my house. I don't know why they didn't take her to the hospital. I thought that was strange. So, she rang my security phone and she said, "Tony, will you please let me in?" She sounded desperate. She came up to the apartment and this poor girl was purple. She was dyin' from hypothermia. I said, "Oh my god, I gotta do somethin'." So I says, "You get in bed with me." I got in bed. She got in bed with me and I just hugged her all fuckin' night long. If I wouldn't have done that she pro'bly would have died that night. So I kind of figure I saved her life that night.

**RS:** She was OK the next morning?

**T:** Yeah. I mean this girl was frozen. And I think the next day she said, "You're my only friend, Tony." A couple days later she says -- she came in the morning, she just got off work -- she said, "Can I stay here?" I said, "Yeah, I gotta go to work." I got home from work about five. She was sleepin' in my bed. It was so cute, she had my teddy bear. She was holdin' on to my teddy bear and out of -- I got to put this point across, too, out of all the girls who were up in my apartment, she was the one I liked the best. This girl had potential. Young. She didn't know how to dress. She didn't know how to fix her hair or makeup or anything. I was gonna make somthin' out of her. She had one fuckin' gorgeous body. It was all hidden, ya know?

**R:** Yeah.

**T:** She had a size fuckin' 38 tits on her and the way she dressed you didn't know that she had anything. She had a gorgeous body. I was gonna make



somthin' out of her. I got to thinkin' about her all that day. I told ya she got a lot of potential. So I come home from work and went over to McDonald's, got us somethin' to eat. Came back. Got to talkin' and she asked me if she could stay there. She said, "Do you wanna roommate, Tony?" I said, "Sure, you can stay here." No problem there, 'cause I really liked her, ya know? So she went to get her clothes, but she never came back and I ain't seen her since. That was two months ago. Not one word. I don't know what happened to her. I called the jail. Called the hospitals. No Debbie. She just disappeared. Somewhere. And she was grateful I saved her life that night. I actually saved her life. End of that story.

## TOASTED TO THE MAX

I left Floyd and Mary's one night, up near the County Prison about 11:00, toasted to the max. I jumped in my '65 Chevy and I had trouble with the gas pedal. It used to stick on me. When I was sober I just jump down there and pull it back up, right?

So I jumped in the back there, East End Avenue and I put it in second gear. It was a four-speed. I put it in second gear and the fuckin' pedal stuck. I was too drunk to get down there to get it out and by the time I got to Ann Street, there was a fuckin' taxi cab there, right? A Yellow Cab. One of those old Checkers. Bang! I hit that fuckin' taxi cab and I knocked the taxi cab across the fuckin' street.

I said, "Fuck this, I'm goin' home."

So my radiator was leakin', right? And I made a trail down to 735 Plum Street, South. I parked the car in front of the house. Ran in the fuckin' house. I'm bleedin'. My jaw hit the mirror. I still got that scar up there, too. I'm bleedin' like a fuckin' pig and I ran in the house.

I told my old lady -- I says, "XXXX, I'm in a world of fuckin' trouble, a *world* of trouble."

I ran out the fuckin' back door. I'm always runnin' out the back door or the front door, right? I ran out the back door and hid under the bushes. And I'm bleedin', too. My jaw's bleedin'. Fuckin' cops are everywhere. I left a trail for 'em. Another trail. A blood trail *and* a water trail this time. They were all over there, goddam it. They were just about walkin' on top of me. And I'm bleedin'. So I gave myself up. Wound up in jail. The Hospital. Then to jail.

## TONY BEATS THE BARTENDER

In the meantime, my old lady was seein' this other guy. We already split up, right? He was workin' at Floyd and Mary's, so I went in there with this girl, right? And my wife was in there, too.

She seen me comin' and she headed to the bathroom. She knew there was trouble comin', right? So we sat down at the bar, I forget the girl's name and he served her but he wouldn't serve me.

So I drank her beer and he says, "Tony, you can't -- you gotta go man!"

I says, "Fuck you, man!"

So George, tendin' bar came around the bar, right? Out around the bar after me. And when he came close to me and I popped him one. Hit him right in his face with my fist. Big commotion there, right?

"Tony hit the bar tender!"

And about four or five fuckin' guys grabbed me, right? Then got me outside and they're crackin' on me, too, 'cause I hit the bartender. And this girl that I was with was hittin' 'em with her pocket book, "Leave Tony alone, leave Tony alone," right?

And she was goin' bang, bang, bang.

So he had me arrested and I forgot what came out of it. Nothin' pro'bly.

## TONY EATS THE BARTENDER

**Tony:** We were in this bar one night. I was doin' electrical work all over South Carolina. The microwave stations? The towers? Me and this guy used to hit the road every -- five days a week, ya know? All these stations and stuff. And we used to go out at night and hit the bars. There was this bar in South Carolina, I think it was Dillon, South Carolina. The barmaid was in there and I got her on the fuckin' pool table, took her clothes off and ate her fuckin' pussy in front of everybody. "ENTERTAINMENT TONIGHT GUYS!"

**JS:** How long ago was that?

**T:** Back in the 70's. They fuckin' loved it.

**RS:** 70's were wild times.

**T:** Yeah, and I was a good pool shooter back then, too.

**R:** Were they all clappin' and cheerin'?

**T:** Aw man, everybody ate it up. They loved it.

**R:** How was she diggin' it?

**T:** She was eatin' it up. Runnin' her fuckin' legs back and forth. Oh man, I had my tongue in there, aaaaa ... aa ... aaaa ... aaa!

**J:** Oh, *you* did this?

**T:** Yeah, in front of everybody in the bar. Fuckin' ate her pussy out. Got a few bucks out of it. The guys were sayin', "Hey, Tony, you're afraid to do that shit." I said, "Get her to fuckin' take her clothes off and get her on the fuckin' pool table, I'll dig into her. Entertainment time guys!"



## TONY DEFEATS THE BARTENDER (AT THE BLUE ROOM)

This was way back in the seventies. On the 400 block of East King Street. There's a fire station there now. There was a bunch of us drunk there one Saturday mornin' harassin' this one bartender. A little ugly guy. Didn't have his shit together.

And he says, "You fuckin' guys can *have* this place, I'm walkin' the fuck out of here!"

This guy left the bar open. And we were in there all fucked up, right?

So we all went behind the bar and helped ourselves to a couple beers and a couple shots. We didn't take no money though. That's trouble. So we're all gettin' tanked up and the jukebox was blastin'.

Then I says, "Hey guys, I'm gonna have to call the owner," and I wound up callin' him. I says, "HEY," -- I forget his name -- "THIS IS TONY. YOUR BARTENDER WALKED OUT OF YOUR PLACE AND THERE AIN'T NOBODY TAKIN' CARE OF IT. WE'RE ALL DRINKIN' YOUR FUCKIN' BEER RIGHT NOW. YOU BETTER GET YOUR FUCKIN' ASS DOWN HERE ... NOW!"

Then he showed up and straightened it all out. The bartender couldn't handle us. We were all fuckin' drunk Saturday mornin'. That's the first time I ever ran a bartender off.

## **"I'M GONNA KILL YA, TONY!" (PART 1)**

**Tony:** She came from York to Lancaster in a cab. Said her husband was givin' her a hard time. So we drank at Cassidy's that morning, right? As soon as they opened up. She's an alcoholic.

**RS:** Seven o'clock?

**T:** Seven o'clock. Emptied out all the fuckin' beer cans I had. I was on about a week drunk. Fuckin' dick couldn't even get hard that night when she was layin' with me. Drunk. Dead drunk. The next mornin' we get up and head to Cassidy's. Seven o'clock. Got plastered there and we took a cab. We went to York and went to the courthouse to put a Protection From Abuse order out on her husband. I'm hearin' all these stories, man. This motherfucker's mean to her, boy, I'm tellin' ya. I didn't realize he was so mean to her. So we went to her apartment and I went around the back. She went in the front. He was in there drunk. She called the cops. They busted the door down. I didn't know all this shit was goin' on, ya know? I'm at the back of the house, the apartment, in the alleyway. I sneak around. It'd been awhile and I wondered why she didn't come out. So, I walk around Oh Christ, here comes the cops with her husband. Now he sees me. He knows me. He said to me, "Tony, I'm gonna kill your motherfuckin' ass." I said, "Hey cops, this guy ain't even handcuffed and he's threatenin' to kill my fuckin' ass. Why don't you lock him up or somethin'." Then they handcuffed him, right? And I'm sittin' on his porch wavin' goodbye to him. He's goin' to the fuckin' police station. We went up to that apartment. There was nothin' but beer cans all over the fuckin' place. Then, all of a sudden she jumped on the goddam answering machine. Put her foot on it.

**R:** She put her foot down.

**T:** Yeah, she didn't want him to have an answering machine. So I jumped on it and I really smashed the hell out of it. Then she started to ransack the place. Smashin' dishes and I said, "Let's get the fuck out of here." The door was busted down, beer cans were — so we go to a restaurant. She gets somethin' to eat. I wasn't even hungry. Then she says, "Let's get a motel room." Now, I'm a little nervous in this fuckin' town. I don't know when this guy's gonna get out of jail and come lookin' for me, ya know? She says, "Let's go fuck and suck." I said, "Well, sounds good to me." So we get a motel room, right? Right outside of York and it had a waterbed in it and she didn't like the waterbed. I said, "OK." Now I'm gettin' tired

of all this bullshit with her all fuckin' day long, ya know? Her husband; I got to worry about him now. So I went up to the motel manager and I said, "My wife don't like waterbeds, can I have my money back?" He said, "Yeah, that's OK." So we go in this restaurant across the street and got some more beer. She called a cab or somebody called a cab. She said, "Let's go to Lebanon." I said, "I wanna go home." I'm tired of this bullshit all day long. With her, her husband and I'm in the middle of all this shit, ya know? So we got a cab and they took me back to Lancaster. I said, "Goodbye."

## **"I'M GONNA KILL YA, TONY!" (PART 2)**

**Tony:** I went to the VA Hospital. I found out she was in the psyche ward after all this. Ellen was -- yeah, her name was Ellen. Ellen was in the psyche ward. So I go up to see her. I knew she didn't like that word: Cunt. She would get pissed off. So, it was time to get rid of her and I was in the middle of all this shit. So we're talkin' and I says, "YOU, MOTHERFUCKIN' CUNT!" She fuckin' jumped up. Fire in her eyes. She went back in the ward and never said a word. I fuckin' left. She was burnin' up. She signed herself out that day and went home to that nut-case and tells him what happened. He calls me on the phone. He says, "I'm bringin' my New Jersey boys over." I said, "Yeah? Well what are ya gonna do?" "We're comin' over to kill ya." "Yeah?" I says, "You're the one that's always fuckin' around with me, ya know? I don't know what your problem is. If you wanna bring your boys over here from Jersey, I got fuckin' fire power in my motherfuckin' house too, ya know?, guy" He never did come. He was tryin' to scare me. So I hadn't seen Ellen for a couple years then. And I thought I'd never see her again. Her husband died. Overdose on drugs. That was last year. Then she wanted to come live with me. She went in the hospital last summer. I was in the hospital for dehydration. And she said she was gonna call me. But I ain't heard from her since. That was over a year ago. There's more to it then that but -- up at the VA Hospital, I used to take her out in the woods too. We used to -- she'd say, "Tony, You wanna make a run?" Or she would say, "Tony, You wanna go on a mission tonight?" And I'd say, "Why not?"

**RS:** And that was code for?

**T:** That was code to go and get some liquor, some booze to bring back to the VA. So after supper -- "I'll meet ya after supper." I headed over to the shoppin' center. It took me forty-five minutes to walk over there, to go in and get a bottle; vodka. Stash it in the woods and meet her on the way back. Then we'd go back to the woods, get fucked up and have a little bit of sex. She was another battered woman, too. She always went back to it. All these battered women, they can't understand a nice guy like me. Bein' nice to 'em. I bought her stuff while I was there. She was pressurin' me all the time, she says, "Pray for me, Tony." One day I went over to the shoppin' center and I bought her a cross. Brought it to her and I put it around her neck and I said, "Here, I don't need to pray for you anymore, it's on your neck. The prayers are gone."



## THE RING

**Buggy:** I'm sick of payin' taxes.

**Tony:** Are ya?

**B:** Yeah.

**T:** Why?

**B:** 'Cause I don't make all these babies.

**T:** Who are ya payin' for?

**B:** The Spanish. They're breedin' like rats. You know about that. They come in and breed like -- they're breeders. They love, they're breeders --

**T:** They love to fuck.

**B to RS:** Amish breed different. Amish breed different. No, no, no, no, no. Amish breed different Richard. I know you're playin' a game. And the game -- to play the game -- a white man plays the game. To play a game. But learn how the Amish breed, too. With the kids in the field. This is not a joke. You can laugh at it as a white man, because you got a frown on your damn, sick face. Because you're a, you're a gamer, you're a gamer. I know how you are.

**T:** What's a gamer?

**B:** He's a gamer.

**T:** What's a gamer?

**B:** It's a white man who has to speak hustler to me.

**RS:** Don't blame it on the white man.

**T:** You think he's a hustler?

**B:** Yeah.

**T:** Hustler of what?

**B:** I'm a hustler, too.

**T:** I am too.

**B:** Yeah, I know. That's how you got the ring.

[A turquoise ring Buggy was going to give to the bartender a couple weeks ago.]

**T:** No, you gave it to me, Honey.

**B:** I didn't know you were -- what's a name?

And I have something to understand. Why didn't you tell me, that you're a gypsy?

**T:** That I'm what?

**B:** That you're a gypsy?

**T:** Get the fuck out of here.

**B:** That's why you took the ring.

**T:** Get the fuck out of here!

**B:** A brother wouldn't of took the ring. A white man wouldn't of took the ring. A gypsy would've took the ring.

**T:** Don't you poke your fuckin' finger at me.

**B:** You're a gypsy.

**T:** I'll knock your fuckin' head off.

**B:** I didn't know that. Why didn't you tell us you were a gypsy?

**T:** You're in love with XXXX (Bartender 1), ain't ya?

**B:** Why didn't you tell us you were a gypsy?

**T:** You're in love with XXXX.

**B:** Yeah? Well, yeah. So what? Why didn't you tell me you were a gypsy?

**T:** Why didn't you tell me you were in love with XXXX. You want your black dick in that white pussy.

**B:** No. No. I'd rather shoot a game of pool with her. I'd rather shoot a game of pool with you, too.

**T:** Uh-huh.

**B:** But I know where your heads at now. Both of you. Come on — Monica Win-sky, Monica --Awwww ... come on, Richard! Jesus Christ, man!

**R:** What? What are ya talkin' about?

**T:** What the fuck are you talkin' about?

**R:** What are you? A comedian?

**B:** Monica Ewinsky -- The Chinese -- the white people are sick motherfuckers and he's here eatin' chicken legs. Leg bones to the max. This motherfuckers lickin' -- Awwww! I love him! He's simply mahvelous. How can you play a game with your own people, man? Get the hell out of here. This is for real. This is the nineties. God! The *nineties*! When you hurt somebody, you hurt somebody inside. And mental wise, when you hurt somebody, it takes a lot out of here. And you don't

understand inside. Neither one of you understand.

**T:** Get the fuck out of here.

**B:** Yeah, 'cause that's why you're eatin' the legs. That's why you eat legs.

**T:** I'm gonna eat yo' ass in a minute. You, I'm talkin' to.

**B:** I'd love to wait outside. You know I'll take you to the top. I'm gonna take you to the top.

**T:** Go ahead.

**B:** It's not full moon either. I would love to bump heads with you. I want to bump heads with you tonight.

[**B** takes a whiff of a Good Friday rose he apparently bought earlier.]

**T:** Smell your rose baby, smell your rose.

**B:** Ya know, I had brothers rip me off, ya know what I mean? But your not a brother, you're not a brother who ripped me off 'cause I considered you as a man with respect. But to turn around and rip me off --

**R:** Who ripped you off? Tony?

**T:** I didn't rip him off, he gave it to me.

**B:** Tony, just don't talk about it, just do what you got to do. I never thought you were that way.

**T:** What way? What the fuck are you talkin' about? That way. What way?

**B:** I got ripped off by too many people.

**T:** I didn't rip you off. You know that. He gave me a fuckin' ring and now he wants it back. He's a fuckin' Indian giver. And he was gonna give it to XXXX to start out with. And I said, "No. Give it to me." And he said, "Yeah, Tony, you can have it." And now he wants it the fuckin', damn thing back. He's a goddam Indian giver.

**B:** How did you manage to do it? That's why I know the other part in you. And I'm -- I should've been -- you tricked me. But I know how you tricked me.

**T:** I didn't trick you at all.

**B:** Yes you did, But I love you.

**T:** Well I love you, too.

**B:** Why didn't you tell me you wanted it. You can get the same thing that I have. But you had to have that one. That's what fucks my mind up. Why

did you say, "Buggy, I can get you that." Why did you -- yeah --

**T:** I'll get you another one. No problem.

**B:** But why did --

**T:** 'Cause you were gonna give it to the goddam barmaid.

**B:** So what? So what?

**T:** It belonged to you.

**B:** It was on a mission.

**T:** It belonged to you. You can give it to anybody you want, right? So you gave it to me. Thank-you.

**B:** No, Tony, you picked it up.

**T:** Get the fuck out of here.

**B:** We were discussing something and you picked up the ring and stuck it on your finger. Get the fuck out of here Buggy. You gave it to me. You were drunk.

**B:** No.

**T:** You were drunk.

**B:** You're not being fair young man.

**T:** Aaaa, I'm being *truthful*. You don't understand the *truth*.

**B:** Yeah. It's gonna turn something in your life though.

**[Bartender 2 walks up.]**

**B:** Where's YYYY at now? Did he quit?

**Bar2:** Don't even ask me.

**B:** Did he quit?

**Bar2:** I have no idea.

**B:** Can I have a glass of beer?

**[Bar 2 walks away, apparently not going to serve Buggy.]**

**B:** Rich, the ring is mine.

**R:** Which? The ring on his hand?

**B:** Yeah. He tells me he can get all this jewelry, so he steals mine.

**[Bartender 1 walks up.]**

**T:** There's your sweetheart. Talk to her awhile, will ya?

**Bar1:** A glass of water?



**T:** Give him a gallon of water. Give him a fuckin' shower.

**B:** Would you like to take a shower with me?

**T:** Yeah.

**B:** 'Cause I'd like to bump heads with your goddam ass.

**T:** Scratch your ass. You scratch my ass, I'll scratch your ass.

**B:** Anybody who'd wanna take a ring from somebody you know everyday. Steal from your own brother!

**T:** Go take a piss.

**B:** That's why I don't hang out with black guys. They steal from ya.

**T:** What? Black guys?

**B:** Yeah.

**T:** I know a couple of 'em.

**B:** How could you steal from your own people? And there Tony is paradin' around with the ring on his finger. Walkin' around with the ring on his finger.

**T:** Get the fuck out of here

**[Buggy wanders off.]**

He was gonna give that ring to XXXX one time, right? A couple of weeks ago. I said, "What the fuck are you gonna give it to her for? You ain't gonna get her pussy, give it the fuck to me," right? So he gave it to me. Now I gotta hear all this fuckin' bullshit, right? And he ain't gettin' it back. I ain't givin' it back. He gave it to me. Now he's saying I stole it. He ain't too much upset about it though.

**R:** He's just talkin'.

**T:** Yeah, he's just runnin' his fuckin' mouth. Somethin' to talk about. Aaah boy. I'm gonna go the fuck home.

## SLASHED BICYCLE TIRES

[Tony just had his bicycle tires repaired after they had been slashed while stored in the common area of the apartment building he lives at.]

**Tony:** I'll slit some motherfucker's throat. Shit. If I catch him doin' that to my bicycle. I'll slit his goddam, motherfuckin' throat. Pop his motherfuckin' jugular vein, Ssssst. He won't do it no more. That's ignorant. I ain't never done that shit to nobody. Never. I thought about doin' a lot of shit. But I don't do it.

**RS:** Where do you keep your bike at when you're down at the park?

**T:** Right behind my tent, locked up on a tree. I got two locks in there. I got one of them u-bolts, too. And a chain lock. I lock it twice. And ya take the wheels off your bike, too. The back one. Ya got to lock that fuckin' thing up, too. That's a shame the way ya got to lock every thing up. Somebody stole my bike. I had a real nice Schwinn one time. Right in front of the Downtown Sport's Lounge, tied up to the tree. I'm in there ten minutes and it's gone. Ten minutes. Locked up. Hangin' on a tree.

**R:** Wha' did they do? Cut the chain?

**T:** Yeah, I guess so. See, these bicycle books I get -- *used* to get -- they'll tell ya all about these thieves. They go around in a van, see a nice lookin' bicycle. Zip, zip, zip. It's gone. It's in their van. Just throw it right in there. All they do is ride around. I seen 'em on TV, too. A bike hooked up to a sign and they'll lift that cable all the way up to top of that sign. Two of 'em One'll get on top of the others shoulders. Lift that whole thing up and over and down and take it home. And they had it all on tape, too. Then they went right to the guy's house and he denied it. There he is on tape. But them u-bolts, they're called Kryptonites, ya can't break them. Ya can't cut 'em or break 'em

**R:** Ya can't get 'em with a bolt cutters?

**T:** Nope. I had one of them too --

[Edswel walks in from the back door.]

**R:** Wha' do ya say Edswel?

**E:** Hi Rich, How are ya doin'?

**R:** OK.

**E:** Hi, how are ya doin'.

**T:** Hey guy.

**E:** Long time no see, Rich.

**R:** Yeah.

**E:** What've you been doin'?

**R:** We're doin' a book.

**E:** Yea -- Yeah?

**R:** Yeah, ask the bartender about it.

**E:** That's good.

**R:** An exclusive.

**E:** Exclusive? That's good. Yeah, I'm just passin' through. I'm gonna get something to eat.

**R:** Well it's the right place for it. Ya can't beat the price.

**E:** Yeah, Oh yeah, It is.

**T:** Prices good here?

**R:** Yeah.

**E:** Well I'll talk to you later, Rich.

**R:** Alright.

## FOUR MOVES IN ONE YEAR (PART 1)

**Tony:** I was in the woods for four months and it was gettin' near September and it was startin' to get cold. So I knew this girl out of town and -- the last two weeks of September -- about six years ago I moved in with her for two weeks, 'til I could find a place, use her phone, bla, bla, bla. So I did. Maybe I ought to tell ya a little bit about her. She's another one of these women that loves to suck cocks. I mean she was -- soon as I wake up in the mornin' she was on it. If I would keep it up twenty-four hours a day, she'd be on it. She's one of them girls. Young girl, too. In her twenties. Sort of a nutcase, though.

**RS:** Why is that?

**T:** Aaaa, she was a little -- she wasn't mature for her age. She had a mind of a fifteen year old. She was about twenty-four, twenty-five. Slow maturity. So I stayed with her for two weeks, then I moved to Lime Street. Found me a nice little apartment. All I had was my campin' equipment, so I slept on the floor in a sleepin' bag, ya know?

**R:** Yeah.

**T:** And eventually, within a three-month period I had a gorgeous apartment. I got everything from the streets. From the bed on down. The only thing I bought was a television but everything else in that apartment -- I had an Oriental rug I found up this alleyway here on Arch Street, expensive place there. They threw one out one time. It had one little cut in it, that was it. And they threw it out.

**R:** And you got it.

**T:** And I got it. It was in my living room. A nice pretty blue. All the designs in it. Real nice. So I had about twenty-five -- I like plants, I had about twenty-five plants in it. And I had it fixed up gorgeous but I had to share my kitchen and bathroom with this nutcase that lived there. A vegetarian. Stinkiest-assed food I ever smelled in my fuckin' life. Shit. And this guy didn't want me to smoke, right? So I burned incense all the time. So he wouldn't smell the smoke and I didn't like this guy. He was a conscientious objector. He went to Canada, ya know? So I disliked him right then and there. He was a weird motherfucker. I seen his door open one time. Fuckin' women with -- pictures of women on the wall with chains wrapped around, ya know? All that satanic shit. Bondage and all that fuckin' shit. I don't know what he was into. Oh, he was a puss. I was



gonna kick his motherfuckin' ass one day. He was scared to death of me. He was a total asshole man. I know he smoked pot because he burned incense all the time, too. He had been puffin' and huffin', ya know? I used to smoke cigarettes out in the balcony and he used to say, "TONY, YOU CAN'T SMOKE OUT HERE!" I'd say, "Fuck, I'm outside man!" So, me and him didn't get along too well. These guys come up, every once in awhile I'd see a girl. And I was bringin' all this cunt over there, ya know? I picked-up thirty women over at the Catalina in about a month and a half period. Most of 'em black and I brought 'em all over here, ya know? Did the same shit I'm involved with again and -- remember Roxanne? She used to work there.

**R:** Yeah.

**T:** She used to call me a fuckin' whore. Whore-slut. "Here comes the fuckin' whore-slut, fuckin' playboy." I had fun in that Catalina. That worked good for me. I liked that bar. I used to work for the owner, too. When I lived over there. We built a shed in the back. I did electrical work for him. I spent all the fuckin' money -- I worked four hours in the afternoon and he paid me ten dollars an hour. Forty bucks. And I sat in his fuckin' bar and spend it all. And uh, let's see here now -- I was gonna kick this guy's ass. I can't remember his name and he was frightened just to even look at me. He knew I was a Vietnam vet. I don't know why ... you say you're a Vietnam vet people get scared of ya. 'Cause they know ya fuckin' killed somebody already, right? You might be next, ya know? Pro'bly could get away with it. A fuckin' flashback, flashback from Vietnam, fuckin' kill somebody. Pro'bly get away with it with an insanity plea. But I wouldn't do shit like that, though. I'm not into that shit. So, I started bringin' street people in again and I don't know why I always do this but I feel sorry for 'em, ya know?

**R:** Yeah.

**T:** So I brought in a couple guys. We partied. We had money. And we partied, partied. Meanwhile, the landlord didn't like it and I was there nine months 'til I had to move the fuck out.

## FOUR MOVES (PART 2)

**Tony:** So I moved out. Four blocks down on Lime Street. This is funny. So the names -- I'll change the names. John and Joe. Joe is a fuckin' asshole. Now these two fuckin' nut-cases I was livin' with in this big house, three-bedroom house -- I had the bedroom on the third floor. I fixed it up. It was nice up there. Alone up there. I had run my own fuckin' cable, telephone, bla, bla, bla. I kind of liked it there. I had a nice little air conditioner in the summertime. Well, let me tell ya about the house. Every fuckin' place I go to, I got to clean it up. Now, I was afraid to sit my ass on the fuckin' toilet. It was that filthy. Grime. For years. Now you're supposed to go to the bathroom to get yourself clean and the fuckin' bathroom's filth. So I went on a scrubbin' tour. That first week I spent five hours in that fuckin' bathroom. Five solid hours. I fuckin' sparkled it up and inside that fuckin' toilet, oh, my God, scraped, scraped, scraped, scraped. There was algae in that motherfucker and these guys would think nothing about it, right? I don't live like that. So Joe used to sleep twenty-three hours a day. John used to go to work at night, come home in the mornin'. So he slept all fuckin' day. That was their routine and I'm up at four or five in the mornin'. I'm ready to do somethin', ya know? Tony's routine.

**RS:** They'd sleep all day and all night?

**T:** Them motherfuckers would sleep twenty-four hours a day. One time John got laid-off from his job. He slept for three fuckin' days.

**R:** Straight?

**T:** Straight. Never even got out of bed. He was depressed. Really depressed. So Joe moved out. He moved over on Frederick Street. And Joe was a crack head, too. He tried to get my fuckin' ass involved in that shit. Yeah, I blowed with him a couple times, but -- and one time I went downtown and got some for him and we're sittin' at the kitchen -- no, the girl brought it over. He had a runner. That girl would bring it right to your house. Joe was a real crack-head. We're sittin' at the kitchen table, I decided to blow with him and I got buzzed to the max. I thought my fuckin' heart was comin' out of my chest it scared me and I'm lookin' at Joe. This motherfuckers over there cryin'. I said, "Joe, what's wrong?" He's cryin' like a baby. I said, "You bought that stuff to cry. You can cry any fuckin' time, for nothin'." I'm happy as a lark. I jumped up. Shoo! I'm ready to roll. I'm ready to rock'n'roll, now. I'm all buzzed up. It's

time for me to go to the bars and drink. It'll keep me up for a couple of days, ya know? And there's Joe cryin'. So Joe eventually moved out of the house, right? He found a place over on Frederick Street. So John's girlfriend moves in with us and he anted up my rent another fifty bucks. I said, "Bullshit on this place." I had to clean the fuckin' place up and this filthy bitch, filthy-mouthed bitch, never cleaned dishes. Dishes stacked to the fuckin' ceiling. Fuckin' roaches runnin' all around the kitchen. Now there's ants, 'cause it was right around springtime and I told her about it and she didn't like that. She was one pain in the ass, that bitch. So it came summertime. I said, "Can I store all my stuff on the third floor? I'm leavin'. I'm goin' campin'." So the owner of the Catalina leased me some property by the city water works and I set up camp. He wanted me to work over there; trim everything out. Nothin' ever happened about it. Then I got ticks. All over me. The ticks got me over there --

[Two Jamaicans just walk in the back door past me and Tony during the session in the dim-lit back room of the bar.]

R: Hi, Mel.

Mel: What's up?

T: Hey guys

George: You like the dark? Huh?

R: Oh yeah.

T: Don't you?

G: Huh?

T: Don't you?

G: I like light. Everything in light is good ... is godly.

T: You wanna see things.

G: Is godly in the light.

R: Well, that could be good.

T: That could be bad too. So I went to the veterans hospital with ticks all over me. I come in the bar over at Q's one mornin'. The bartender, I forget her name, she says, "Tony, you got a mole on your ear?" I said, "I don't think so, guy." And here this motherfucker was hangin' on my earlobe. I pulled that son of a bitch out. What the fuck's goin' on here? And I said to myself, "If I got one on my fuckin' ear, I know they're in my hair," right? And these cocksuckers are suckin' my blood, I know they're gettin' fuckin' drunk, too. They got to be gettin' drunk 'cause I was drunk the

night before. So I went over to John's house And I hit the showers and about four or five of 'em popped out of my fuckin' hair, man. It scared the shit out of me. I mean, they'll suck the blood right out of ya. They'll make ya sick. So I got scared and went to the VA. I signed myself in. I was there about one or two days and I felt this on my stomach. Here there's still one on my fuckin' stomach. I didn't even see him. And I took a shower that day. He must've been embedded in me or somethin', ya know? So I pull that motherfucker out. You're supposed to burn 'em.

**R:** Yeah.

**T:** But, I don't know, I got fingernails, ya know? to snatch 'em out. I had a hell of a mark on my stomach for awhile. In the meantime, the owner of the Catalina terrorized my camp and fucked my tent all up and poured oil all over it when I went and got it. It just ruined my fuckin' equipment. And I gave him twenty dollars to store it, too. He got pissed off at me because I built a fireplace over there. Now what's a camp without a fireplace?

**R:** Right.

**T:** It prob'ly would've chased them fuckin' ticks away, ya know? So a guy told me one time, he says, "If that ever happens to you when you're out in the woods" -- they were really bad that year, I read some articles in my hunting magazines about that -- "Boil some" -- ya know them ferns that are wild in the woods? Ferns?

**R:** Yeah.

**T:** He told me to, "boil 'em and just rub it all over ya and put that stuff all around your tent, so that'll get rid of 'em."

**R:** I never heard of that before.

**T:** No, I didn't either. So I moved in with 'Joe Blow Crackhead' at the end of summer. I moved in with that asshole. His apartment. It was a garage at one time and it was very small and that son of a bitch got fifteen speakers in the fuckin' living room, ya know? And the noise bothered me. He had it cranked up all the time. Fifteen speakers. In a little box. The living room. So one time I came home -- let me back up -- Lisa brought two girls over when I was livin' with Joe. Joe could not pickup a woman if his fuckin' life depended on it. He was on American Bandstand in the fifties and he's still there, in his mind. Well, he couldn't pickup a bitch if his life depended on it. 'Cause he's changed a little bit. That motherfuckin' crack turned him ugly. And his mind's gone, too. From the crack. All them fuckin' years. Plus, he's got some mental problems, too. So Lisa brought



Judy and some black girl over one night. I knew Lisa way back. So that night I asked that black girl, "You wanna go out with me?" "Yeah, I'll go out with ya." So we went over to Q's. Then this bitch took off without me. Boy, I was pissed. The first time this ever happened to me; take a girl out and she takes off with another dude. I was pissed to the max. I was gonna fire that black girl up that night. I was gonna get some black pussy. So, Lisa brought Judy over the next day. So I took Judy out. Now Joe don't like this. His mind is disturbed with all this shit. So me and her went up to the Brunswick Hotel, to the bar; The Library. A nice bar and it was Karaoke that night, Wednesday nights. And I was singin' 'You Are Always On My Mind'. She says, "I don't like that song. I don't like Willie Nelson." OK. So I started goin' with Judy. I was in her apartment every day. I loved this girl. Tall. Thin. Five foot, ten. Kissed her straight up. Didn't have to bend down or look up or somethin' like that, ya know? She's five foot, ten, I'm five foot, ten. I really liked this girl. I was there every fuckin' day after we went out that night for two months.

[Archie from Sierra Leone just walks in.]

Archie: I thought that was your car yesterday, though. You were parked up here --

R: Yeah, a little bit.

A: OK.

R: Yeah I had to take care of some, shit.

A: OK, 'cause I seen the car, but I didn't see you.

T: What's your first name?

A: Archie.

T: Archie?

A: Riiiiight.

T: I'll remember that.

A: Arch-man.

T: Arch-man , Arch-man.

A: Yeeaaaah.

T: So, let's see -- Thanksgiving me and the Indian girl and Judy went down to the Boy's Club and got a free turkey and Judy went to her ex-boyfriends for something while me and the Indian girl went to Judy's apartment. Well, first she dropped me off. I dropped my shit off at Joe's



### FOUR MOVES (PART 3)

**Tony:** It was the first or third of December. Judy got her check. So we go trippin' down the post office. She got some money orders. I go to the House of Pizza. I had two beers for us, ya know? She's still over at the post office. She walks in, "I don't want no fuckin' beer, I want a real drink!" She gets a double-shot of some fuckin' shit and we're sittin' there talkin'. We stayed there for a little while, then we headed for the liquor store. And this girl's a stoned alcoholic, too. A *stoned* alcoholic. So she gets a gallon of whiskey. Not a fuckin' fifth, a gallon. So we head to her apartment. We met somebody over there and she talked to 'em. She's drunk. I couldn't even stand to be around her when she's drunk. I was over at her apartment. I used to go over there and she had some assholes there. I'd have to leave. I couldn't stand to be around her when she was drunk. She'd get all fucked up. She'd come up with some shit, ya know? One time she grabbed my fuckin' glass and threw it the fuck out. I don't need this shit. So I'd leave instead of startin' trouble. That was the first week of December and she's drunk for a week. Solid. Didn't even eat anything. I'd bring food over there for her. Put it in her icebox. She wouldn't eat it. It was there. She wouldn't eat anything. So one night she calls me about a week later after being on a drunk. She was walkin' down the alleyway. I don't know if she was comin' down my house or Lou Blew's.

**RS:** Lou Blew?

**T:** Yeah. I'll tell ya about him then. So she fell. Backwards. And hit her fuckin' head. And she was out. Behind the Italian American Club there. On Christian Street. She had her apartment above that plumbin' outfit. She had a cute little apartment, too. It was upstairs. She was on Section 8. She only paid about fifty dollars a month. So she went to the Community Hospital and she went to Lou Blew's and she called me about 1:30 in the mornin', Sunday mornin' and told me what happened. I went over there. Her fuckin' place was a wreck. So I fixed everything in the place. Got everything straightened out for her. She was still fuckin' bleedin' so I got a cold compress and put it on the back of her head. She was so fuckin' drunk she pro'bly didn't sit still for the doctor to do it right. When somebody has a concussion you got to keep 'em up all night. They shouldn't go to sleep. So I kept her up 'til six o'clock in the morning then we went to bed. And she couldn't lay on the lefthand side of the bed, she had to lay on the right. She had to lay in a different position on account of

that concussion she had. It was sutured up with about seven or eight sutures. There was blood on the pillow. So the next day, Monday, she made an appointment to go to the doctors and she was comin' down off that fuckin' booze, right? Shakin', shakin', shakin'. We went to the doctor's -- first we went to her mother's house and put some clothes in her washin' machine, then we went to the doctors. I don't know why that doctor didn't ask or tell us or tell her to be x-rayed on account of the concussion. That's the first thing a doctor's supposed to do when you got a concussion. Ya hit your head, ya got to be x-rayed. He didn't do that. Instead he gave her a prescription for Advil. Five hundred milligrams. So that was Monday. Tuesday rolled around and I'm still at this apartment. She's startin' to feel better. She took a bath that day and got all of that blood out of her fuckin' hair. So we were out of cigarettes and I went to the MAC machine. I got a quart of beer. She didn't want to drink any beer. I was more concerned about her withdrawals than her concussion, 'cause she was shakin' like a leaf and she didn't even want to drink any beer and I gave her ten dollars. She blew all her money in one week. Everything's gone. So I gave her ten bucks, bought her a pack of cigarettes and a quart of beer. I went down to 'The Center' at 4:30, but something struck me about her and I didn't think about this at the time. She said to me -- we were watchin' TV before I left. She says, "Tony, I feel goofy can I lay on the couch?" "Yeah, sure." So I left at 4:30, went down to 'The Center' and got us food. A bunch of food I got that night and I said, "I'll be back around six." So I got there about ten of. I knocked on the door. I should of got the keys, 'cause in the meantime she died. During the time I left.

**R:** In that short amount of time?

**T:** Yeah. She said she was goofy, right?

**R:** That was a signal.

**T:** Yep. When I got there at ten minutes to six and I knocked on the door, she was upstairs, ya know? No answer. Well I thought she fell asleep. So I went home, just three or four blocks down the road and called. Answering machine. Aaaaa, she went to sleep, right? I ain't gonna bother her, ya know? So I went out that night and at 11:00 I called her again. I'm gettin' a little concerned about this now. So the next day I go to the Indian girl and she lived over there on Farnum Street, but I didn't know her last name. I didn't know what to do but I knew she had a key. Then we could get in the house to see what's wrong. So I went to Lisa, her best



girlfriend. She called and I said, "Lisa, somethin's wrong." So Tuesday rolled around, right? The mail was buildin' up in the box. I don't know why I didn't go to the cops. The next day I called her ex-boyfriend. He says, "Ohhh, Judy's up in Lititz with some other guy." "Yeah, I don't think so, because she's in love with me." Before this happened we were just gettin' intimate. After two months we started gettin' the lovey dovey stuff, ya know? Things always change. It's a different ball-game for a man and a woman. Everything changes. So I called her ex-boyfriend. I called her mother and her mother said on Wednesday, "She pro'bly got better and is boozin' it up somewhere." That was her track record. With everybody. Well, OK. So Thursday rolled around and every day I'm bangin' on that fuckin' door. Every fuckin' day. Monday, Tuesday -- Friday the Indian girl showed up at the apartment. The word was gettin' around; somethin's wrong with Judy, 'cause nobody's seen her. The Indian girl went over and opened up the door. I knew she had a key. She had to go to the hospital. Judy was dead up there. She was decomposed. Almost five days. She was covered black. The Indian girl flipped out. They had to take her to the hospital.

**R:** You were with her when she went in?

**T:** No, I'm glad I didn't see that. That would've been on my mind the rest of my life. So I got pretty sick about this. She got very -- bla, bla, bla. She got cremated. I go down to the graveyard every once and awhile. I was in love with her and I was grievin', ya know? The first time I ever grieved in my life. For anybody. So I went to the hospital and I talked to some professional people about grievin' because I never felt it before. And I got over it in about three or four days over there. In my safe haven. Friday the cops came by Joe's place and I told them what I'm tellin' you now. And he told me she died of a concussion.

**R:** Complications from the concussion.

**T:** Prob'ly hit the brain or something. At least she died peacefully anyway.

**R:** As far as you know.

**T:** 'Cause I know she died between that hour and a half while I was gone. She might've died ten minutes after I left that day. I was pretty upset about that. I was fuckin' screamin' in my goddam sleep. I was havin' nightmares. Screamin'. I was hollerin' her name. It really flipped me out. No one ever did that to me before. So, life goes on.

## FOUR MOVES (PART 4)

**Tony:** So old Joe crack-head -- I go home one night. He's got that fuckin' jukebox of his blastin'. All the way over at the General Hospital I could hear it. I come around the corner, I could hear it. So I go in and this motherfucker's laying on -- he's always layin' on the couch. He sleeps 24 hours a day, too, ya know? I crank it down when I come in. I look at the couch. He's sleepin' on the couch. And I had the bedroom. So I'm in the bedroom and this fuckin' things blastin' again. Now this fuckin' shit -- with all the bombs in the war; my fuckin' ears hurt. Listenin' to that fuckin' loud shit. It just drives you insane. So I go out. "What the fuck's up Joe?" So he acts like he's sleepin', ya know? He's a fuckin' sneak. He used to -- me and Judy used to come in there. Yeah, yeah, yeah; we're havin' a conversation. He's listenin' to every fuckin' thing. All of a sudden here comes Joe at me with a fuckin' tire iron. Whoooooaaa! Wait a minute there, guy. He reached under the fuckin' couch. "DON'T YOU TURN THAT FUCKIN' THING DOWN!", he said. The first thing that entered my mind is go right in that fuckin' bedroom of mine and get that knife that's on that table there. My huntin' knife. And I says, "Wait a minute, I'll talk him out of this shit." I said, "OK, YOU MOTHERFUCKER, HIT ME WITH THAT MOTHERFUCKER. GO AHEAD. And you know what Joe? You're on fuckin' probation," Right? For sellin' that crack down on South Prince Street. "And you are goin' back for three fuckin' years. Go ahead. HIT ME MOTHERFUCKER! ONE TIME! YOU'RE GOIN' BACK." He settled down a little bit.

**RS:** He changed his mind.

**T:** He changed his fuckin' tune then. He put the tire iron under the couch. Why he's got a tire iron, I don't know. He must be scared all the time or somethin'. So he calls the fuckin' cops. I hear him. He's callin' the fuckin' cops. Now what's he callin' the fuckin' cops for? He's the one who started doin' the shit. I'm just tryin' to get out of it. Here comes the cop.

[In slurred speech, Tony imitates Joe.] "Awwwwl, I-I don't know what happened, I take these pills," and bla, bla, bla and all this bullshit, ya know? The cop says, "How old are you guys?" You're actin' like a bunch of kids." He says, "I could be one of your sons." I said, "That motherfucker!" All I want is for him to turn that jukebox down. So he tells Joe to keep it down and he left. So he settled down that night and the next

day he says, "Tony, you got to move." Now this motherfucker gives me two weeks to move. "You gotta go Tony." "OK, it's your pad." So the end of December -- he ruined my whole fuckin' Christmas, too. I was all grieved over Judy and he's pullin' all this shit on me all the time, the filthy-assed-motherfucker. One day he was in there wantin' to take a shower. It looked like -- I seen him in his underwear, right? He didn't bathe too much and I bathed every fuckin' day of the week. And it looked like 'Chocolate City' on the back of his fuckin' pants. His underpants; boxer shorts. It looked like 'Hershey City'. Stains, stains, stains, stains. Twenty-five stains. Oh my god! That filthy-assed-motherfucker. I brought a girl in there one time, "Damn," she said, "This place smells." "Yeah, it's that motherfucker there layin' on the couch." You live in an environment like that and ya get used to it. But another individual comin' in. They can smell it. So I moved out of Joe's house down to Lou Blew's.

## FOUR MOVES (PART 5)

Lou Blew lived the next block down on Frederick Street. I talked about him before. That skinny-assed-motherfuckin' nutcase. I had to go down to his fuckin' apartment, I mean his house. His brother owns that whole block there on Frederick Street. Second block down. His name is, uh, I call him Joe Black. He always wears black all the time. He owns that whole fuckin' area. And this brother of his is the nutcase. Alcoholic.

So I had to clean the bedroom up before I even moved the fuck in and moved shit and take shit up to the attic. Then I had to clean his whole fuckin' house up and it was filthy. I had to have a place to go. I couldn't live with Joe because he was drivin' me insane. So I moved in with Lou Blew.

Donna used to come over with the terrorist kid. She used to come over every day. That was Judy's best friend, the one I was grievin' over. So we went to Q's one night and I'm tryin' to make every fuckin' broad in the bar, right? Like I always do. She thought that I was gonna take off with somebody else. Well some guy was buyin' her drinks all night. So we went out at closin' time. Uh, we'll give you a ride home. There was a couple in the front -- this guy in the back thought he was gonna make Donna.

Now she's goin' home with me, guy, ya know what I mean? So we had to walk a couple blocks, ya know? From Q's. We all get in the fuckin' car. He puts his arm around her.

I said, "Hey dude, the party's over with you, man. She's goin' home with me. Get your fuckin' arm away from her."

Well he got a little upset. He spent a few bucks on her I guess he thought he'd get some pussy, right? I don't think so. So we got out of the fuckin' car and he comes out after me. Now I gave him a kick in his nuts that he'll remember the rest of his life, 'cause he buckled over. All I do is kick him in his nuts. He went down like a motherfucker.

All we had to do was walk three or four doors down and we're at the fuckin' house. So me and Donna are in the kitchen. Lou Blew had a crush on her, too. He had a crush on Judy, too. We were in the kitchen and me and Donna started kissin'. She's a nice lookin' girl. All of a sudden we're in bed. And that's Judy's best girlfriend, right? Now I'm feelin' guilty as a motherfucker. My heart was goin' out to her, right? She ain't even dead three weeks. Four weeks and I got me another pussy. I felt bad about that.

So me and Donna started goin' together and then -- I was there two



months and I couldn't stand this guy. He was a real nutcase. I kept the place all sparkled up. I put a nice Oriental rug in the room. I tried to be nice to him. That's in the meantime my brother died, too and had all that shit of his over there we had to take care of. So this is the forth move now.

## FOUR MOVES (PART 6)

I move in with Donna's Mother and Father in Manheim Township. Now I thought if I moved out there, that would be real fuckin' neat, right? While Donna's Dad was goin' out, we can whack it out up there, ya know? But the old man says, her father, right? Oh, he's a nutcase, too.

**"YA AIN'T MAKIN' A FUCKIN' WHOREHOUSE OUT OF MY PLACE. Y'ALL GOT TO BE MARRIED. Y'ALL LAYIN' IN THAT BED, YA GOT TO BE MARRIED. YA AIN'T MAKIN' A FUCKIN' WHOREHOUSE OUT OF MY PLACE, TONY."**

So, eventually I moved out of there, too. There's more to it, but --

## LUCKEE'S ELBOW (ELBO AFTER '74) ROOM

**JS:** Did you ever have anything go on at the, uh, Luckee's Elbow Room?

**Tony:** Yeah.

**J:** Was that a wild bar?

**T:** Yeah, I used to -- back in the seventies you could buy marijuana, cocaine. Anything you wanted.

**J:** Whatever you wanted you could buy there?

**T:** You could buy it there. Lucky sold it.

**J:** Lucky sold it? No shit?

**T:** Lucky's gone.

**J:** Yeah.

**T:** Lucky's gone. They ain't even found him yet.

**RS:** Wha' do ya mean they didn't find him?

**T:** Never found him. He skipped town. In the seventies.

**R:** No he didn't.

**J:** No, no, that's the wrong person. That's Dave Emerich.

**T:** Yeah, yeah. Not Lucky.

**R:** Folk lore has it that he's "Underneath Giants' Stadium".

**T:** Is that right? Well they ain't seen him since the 70's, when he split Lancaster. All the bikers used to hang out down there. I used to hang there, too. There ain't a fuckin' thing I don't know about this town. I've been here thirty years and I like to party. So you're with the party people, right?

**J:** Tony, did you ever see Emerich in a fight? Never saw him kick anybody's ass?

**T:** No.

**R:** I heard he was a pretty bad dude.

**J:** Oh man, I heard -- very bad, very bad.

**T:** He's a little short guy.

**J:** Yeap.

**R:** No he wasn't.

**J:** Sawed-off but tough.

**T:** Yeeeah. Tough guy.

**J:** Philadelphia dude. Millersville College. Would kick anybody's ass at anytime.

**T:** Yeah, he was tough.

**J:** Yeah.

**R:** Tony, let me see that beer over there. Thank you.

**J:** It's on me.

**R:** All right, I'll accept that.



## COLORFUL TAVERN MAY BECOME FOCUS OF FILM

[The following is an excerpt appearing in the Lancaster morning daily, Intelligencer Journal around the summer of '99.]

TriCoast Entertainment and former Intelligencer Journal sports writer Mac Rutherford are teaming up to produce "Luckee's Elbow Room."

Based on Rutherford's book of the same name, the film focuses on a Lancaster tavern that occupied the corner of Manor and Old Dorwart streets in the 60's and 70's and it's (original) owner, James M. "Lucky" monaghan.

Rutherford called Monaghan, who died in July 1996 at age 85, "a crazy old kind of guy" who enjoyed sharing his varied and offbeat experiences with his patrons.

Monaghan ran Luckee's Elbow Room from 1964 until '74. Under it's new owners (from '74 until the late 70's, when Luckee's shut down for good) the bar went from colorful to notorious and was the site of numerous arrests for drug trafficking, underage drinking, assaults and shootings. ...

## SOME CRAP ABOUT TREE STUMPS

[A conversation ensues about the tape recorder sitting on the middle of the table.]

**RS:** We talked about this a couple months ago.

**BC:** Yes, and I'm gonna get mine, because I told you that I would like to, ya know? do that same research.

**R:** Well, we might, we might do a book.

**B:** Yes, yes.

**JS:** I have one of those. You're welcome to it.

**B:** Oh, I'd like -- how does that record -- like in --

**Tony:** It's recordin' you right now.

**B:** Yeah, I mean will it record us --

**T:** Give him a playback

**J:** It picks up pretty well.

**B:** It records well?

**T:** Give him a playback on what's happenin' right now.

**J:** It's listening to all of us right now. It picks up everything.

**B:** I'll tell you what, I've had conversations with people where I wished I would've captured it. I mean in some instances it was bizarre, in some instances it was so interesting and in some instances it was so unbelievable.

**R:** That's why I'm doin' it.

**B:** Yes, documented conversations. Did I ever tell ya the conversation I had with Don X. Now this is a guy that -- you might see him around town. He walks around with the placards.

**T:** Yeah, I cannot converse with him.

**B:** Not now, but listen, Tony, I'll tell ya. I talked to him back in the days of Hildy's in the early 70's I talked to him and he was normal. But he was a little out in left field. And we would have good conversations. But then I had a business up in Marion Court called 'Living Woods'. It was a shop. And one day he walked into the shop and he said to me that he was interested in tree stumps. He wanted to provide me with tree stumps because he wanted to take something that was socially negative and turn

it into something that was socially positive. And he said, "What I would like to do is, I would like to have these stumps that people could put in their living rooms and grow watermelons out of them." OK? "And cantaloupes." Now I'm listening to him and I'm on the verge of breaking into hysterical laughter. Then I said to him, "Don, a stump to me is something that's this high off the ground, two or three off the ground or it could be something level with the ground." Then I said, "Which are you interested in?" He looked at me and he said, completely serious, "Let me assure you I do not want anything that has been defecated upon." So that ruled out those goddam low stumps. Ya know what I mean? He wanted the high ones.

**T:** Yeah.

**B:** It just cracked me the hell up. But I didn't laugh. I didn't laugh. I want to respect him. So I keep a lid on it.

**J:** Everybody's got their own sense of nonsense.

**T:** You're respecting his dignity.

**B:** Well, hey every human being deserves respect.

**T:** Yeah.

## MURDER TO SATISFY JEALOUSY

**Tony:** The other day I was in St. James' Episcopal Church. I eat breakfast there sometimes.

**BC:** Oh on Duke Street there.

**T:** Yeah.

**B:** Down from the library.

**T:** Just to see whose in there.

**B:** Yeah.

**T:** It's a very devastated crowd. Homeless. They smell. One guy smelled like he pissed himself for about three fuckin' days. Ya can't even -- ya got to walk away from him. So I pop in there every once and awhile. At one time I was homeless, I used to go there to eat 'cause I didn't have any money. And I go back there to remind myself of where I was at one time in my life. It's like a social reminder, ya know? It could happen to anybody.

**B:** Oh, it *could* happen to anybody.

**T:** Some people lose one fuckin' paycheck, they're **DONE** in their life.

**B:** They live paycheck to paycheck.

**T:** Paycheck to paycheck. Week to week, week to week.

**B:** Day to day.

**T:** You lose a fuckin' paycheck, you get laid off. You are fucked. That's the way life is.

**B:** Uh huh.

**T:** Then you got to pick yourself back up and go from there.

**B:** You can always pick yourself back up.

**T:** Yeah.

**B:** No matter where you are.

**T:** A lot of people go to the bottle. A lot guys. Especially when they break up in their marriages. They hit that bottle. That's their, restitute?

**RS:** Emotional rescue.

**T:** Yeah, that's their rescue and that ain't where it's at. Then ya get angry thoughts in your mind, right? Ahhh, I'm gonna get back at her. I'm gonna get her boyfriend. I'm gonna kill this person. I'm gonna kill -- that's why



those jails are so fuckin' full, 'cause they don't use their minds. Properly.

**B:** They're a slave to their emotions.

**T:** Yeah, they use they're emotions.

**B:** Ya know I've always thought to myself, ya see these guys that are in the paper. They kill their ex-wives --

**T:** Yeah.

**B:** -- out of jealousy. And then why would you do that to jeopardize your life freedom?

**T:** Yeah.

**B:** When there are other women out there to find.

**T:** There are a million women out there lookin' for a DICK.

**B:** That you're so obsessed with this woman that you kill her

**T:** Yeah, for what?

**B:** Well, because to satisfy your jealousy, I guess.

**T:** And you're gonna land in jail.

**B:** But you're so blinded by jealousy that you jeopardize your life freedom.

**T:** Your whole entire life.

**B:** Your entire life. Think about that, I mean, I'm glad I never thought along those lines. I mean, I've been really bent out of shape over women.

**T:** I have, too.

**B:** But I never thought about --

**JS:** Were ya ever in love?

**T:** I don't think so.

**J:** You were never in love.

**B:** Oh, I've been in love many times

**T:** I *thought* I was.

**J:** You *thought* you were?

**T:** But I don't think I ever was.

**IF ALL THE CHINESE WOULD JUMP UP AND DOWN IN  
UNISON, THEY COULD CREATE A TIDAL WAVE SO  
DEVASTATING, EVERY PERSON IN AMERICA WOULD  
DROWN**

**Tony:** Hey Rich, you look around and you see these people in these places, right? They lead a very dull --

**RS:** You're right.

**T:** -- dull, life.

**BC:** Many people.

**T:** So fuckin' dull it's pathetic.

**R:** And they don't enjoy life.

**T:** They don't enjoy life

**B:** They don't taste life. They don't savor it.

**T:** Yeah. They fight about money, money, money, money. You don't need money to be happy.

**B:** Shakespeare said, "For a quart of ale is a dish for a king." You have to swirl life in your mouth, just like a, like a good lager beer.

**T:** That tastes fuckin' good.

**B to the waitress:** A pitcher of Lager. (Yuengling Lager).

**R:** You're right, Tony, people are bored out of their minds. They sit around and watch the goddam TV.

**B:** They got to be told what they like. What they should have and how they should be. How they should do -- and they get most of that from TV

--

**T:** I hate fuckin' TV.

**B:** -- or from publications. What's the trend? What's the style? What's this? What's that?

**R:** TV's worthless.

**B:** It *is* worthless.

**JS:** It robs your brain. It sucks you in and you become --

**B:** Worthless.

**J:** Well -- no, it's not worthless, it's not worthless, it fills your mind with trivia.

**B:** Well, what it really fills your mind with is --

**J:** Which kind of TV are we talking about? I mean there's a lot of interesting things on TV? There's the History Channel, Discovery --

**R:** A&E.

**B:** The average American watches five hours of TV a night and that translates to 20,000 commercials a year. Now you figure; the family comes home from school and work. Eats dinner and watches TV 'til they go to bed; about five hours of TV. Twenty-thousand commercials and every commercial's tellin' you to buy it! Do it now! You need it now! You got to have it! Buy it now!

**T:** We need this product tomorrow.

**J:** Advertisers drive people insane with shit.

**B:** Park City had billboards out a couple years ago; 'When Shopping Calls, You Must Answer!' Like it's some kind of primal instinct. But that's what it's about. It's about buying. It's about selling. TV is about selling. Corporate America is about profit and growth and people are last. On the agenda; if we can grow, it doesn't matter if we hurt people. Or the environment. It doesn't matter at all as long as we are profiting. Corporations are like a military machine. They're very much like the military. They have two objectives: Profit and growth. Just like the military has. Win --

**T:** We are the winners and our primary objective is: To win. We're gonna wipe 'em OUT! No matter what. We are the winners, of America.

**J:** We are a bunch of pussy-assed motherfuckers.

**T:** I don't think so.

**J:** I do. I think the Chinese would kick our fuckin' ass everywhere.

**B:** No way. I disagree.

**T:** I disagree.

**J:** I think they would kick the living shit out -- just the numbers --

**B:** Well certainly population and number wise. But with technology and war machinery.

**J:** Yeah, yeah. You're talkin' foolish now. It's not even a comprehensible idea. If you want to get technology involved, it's not even a comprehensible idea.

**B:** Oh, we could never be involved in a ground war with 'em.

**J:** Right, right. That's what I'm sayin'.

**B:** They'd run over us. They would consider it totally expendable. To send in wave after wave. They could lose millions.

**J:** It wouldn't even phase 'em.

**B:** It would help their country. A war would help their country.

**T:** Economy-wise.

**B:** But it'll never happen.



## THEY RIPPED UP THE BATHROOM

[Jack Groovy buys a round of shots for me and Dancin' Dan, but instead of drinkin' it straight down Dancin' Dan pours his into his mixed drink.]

**Jack Groovy:** Well, Rich. Let's get rid of it.

**RS:** Cheers. Thank you.

**J:** Dan can't handle it.

**Dancin' Dan:** It's not that I can't handle it Rich, it's too early for me. I got a long night in front of me.

**J:** Stay off my goddam dance floor tonight 'cause I cleaned that up today.

**D:** That's good, 'cause then I can dance better.

**J:** They spilled beers all over the dance floor last night, Christ I had to wipe up that whole goddam floor up, I was fuckin' pissed off all day. There were a lot of strange drunks there last night.

**R:** Did ya clean up any vomit in the bathroom lately?

**J:** No, but they remodeled it.

**R:** Why?

**J:** Well I guess they had to. Christ, they knocked holes behind the urinals, they tore the stall apart --

**D:** It look good in there now, Rich. It look good in there. But how long that gonna last?

**J:** I think they put two thousand dollars in that bathroom.

**R:** Just the men's bathroom?

**J:** Just the men's bathroom.

**R:** That'll last about two weeks.

**D:** That's what I said.

**J:** They wrecked that damn bathroom.

**D:** It was a nightmare. That was a bathroom you dial 911 for. It's nice in there now. That's a bathroom you don't mind goin' in.

**J:** It's the same lookin' bathroom it looked like all the other times.

**D:** You know what it looks like, you clean it up.

**J:** I took Dan some place a couple years ago.

**D:** Where'd ya take me?

**J:** I took ya up to Mt. Joy and then we ended up at the American Bar & Grill. Dan could drink in there, but I can't drink in there. I was barred in there for about seven years.

**R:** Oh, you forgot about it.

**J:** No I didn't forget about it, I knew about it. Dan says, "I like this, I can drink in here. I'm a black man, you're a white man and you can't even drink in a white bar." I said, "Ain't this some goddam shit."

**D:** It was funny at the time. You woulduh hadah be there.

## THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DMZ

**JS:** Where did you grow up?

**Tony:** Schuylkill County.

**J:** That's on the other side of the DMZ.

**T:** Yeah.

**J:** Yeah, there's a culture line there.

**RS:** Wha' do ya mean a 'culture line'?

**J:** There's a culture line between Lancaster and Berks and Schuylkill County.

**T:** Yeah, It's all different.

**J:** It's heavy union territory. And it's mob territory up that way.

**R:** *Schuylkill County?*

**J:** Well, not necessarily Schuylkill County, but up --

**T:** Reading.

**J:** Reading.

**R:** Allentown.

**J:** Allentown. You go any place north of Lancaster County and you get in to Berks County.

**R:** You're runnin' into New York City.

**J:** Yeah, you're runnin' into mob -- Reading's pretty heavily infiltrated.

**T:** That's a mob city.

**J:** It's controlled union-wise. How about any women -- ever do anything with women up in Reading?

**T:** No, I never hooked up with 'em.

**J:** They're loose up there.

**T:** I know they are.

**J:** Yeah.

**T:** Ya know? there's eighty fuckin' cunt in the jailhouse right now?

**J:** Oh, I don't know that.

**T:** Yeah. Some girl that's in jail, she called me the other day. I wanna take her down to Atlantic City. Pimp her for about a week. I could make five hundred dollars a night. Ya gotta float around to find out what's goin'

on.

**J:** D'ya ever do that?

**T:** No.

**J:** That'd be another good life experience.

**T:** Yeah. Somethin' for a week or two. Exciting.

**J:** Yeah.

**T:** Excitement. Ya know? Women like that, too. They love the fuckin' edge of the earth.

**J:** They need the protection, too.

**T:** And the protection, too. This girl I know, the one that's in jail? She'll suck anyone's dick for twenty dollars in this town right here.. You take her down there to the high rollers and — ya got to dress her up. Make her look -- she's gorgeous lookin'. She needs a few alterations.

**J:** That's not gonna be easy.

**T:** No, that's gonna be easy. I know how to do it.

**J:** *Alterations?*

**T:** Yeah, she got a little pimple on her head. On her nose.

**J:** Oh, you're talkin' about that kind of stuff.

**T:** Face, facial features -- she needs some new teeth, get her some new choppers so she can take 'em out.

**J:** That's an investment, man.

**T:** It's a little investment. A thousand bucks. Go down to Atlantic City -- well, you should have at least two in your hand. Rent a room for a week. Float around. Find out what's goin' on.

**J:** Oh, it's happ'nin'. It's hip.

**T:** Yeah, I know it.

**J:** It's late at night. It's hip. It's happ'nin'.

**T:** See some old man makin' a lot of money, "Hey, hey guy, how would you like to have your dick sucked all night long? I got the woman for ya."

**J:** Yeah, but ya better have somethin' special, too.

**T:** She *is* special. The way I would make her up. I know how to do that shit. She'd be first class. Plus, I'll be dressed up real well, too. Ya gotta play the part, plus I'll be gamblin', too. I'm not a pimp down there I'm a gambler. Just roll around, get in with the crowd.



## THEY AIN'T GOIN' NOWHERE

**Tony:** I need drums, two guitar players and a keyboard and two nice lookin' backup singers -- a black girl and a white girl.

**JS:** Is this a band?

**T:** Yeah, I'll sing; Jamaican music.

**J:** Reggae.

**T:** Everybody likes that Jamaican music.

**J:** Yeah.

**T:** It's got a good beat to it. Ya got to get it down. Get a good love song goin' with it. Ya got a hit. Put it on that fuckin' internet, man. If we can rent a spot up here at 'The Studios', we can, uh --

**RS:** Have gigs up there.

**T:** Yeah. No, not gigs but we can practice up there. They already got a band up there; Jackal and Hide, Hide and Jackal or somethin'. The one's I was tellin' ya -- that hard rock shit. I don't like that shit. That's their gig. They're wild lookin' too. Earrings. Noserings. Chains. Tattoos, ya know? Looks like -- the one guy's so fuckin' skinny, he looks like a vampire.

**J:** He's so skinny he looks like a vampire? Vampires aren't skinny.

**T:** He looks like a vampire. Believe me. And the head singer in that metallic music -- pale lookin'. Long hair. Got a beard.

**R:** The Gothic look. Black metal.

**T:** Yeah. Little fuckin' short motherfucker. They ain't goin' nowhere.

## ANOTHER MIKE STORY

**Tony:** We were out at the, Parkside Motel? The place where everybody OD's all the time? The end of the road? Well, I picked up this girl at a bar. Mike was with me and I said, "Come on Mike let's take her out to the Parkside." We took her out to the Motel. Fuckin' her all night, right? Mike took seven showers that night. She told me that.

**RS:** Seven?

**T:** Seven fuckin' showers. He's layin' in bed naked. We're all naked. All of us are naked, right? I'm poundin' her and I'm poundin' her. And I stick my dick in her mouth. "Why don't you go fuck Mike, I'm tired of fuckin' you." "Na, na, na." See, he had bumps all over his body. Ya know, women don't like that shit. Pimples. Pimples all over his ass. Women don't like that shit. They don't like to fuck with a guy like that. They like a smooth body. She wouldn't fuck Mike. I said, "YOU GO OVER AND FUCK MIKE." She still wouldn't go over. I tried to force her into it. She said, "You know what, Tony? Mike took seven fuckin' showers." And I had her in the bed. I was up on her, right? She says, "What about Mike?" I says, "HE'S IN THERE TAKIN' A SHOWER, DON'T WORRY ABOUT HIM." He came out, I had my dick in her mouth -- who gives a fuck when you're drunk and shit. We were drunk the next day when we got out. That fuckin' woman had the hairiest patch I ever *seen* on a woman. I told her I needed a lawn mower to find my way around. She laughed like hell. It's like my head of hair. I loved that. Them Orientals are like that. They all got big patches. Some guy about three weeks ago; he had five books. Four were Oriental, one was white girls. And all the Orientals had big patches. I'll show 'em to ya sometime. He sold 'em to me for five dollars at a bar. They weren't even opened yet. So anyway, we were still drunk from the night before. We left the motel; me and Mike and this girl. It was about 10:30 Saturday morning. I could hardly open my eyes. And I couldn't walk too good either. So we went over to the house, to my brother's, Larry. 'Cause he wouldn't allow that kind of carrying on in the house. That's why we got the motel room. So we're in the house. Now my brother didn't like people in the house, either. He didn't like anybody, but himself. So we went back into the kitchen to get some coffee. First I had to see where had it hidden. He didn't want anybody takin' his coffee. So I found it below the sink, behind the Drano. I put some in the cup and put the hot water in. And he came bustin' his

ass back there, in his wheel chair and says, TONY! WHAT ARE YOU DOIN' GIVIN' MIKE MY COFFEE! Then he threw the hot coffee in my face. So here we go again. I start chokin' my brother and there was a lot of hollerin' and screamin' goin' on. Then the fuckin' drug dealers upstairs got a little excited and their fuckin' asses came down -- one of 'em. And he started givin' me a bunch of shit about wakin' him up at ten, eleven o'clock in the mornin'. And I started givin' him a bunch of shit right back about keepin' me up at *four* o'clock in the mornin'. So I went and got my knife in the fuckin' bedroom and came out with it. He said, "I'll make you eat that motherfucker." I said, "Try me." So I stepped out on the porch. And here comes my rationalized thinking again. Somebody's gonna get hurt. Me or him. So we compromised, to settle it in a fashionable way. So he went back to bed and we went over to Cassidy's and started drinkin' again. While I'm there I start thinkin' about my brother and the coffee and the Drano. Then I thought about mixin' a little Drano in his coffee grounds to clean his pipes out. To fuck his day up a little bit. Like he did to me all tthe fuckin' time. But I didn't.

## MARRIED IN SNEAKERS AND A T-SHIRT

**Tony:** I wished I had my second wife back.

**RS:** Why is that?

**T:** I don't know. I think about her every fuckin' day of the week.

**JS:** Ya wish ya had who?

**T:** My second wife back. Her old man, her Father owns X.X. XXXX Co. in Lancaster. I married his oldest daughter, back in the eighties. 1981 I married her. In a pair of fuckin' sneakers and a T-shirt.

**R:** You got married that way?

**T:** Yeah.

**J:** With a pair of sneakers on and what?

**T:** A fuckin' T-shirt.

**J:** Nothin' -- no pants on.

**T:** Yeah, I had a pair of pants on. Pants and T-shirt and a pair of sneakers. Right up on the hill, that Justice of the Peace. I had our marriage license and went up there. I said to him, I says, "We'd like to get married." "Well, OK." He put on his fuckin' robe and married us. And out the door we went, just like that. We went home and told the three kids, she had three daughters. "Tony, you got married in a pair of sneakers?" I said, "I sure did, honey. What difference does it make?" I'd like to get married like these people do up at 'The Studio', all decked out and shit.

**R:** Some people get married with no clothes on, ya know?

**T:** Some people get married underwater.

**R:** Right.

[Waitress walks up and asks J if he wants another beer.]

**J:** Ohhh, I don't know.

**T:** Want another beer on me, guy?

**R:** You bet, Tony.

**T:** Alright. When I got money, I treat. Yeah, we'd like to have two more, please.

**Waitress:** And what are you drinkin' tonight?

**T:** A Lager.



## THE CHECK'S IN THE MAIL

**Tony:** I worked there three days and quit. I just got my fuckin' check. I worked out there last week. They treated me like a fuckin' dog, man. I went over there last Tuesday. I didn't get the check. He said payday's on Tuesday. So I thought I'd get the check in the mail, right?

**JS:** Right.

**T:** This Tuesday, 'cause I talked to him the Thursday before. I worked: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, of last week. I talked to the boss and told him what happened.

**J:** That was cold. That was very cold out there, *them* days.

**T:** There's heat inside the building.

**J:** Right. They got a big propane heater --

**T:** Yeah, there's heat up on the second floor.

**J:** Yeah, yeah.

**T:** I was runnin' around with a T-shirt on.

**J:** Yeah.

**T:** And I went out there last Tuesday figurin' maybe they sent my check down. Jack Groovy took me out.

[The waitress walks over.]

**J:** Hey-uh, XXXX, I'm gonna get a pitcher. I'll split that. I didn't know you were drinkin' Lager. I'll buy some beer for ya.

**T:** Alright.

**J:** 'Cause I'm not gonna drink it all. I just want another glass or so. I'll pay for it.

**T:** Alright. So Jack Groovy took me out there.

**J:** Yeah.

**T:** I got on the job-site --

**J:** Is that for P-O --

**T:** No. The name of the comp'ny is XXXXXXXX XXXXXXXXXX.

**J:** Oh. OK.

**T:** Outside of Reading.

**J:** Right, Right.

**T:** And I went up. I said, "Is the foreman on the job?" They said, "No." I said, "Who's the acting foreman?" They told me, right? So I went up to the second floor, to the control room and this asshole who's been givin' me a hard time during the three days. He's one of the reasons why I quit. And he says, "Tony, you got to get out of here, you don't belong on this job." I says, "I'm lookin' for the acting foreman, I want my check."

**[Waitress comes over with the beer.]**

**J:** Give me three dollars and put the change in your pocket. I'll settle up with YYYY when I walk up to the bank. Stewart, do you owe me any money?

**R:** No, I don't think so. Do you owe me any money?

**T:** I don't think I owe ya any money.

**J:** I thought I was cleaned up with you, right?

**R:** Yeah.

**J:** Tools and all that stuff.

**R:** Yeah. So what happened there, Tony?

**T:** We get up there and the guy that's been givin' me a hard time the last couple days -- During the job I went to him and I says, "Can I borrow your drill?" He's workin' in the control room, where all the electric is? I'm workin' back further runnin' electrical pipe. "NO, YOU CAN'T USE THE DRILL" I said, "All I need is two fuckin' holes in a box." "NO, GO DOWN TO THE FIRST FLOOR AND GET IT," he said. "It's layin' right there, man." Well that really pissed me off. I said to myself, "Man, I don't like this motherfucker up here." I went around there again and he says, "What are you lookin' for now, Tony?" I started to say, "None of your motherfuckin' business, man." I mean, "Why're ya keepin' an eye on me all the fuckin' time, man? You a fuckin' eagle or somethin'? Shit." So, I said, "I'll tell ya what dude, I ain't askin' you for a fuckin' thing. No more. You can go fuck yourself, NOW, with a piece of pipe, whatever you wanna do, guy." And I walked away from him. So we had a personality thing there. That was the second day I was there. Third day, the Foreman says, "We gotta have production and quality. Quality means get it in and I don't give a fuck how ya do it. Production means fast," right? We're on the assembly line. I never been on an assembly line on an electrical contractin' job. Ya do it and that's it. So the third day he agitated me. At three o'clock in the afternoon. I said to one of my coworkers, Frankie, "Twenty-five years in the trade, I ain't never walked

off a job in three days," right? Tsssst. I picked up my tools and went down to the fuckin' job trailer. He's in there lookin' at some pictures. He must of took 'em somewhere, right? I says, "I'm tired of your agitation." I quit. And I walked away. So I went back this Tuesday to get my check and he wasn't there. This bla, bla mouth in the control room. "You got to get out of here, you don't belong here, I'm goin' to see the general foreman." I said, "Go ahead motherfucker." And I spit on his chest. I wanted to spit in his eyes. Like in the 'Handgun' chapter. I wanted him to hit me. I said, "You motherfucker, you hit me, I'm gonna have you arrested. So we walked down. Went outside. And I'm thinkin', I got that hangman's noose in my backpack and he's walkin' ahead of me. I thought, "Hang him up right on this job." I said, "No, Tony that'll get ya in trouble." So I walked out to the trailer. Another guy came out and says, "Here's your check." I opened the thing up. It's not my name. So I gave it to the general foreman and the kid came back out. Oh, I got ya mixed up with somebody else. He's givin' me another fuckin' check. He gave me a check for about seven hundred dollars. I started to take the motherfucker to hold 'til I get mine. Na, ya can't do that shit, Tony. So they all gave me a hassle and I went home. Then I'm on the phone with the boss. He says, "Tony, your bustin' my balls." I said, "I called ya twice, I told ya what happened and I didn't receive the check today. "Well, I sent it in the mail." It came Saturday, today. So that's the end of that story.

## SKINHEAD ENCOUNTER

**Tony:** About six, eight years ago I was campin' out. I was sittin' down by the railroad tracks between Harrisburg Pike and Lemon Street, behind the lesbian bar. There's a park there now. Me and two other guys were sittin' there drinkin' a quart of beer on a Sunday mornin' gettin' a nice buzz on, just about ready to take a swig of beer. All of a sudden about four skinheads came down. We were sittin' right on their munitions dump, filled with: Rifles, Guns, What's them things ya roll around? Karate bullshit?

**RS:** Numbchucks.

**T:** Yeah, they had them. I forget what all else. I said, "Hey, what the fuck you guys doin', man? Don't you fuck with us, man." I got a little scared when they started pullin' the fire-power out. Then all of a sudden they disappeared. Never seen 'em again. I called the cops about it but I don't know what happened.

**R:** So, how did you know they were skinheads?

**T:** They had their heads skinned and they were dressed in military uniforms. Fatigues.

**R:** Tattoos or anything?

**T:** I didn't notice that. They pro'bly did though. Them skinheads -- they all have NAZI insignia's and all that bullshit on 'em, ya know? Makes 'em feel, powerful. A bunch of punks.



## ESCAPE FROM REALITY

Alcohol tears your body systems down but we like to drink and I ain't drank anything in two weeks. Maybe two beers. It's slow down time, plus I'm broke, too. That helps. Ya know, sometimes in my life I'm glad I get broke. Thank god I'm broke.

I even say that, "Thank God I'm broke. The parties over. It's time to settle down a little bit."

If you drink alcohol all the time, you can't think right. So I have a formula: Drink for two weeks; stop for two weeks. And drink lots of water all the time.

All of us got to keep our things together, ya know?

I got to get a fuckin' job instead of fuckin' around. I wanna be a server. I'm gonna get drunk. I'm gonna get so fuckin' drunk tonight, I'm not even gonna be able to walk to the Stevens House. Where my apartment is.

I think I'll go to the Rendezvous Steak Shop. There's all kinds of pussy down there: Black girls, Spanish girls, White girls.

It's time to escape from reality.

## ICING ON THE CAKE

Most guys think through their dick and their dick controls 'em. Women really don't like a guy who thinks through his dick. Most guys think you satisfy a woman through their dick. You satisfy a woman through your mind, not your dick. Your dick comes later. That's icing on the cake.

I feel this way. When you meet a woman, you like her and you have a friendship for at least, two to three months. Get to know each other. Then, the sexual activity rolls in. That's icing on the cake. That's two people lovin' each other. Happy campers.

## THE 900 NUMBER

**Tony:** I got a nice little story for ya. It's called the 900 number. I don't know what it is but guys get fascinated by talkin' to women over the phone. Talkin' dirty sex all the time. Live sex? So, I got into the 900 number. I think it was a period of two weeks. It don't take long to rack it up and I was livin' at my brothers at the time. And his phone bill was nine thousand ... eight hundred dollars! I had a lot of fun talkin' to them girls but I don't know what got into me. I just did it. Every night when my brother went to sleep around 11:30, 12:00. I'd be on 900. Talk four, five hours. It don't take long to run up \$9,800.

**RS:** Different numbers?

**T:** Yeah. Talk to different women. Switch 'em around. You might even be talkin' to a fuckin' faggot for all I know. I heard that before. So after my episode of about two weeks, I was gettin' a little nervous about the whole situation.

**R:** It's addictive.

**T:** Very addictive. And I don't know why I did it, because hell I could talk to any woman in town about dirty sex, if I wanted to. Just call 'em up on the phone right in Lancaster. No charge. I don't know, but the way they show them girls on TV, ya get an image of a gorgeous, gorgeous, gorgeous woman.

**R:** That's not who you're talkin' to.

**T:** No, not really. But that's the image you get in your head. I'm talkin' to this gorgeous woman, ya know? I've had lots and lots of gorgeous women in my life. So after this two-week episode, I was gettin' a little nervous about my brother gettin' this \$9,800 phone bill. So I decided to check my self into the Veterans Hospital, to get away from this thing. So I got in the hospital and got away from it -- I was up there braggin' to the nurses about it. And tellin' everybody about it. My head was still into it and my brother got a phone call from the telephone people about it. "We want to warn you that you got a bill comin' tomorrow for \$9,800 from a 900 number. And we didn't want you to have a heart attack, when you opened it up, 'cause we know you're an old man."

**R:** How old was he at the time?

**T:** He was in his sixties, mid sixties. So the next day he got the bill and I was in the hospital. And I had to come home to get some clothes. I left

without anything. It was time to get out of Dodge and I came home. I was in my bedroom gatherin' my stuff up and my brother goes, "Hey Tony! How are we gonna pay this bill?" "I don' know." And I went out the door. I went back to the hospital.

**R:** Twice?

**T:** No, I was home on a pass.

**R:** Was he upset about it?

**T:** Hah! *Really* upset. You could see the burnin' in his eyes. It was like he was gonna kill me in the house over nine grand. So it all turned out that he didn't have to pay it anyway.

**R:** How did he get out of it?

**T:** 'Cause I was in the hospital with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. I guess he told everybody I was crazy.

**R:** So they waived the charges.

**T:** They waived the bill. Bye, bye



## UNFRIENDLY TAXI

**Tony:** I was campin' at the County Park the last couple weeks and I was drinkin' in town. I'm an alcoholic. I'm a binge drinker. I drink for weeks and then I stop for months sometimes. Six months, three months and all of a sudden somethin' triggers in my brain and once I start I can't stop. And I just constantly drink. We could do a story on alcoholism, too. I had my bicycle down at the other end of town at Mr. Z's bar. First I stopped at the Wonder Bar. And they wouldn't serve me.

**RS:** Why?

**T:** My hair was stickin' way up in the air from ridin' my bicycle. It looked long and wild. So I opened the door, "No, no, no, no, no."

**R:** So they thought you were a wild-man?

**T:** Yeah, at the Wonder Bar of all places. I couldn't believe that. And I had my bike locked up. I was just goin' in for a drink. Just headin' down the road, ya know?

**R:** Ya never started any trouble there?

**T:** No, hell, it was the first time I'd been there in twenty years. I didn't even get in the door. All I did was open it, "Uh-uh, uh-uh." That freaked me out. It was 'cause my hair was so wild from the bicycle. They prob'ly thought I did about fifty hits of crack cocaine. So I went down to Mr. Z's. And I'm gettin' pretty toasted. I got to ride my bicycle down to the camp grounds and I'm afraid I might get killed. I might get the fuck run over or somebody else might get hurt. So I told the bartender to call me a cab. So one of Friendly Cab Co.'s cabs picked me up and put my bike in the trunk. The cab driver couldn't speak English too well and I tried to get this foreigner down to the campground. He didn't know the area and he's gettin' all excited. He thought I was fuckin' him around.

**R:** How close to the campsite did ya get?

**T:** South Duke Street near Eshelman Road.

**R:** He prob'ly thought you were gonna take him out of town to fuck him up.

**T:** Maybe. I never even thought of that.

**R:** He was prob'ly thinkin', "Who the hell lives out in the woods?"

**T:** Yeah. He says, "You don't know where you're goin'. I'm takin' you to the police station." I said, "What?" What I should've did right then and

there was stop this motherfucker where he was at, pay him and went out. But he was so insistent on goin' to that fuckin' police station. He had me all riled up. And I was drunk.

**R:** And you were sittin' in the back seat?

**T:** No, I was sittin' in the front.

**R:** And you couldn't get out?

**T:** He had the automatic door locks on otherwise I would've bolted out of that motherfucker while it was movin', I was so angry with him. He called his dispatcher and he had the police at the station waitin' on us. We got there and they handcuffed my ass and here I wind up in the fuckin' drunk-tank. All I wanted to do was go home. I had a couple hundred dollars in my pocket to pay the guy but I never thought about what you said, he got scared with me. So I was there 'til five o'clock in the mornin' and I got charged with public drunkenness. Five o'clock on a Saturday mornin'. Where ya gonna go? I went to the A-Plus to get some coffee. I was already sobered up. It was cold that mornin'. But I had my jacket on. The last time I was in the jailhouse they stole my fuckin' jacket. Never got it back. It was a nice silk jacket, too. So I hung out at 'The Center' 'til seven o'clock and then I hit the bars. I was at the Shamrock at seven.

**R:** I was in the Shamrock at seven once.

**T:** *Once?*

**R:** At least once.

**T:** I did that a million times. Heh-heh-heh-heh. Two million.

## THE SPY HOUSE

**Tony:** This one's called 'The Spy House'.

**RS:** Where's that at?

**T:** The Stevens House Apartments. They have cameras up everywhere. They have one in the front door by the lobby and they can hear ya talk there, too. And the two garage doors in the basement. They watch you constantly and that's the reason I'm callin' it 'The Spy House'.

**R:** Yeah, the people that live there can watch ya on their TV.

**T:** Yeah, channel 2. There's a four-way split screen for the four cameras.

**R:** That's pretty slick.

**T:** Yeah and when ya walk in, when ya dial the number to go in, to get in the place, people in the building can hear the conversation if they want. 'Cause there's a microphone by the camera at the front door. That way people can keep tabs on everybody. Especially them old people who ain't got nothin' else to do and that's all they do all day long. Just sit there and watch who's comin' through the door.

**R:** They were pro'bly watchin' you like crazy.

**T:** Oh, they were watchin' me like a bunch of nutcases.

**R:** They could've made a TV show out of it.

**T:** Yeah, fuck yeah. Prime-time Tony. So I moved there in April of '98. I was in the Veterans Hospital for a month and I came home on a leave to get the apartment. I went back to the hospital and got everything set up and moved in there April, third of last year. So it seemed to be alright at first. So, uh, let's see, they had an arts festival put together by 'The Center' for mentally disturbed people from all over Pennsylvania at 'The Studio'. And I helped the director of 'The Center' set up the show. Took about three days. I met the director of 'The Studio' and I asked her to give me a job and she gave me a job.

**R:** Simple as that.

**T:** Simple as that. And then we found out we were cousins. So that turned out alright. Everything was fine. I dressed up real good every day. Weekends. Parties. Everything seemed to be alright at 'The Spy House'.

**R:** So what started all the bullshit?

**T:** I had a few incidents with, uh, we'll call him Farmer Brown. The

maintenance man. He fuckin' wears bib overalls. Now this motherfucker didn't like me from day one. I don't know what his problem was. I think his problem was jealousy, 'cause I used to have a lot of girls come up to my apartment. People get jealous over shit like that but that's their fuckin' problem. In between April and January, I had quite a few girls up there and everybody seen 'em comin' in from the camera. They know what apartment they're goin' to because when they call me on the security phone they go, "Hi Tony. Are ya there? Will ya let me in please?"

**R:** And then they hear your voice?

**T:** Yeah, and then they hear my voice, they know whose apartment they're goin' to.

**R:** And the audio goes through the speaker on their TV?

**T:** Yeah. So January we got slow at 'The Studio'. And me and the director had some problems. Then I started bringin' the hookers up to my place. Well, the other tenants really got excited about that.

**R:** How did ya meet all those girls?

**T:** From goin' out the Water Street exit of the building.

**R:** Yeah, that's where they hang.

**T:** Yeah, I walked by there every day. A couple times a day. Day and night. I'd work at night and come in that way and I got to meet 'em all. I don't know what got into my head but all that period of time. When I was busy workin'. I never wanted to bring 'em up to my apartment. I said, "I'm not gonna start this." But when I got laid off and didn't have nothin' else to do. I felt sorry for 'em, too, in a way, 'cause they're on the streets hustlin'. These bitches don't even have a place to live half the time and they're a bunch of crack heads, too. They love that crack. They'd suck a dick for a ten dollar piece of crack in a minute, no problem. So I started bringin' 'em up to my apartment and Farmer Brown the maintenance man sure resented that shit. So I got a letter from my landlord: 'WE DO NOT ALLOW PROSTITUTES AT THE STEVENS HOUSE!' And I said, "OK, I'm payin' the fuckin' rent I'll bring anybody in I want. Fuck you!"

**R:** How did they know they were prostitutes?

**T:** From Farmer Brown. Farmer Brown knows the prostitutes 'cause he's been livin' on that corner for many, many years. And this fuckin' guy who owns the laundromat downstairs? He's a spy man, too. If I fuckin' farted wrong, that motherfucker's callin' my landlord. I thought they had a camera in my fuckin' apartment.



**R:** Did he live in the apartment building?

**T:** Catty-corner from me. Then I seen my landlord down in the parkin' garage and she says, "I understand you're pimpin' in your apartment?" I said, "I am?" And she said, "I heard you're dealin' in drugs too!" That there was a drug dealer up in your apartment. I said, "Me and Dave work together, I don't care what he does on the streets. I just invited him up to my apartment to drink some beer." Then she said, "We talked to the police and they know you." From the incident at Duke and Liberty. They said, "Tony don't do drugs, he's an alcoholic." She said, "They're watchin' you." I said, "They can watch me all they want, I ain't doin' anything, I ain't dealin' drugs."

**R:** It's legal to drink.

**T:** Yeah. So I was accused of that. Dealin' drugs and pimpin'. And I ain't doin' neither one of 'em. So Farmer Brown is givin' my landlord all this information. One time these two hookers were down by the lobby. That was around the time Tex ripped off my phone, so I couldn't ring anybody up. They were stayin' with me for about four, five days. They were in the vestibule waitin' for someone to go out so they could go in. All of a sudden I hear a knock on the door. Here's Farmer Brown, "What the fuck's goin' on Tony?" "Well what are ya talkin' about, guy?" Here comes the girls right around the corner. They just came up the elevator. Someone from the building was watchin' 'em down in the lobby and called Farmer Brown. So, he goes off, "YOU GIRLS GET THE FUCK OUT OF HERE! YOU DON'T BELONG HERE!", bla, bla ... So they came in my apartment to get their stuff and I kind of felt sorry for 'em. This was two o'clock in the mornin'. So they left that night. I escorted 'em through the garage just to satisfy Farmer Brown. I didn't even leave 'em in. And the shit just went on and on. When I was workin' every morning at two a.m. -- at McFly's when the college kids come out. They all holler and scream. I don't know why they do it, they don't do it inside. But as soon as they get outside they make a lot of noise, between two and two thirty. And they used to wake me up every fuckin' night. Every once and awhile I'll scream down there -- I told this one girl I says, "WHY DON'T YOU, BITCH" -- she could hear me from up on the sixth floor, right? 'Cause I was lookin' at her. "WHY DON'T YOU, BITCH, GO SUCK A FUCKIN' COCK AND STOP YOUR FUCKIN' SCREAMIN'? AND IF YA KEEP THAT FUCKIN' SCREAMIN' UP I'M CALLIN' THE FUCKIN' COPS!"

**R:** What did she say?

**T:** She hollered somethin' -- "FUCK YOU!" What I was gonna do down there, was get some water balloons and start poppin' 'em on 'em. To stop 'em from screamin' down there. They wouldn't even know where it came from. All I would've had to do was jump back.

**R:** From the balcony?

**T:** Yeah. My bicycle got trashed down there. Right in front of the fuckin' place. Totally trashed. Between six and eight in the evening. Trashed. Kicked my fuckin' wheels in

They looked like lopsided spider webs. They were all fucked up. Both of 'em. Plus they stole my seat cover. I only left it out there for two hours. And in the garage, twice when I was livin' there. Twice they cut my tires. Somebody cut my tires. I think it was the Farmer Boy. I almost got into a fuckin' fight with Farmer Brown on the elevator one day. He was givin' me some grief. He came down while I was in the lobby talkin' to a dude. "WHAT'S GOIN' ON DOWN HERE?" "WHOSE FIGHTIN' DOWN HERE?" "There ain't no one fightin'. What are ya talkin' about, man? There's nothin' goin' on down here." Then Farmer Brown's lookin' at me. So I go to get on the elevator and he's standin' there, and he says, "Don't get smart, Tony." I says, "Hey guy, the only thing I wanna do is take a shower and go out. That's it." Then one time right before I moved. It was on a Saturday. He says to me, "Ya know, Tony, you're behind in your rent." So I'm sayin' to myself, "That ain't none of your motherfuckin' business in the first place." Then he says, "You're nothin' but a drunk." I says, "Me? YOU, ARE THE BIGGEST MOTHERFUCKIN' DRUNK IN THIS PLACE, PLUS YOU'RE A FUCKIN' COCAINE HEAD." So I ran into the landlord a few days later. She says, "I understand you cussed Farmer Brown out. I said, "What?" And I explained to her what he said. What's he callin' me a drunk for. There ain't no man on this motherfuckin' earth in my entire life that ever called me a drunk. I felt like tappin' his head right there. But rationalized thinkin'. You tap him and you're goin' to jail and he's not worth it.

**R:** Let him throw the first punch.

**T:** Let him throw the first punch and we'll see what happens. Now I'm movin' out of the 'Spy House'. I got all this stuff figured out in my head, what I'm gonna do and everything got f-u-u-ucked up. I'm movin' my stuff out of my apartment. I had a wicker chest with all my summer clothes, all my military records, social security. All my personal

belongings I put down in the garage. I go back up in the elevator. Come back down. Within ten minutes and the fuckin' wicker chest is gone. I got so fuckin' disgusted — I can't even leave my stuff ten minutes and it's gone.

**R:** Nobody seen anything from the camera?

**T:** Yeah, how is it that nobody sees anything and everything at the same time? There's one door ya can come out of that doesn't have a camera. The King Street side. It says: 'Alarm Will Sound'. But there is no alarm. I used to get paranoid in that place. Cameras watchin' ya all the time.

**R:** Big brother.

**T:** Yeah, big brother's watchin' you. Tryin' to fuck ya. Exactly. So I guess that's about it for the spy house.

## BUTCHER-KNIFE-TOTIN' TAMMY

**Tony:** I was livin' in Columbia, South Carolina. I was workin' for an electric company in the early seventies, I guess. And I used to work out of town, Monday through Friday. I had two, three, four kids. The wife. I came home at the end of the week one time and she wasn't there. No one was there. But I knew they were at her mother's house. So I went to her mother's house. Her name was Tammy. I got about half gooned up before I went over that Friday night. I worked all fuckin' week. I go over there. Her mother's an alcoholic. She tried to get in my pants one fuckin' time, right? But I thought that was fuckin' immoral. To the max. Mama tryin' to get in son-in-law's pants. My wife was pretty young so her mom wasn't that old. I was in my twenties. One night we were drunk, drinkin' and she tried to get in my pants but I was brought up with so many values. Back to the story. Now this fuckin' bitch, man; stoned alcoholic. She's drunk all the time. I come to the house. The kids are there. My wife. And her mother was pissed off at me. "YOU'RE NOT TREATIN' MY DAUGHTER RIGHT." You know how mother-in-laws are. But I'm fuckin' workin' my ass off. All week long. Out of town. To support this family but I'm not treatin' her right. What she meant by not treatin' her right, was because I used to run around on her. I took care of everything else, but I used to run around on her. A lot. I prob'ly didn't love her. All I wanted was a big family. So I go to the bathroom. I'm in there takin' a leak. All fucked up. Here comes mother-in-law. I just heard the door open and her comin' in and I'm still there takin' a leak and I say, "What the fuck ya doin' in here? I'm usin' the bathroom." I thought she wanted to -- and all of a sudden this butcher knife appears. About twelve inches long. I get a rush of adrenaline, then she plunged at me and she hit me right on the chest. Tore my T-shirt before I stopped it and it was right at my heart. She's gonna blow me away.

**RS:** She meant business.

**T:** Business time. When I seen it comin' I grabbed her wrist and I pulled it back. And we're fuckin' wrestlin' around in this small bathroom, ya know? I didn't even finish my piss and I finally got the fuckin' thing away from her. And I'm like, "Oh my God, this bitch really wants to do me in." Kind of scared me a little bit. So I'm finishin' up in the bathroom and here she comes after me with another butcher knife. Round two. She had a hold of that son-of-a-bitch so bad, I had to break her wrist to get it out of her



hand. Snapped it. Then I got the fuckin' knife away and she was hollerin' and screamin'. Everybody was fuckin' gettin' – it was chaos in the whole fuckin' house. The kids hollerin' and screamin' and I'm in the middle of it. Now I'm gettin' a little scared of this whole shit so I fuckin' took off. I got the fuck out of the house. I got my things 'cause I knew she was gonna have me arrested. So I caught a bus to Pennsylvania that night.

**R:** So what happened?

**T:** I went back in a couple weeks after everything simmered down. Came back. Quit my job. I said to myself, "I'm not livin' down here with her." And I left for Jersey. Plainfield, New Jersey. I had a friend there. I stayed with him. I got a job right away, then I accumulated enough money to get down and get my children. And my wife.

## 1970, AUGUST TENTH

**Tony:** 1970. August tenth

**RS:** You remember the day?

**T:** Yeah, it was my birthday. I was in the courthouse in Lancaster. I threatened to kill my wife and her boyfriend. It all started out as a game. Threatenin' 'em because I was pretty angry with them two. I told 'em I was gonna climb up that tree where they live, jump over to the balcony and kill both of 'em in their bed. And shoot his fuckin' dick off. They took this very seriously. They were very scared. Her boyfriend had handguns in the house; rifles, shotguns. So August tenth I had a court hearing and they decided in the court to send me to a state mental hospital. Crazy. Crazyman. So I went to St. Joe's Hospital. Psychiatric Unit. I was there about two weeks and then they shipped me off to Embreeville State Hospital. The sheriff's took me there. Escort service. I met this woman while I was at St. Joe's and I kind of liked her quite a bit. A gorgeous woman. That's enough for now. She'll be back in the story later. So I was very angry about gettin' sent to a state hospital. I ain't never been to a state hospital. At Embreeville State Hospital, each building has their own county in it. Like Lancaster County, Chester County, Dauphin County --

**R:** Everybody's segregated by county.

**T:** And they had a special place for retarded kids. So I'm there and I'm angry. Very angry. I got into a few fights there. And after awhile I met this young girl. She was pregnant. So I started hangin' out with her. They had a swimmin' pool there. We went swimmin'. Played around in the pool, ya know? It was fun. Oh yeah, there was five guys from Lancaster that got busted in a drug raid on South Duke Street. They were there, too. Back in 1970 they put 'em in the state hospital instead of jail. They had a birthday party and they put marijuana or LSD in the birthday cake. The one guy shot heroin every day at the hospital.

**R:** How did he get a hold of it?

**T:** He had his girlfriend bring it up. And the other four guys smoked pot every day. We had these student nurses from Philly (Philadelphia), right?, and I was always wondering why they were always hangin' around these guys, 'cause none of these guys were that good lookin'. Well I found out later on they liked pot. All they were doin' was gettin' high every night. So anyway, I'm gettin' tired of this joint.

**R:** How long were ya supposed to be there?

**T:** Indefinite. 'Til they thought it was time for me to go home. So -- this is funny -- I escaped from that place. I'm tired of this fuckin' nuthouse. All these fuckin' nuts runnin' around. The only reason I was up there, was because I was pissed off at my old lady. And now I got to deal with all these nutcases. So I said, "It's time for me to leave here." I went down through the woods to the road and hitch-hiked to Lancaster.

**R:** Was it easy to escape?

**T:** Yeah. Just walk out the door. I did it at a certain time so they wouldn't know it for about four, five hours. So I get into Lancaster, to my brothers at the Davidson Apartments. Number 12, I think. Top floor. I get there and nobody's at home. Then I remembered my brother sayin' he was goin' on vacation. So I popped the window out and crawled in. The telephone rings, right? I answer the phone. Uh, we'd like to inform you, Mr. Straub, that uh, your brother escaped from Embreeville State Hospital. I said, "Yeah?" They said, "Would you be on the lookout for him?" I said, "I sure will. Bye."

**R:** They thought they were talkin' to your brother?

**T:** Yeah. So I had a check there. It must've been late at night when I got there. So I took my check and went over to Cassidy's. Remember Cassidy's?

**R:** Yeah, that's the first bar I got served at underage.

**T:** Joe the owner cashed it for me and then I got drunk there that night. Then I got to thinkin' about that girl I met at St. Joes's, right? So I went over to West End Avenue, where she lived. But I still have Thorazine and Norvil in my system. They were pumpin' it in me to slow me down. So I was there awhile with her. She had problems with sexuality. I got her in bed, right? And Thorazine will knock your dick down and it ain't comin' up. She got all excited because I couldn't perform, ya know? I said, "Honey, ya know it's the medication." And this chick had a beautiful body. My dick should of jumped in a heartbeat. So she was a little dissatisfied with that. Anyway, I knew they'd be lookin' for me in Lancaster so I went home to Tremont. She took me to the bus station. I caught the bus. I told my mother and father that I ran away from that place. I was angry at that time. Angry with everyone for some reason. So I was there a couple days and I went to the public swimming pool. Someone there tried to give me a hard time so I cracked him one in the

pool. Then they threw me out and my other brother came and got me. His daughter was a lifeguard there. She was embarrassed over the whole thing. So I'm layin' in bed at my parents house and here comes the guys in white coats. Now I'm goin' to Pottsville. Psychiatric Hospital. My mother and father decided it's time for me to go back. Back in the seventies they treated mental patients pretty harsh. So I'm in this holding area and here comes these cops. They used to get cops to take care of the patients. And they said, "We want you to go to this room. I knew where they were gonna put me. In the seclusion room and I don't like tight places. I feel funny when I'm in a tight place. I get claustrophobic. So there's six of 'em there, right? Six cops, for one little guy like me. They're scared of me. I says, "OK, no problem. I'm not gonna give you any problems." So they had my hands out. All six of 'em jumped on me. They all had to put their hands on me. So they took me back to the seclusion room, right? Oh, this is great here. So this one fuckin' cop had to be smart. He pushed me through the fuckin' door. I turned around, made a fist, when I was turnin' and hit that motherfucker square on his nose and broke his motherfuckin' nose. I found that out the next day. I got away with that one though. No charges, 'cause I'm a mental patient. They left me out of the seclusion room the next day, so I could smoke. Then the boys from Embreeville were comin' after me. They came after me that next day. And I was back again. So in the meantime this girl was upset because I left and they shipped her to another part of the hospital. She was pro'bly one of those runaways. A young girl, ya know? I said, "How am I gonna get to her?" They used to put flowers all around the hospital. Yeah, that's how I can get over to her. I said, "I'll take some flowers over to that building." So I go over and there she was. I ran over and she grabbed me; bla, bla, bla and these fuckin' nurses were gettin' excited 'cause this girl was all over me. They were goin', "Hey, what are ya doin'! What are ya doin'!" Then I left and about a half hour later she was transferred to Lancaster County. She was raisin' all kinds of hell 'cause she wanted to be there with me. Anyway, to occupy my time I used to go to the wood shop and I made a baseball bat on a lathe. I don't know why I made a baseball bat. I took a square piece of wood about two feet long and put it on that lathe. Eventually it became a baseball bat. That was pretty neat. They wanted to put my picture in this newsletter with my baseball bat. I said, "No-o-o-o way!" One time I stole an ice pick, a couple of drill bits, some other tools and they ransacked the whole building. They found 'em, too. They found 'em all in my room. I didn't



get punished for it, though. They just wanted 'em back, especially that ice pick.

**R:** Why did ya take the ice pick?

**T:** I don't know. I wasn't gonna kill anybody with it, but -- I just took it, ya know? Somethin' to take from down there. This one guy used to get on my fuckin' nerves, "How did you learn all this stuff? How do you know all these tools," ya know? Most people that go in there don't have a fuckin' clue what anything is. All they do is sit around. They don't do anything. They don't do anything. They don't make anything. I think I made birdhouses and all that bullshit. Then they had guys from the hospital of the criminally insane come in. It's up around Hazelton, I think. About three or four of them guys there. They were gettin' rehabilitated back into society. They weren't too bad. There was one guy there who ran the store and he was fuckin' crazy as the days gone, man. He had some kind of disease, too. He used to scratch himself all the time 'til the blood came. And he used to holler and scream all the time. He was a real nutcase. OK, I'm there awhile. Settled down. It's time for Tony to escape again. I'm tired of this fuckin' place. I wanna go the fuck home. So I did the same thing again. Hitch-hiked back to Lancaster. Went to my brother Larry's again. He was home this time. I got all fucked up and this girl's father -- step-father brought this girl to Larry's apartment. I spent the afternoon with her. I was drinkin' vodka and gettin' all fucked up. Vodka always fucks me up. Every fuckin' time I drink it I get in some shit. Some kind of trouble. Can't drink it. Me and Uzi\* were drinkin' tequila and we fell down. Come here, I wanna show ya somethin'.

**[\*Tony's roommate. This session was recorded in Tony's apartment; we walk over to the window.]**

Ya see that black railing in front of that building. It's a stairway to the basement.

**R:** Stairway to hell.

**T:** Yeah, I fell down that motherfucker, me and my roommate, walkin' home from Hall's Café. And I thought for some reason that was our apartment there.

**Uzi:** He walked me over there, I tried to save him because he started fallin'. I put my arm around his and he dragged me right down the steps.

**T:** I fell right to the bottom of the concrete steps. Was sore for a couple days. I'm lucky I didn't break anything. I had a knot on my head --

**U:** I chipped a tooth. Tony conked his head good.

**T:** You're not gonna hurt this hard head, ah-heh-heh-heh.

**U:** I was so afraid for him to fall asleep that night, 'cause I thought he might have a concussion.

**R:** Didn't knock ya out though?

**T:** No. That's what the doctor asked me. That's the first thing he asked me. I was so fuckin' drunk. I can't drink that stuff. I get disoriented. I can drink beer day and night and know what I'm doin'. Don't remember anything but I know what I'm fuckin' doin' and I don't stumble or anything. Any kind of vodka. Any kind of whiskey. Disoriented. To the max. They thought me and him were two queers comin' up the road, we were holdin' each other up. The kids down the street --

**U:** They asked us if we were gay. I said, "No, we're just fucked up, man." Then the next day Tony walks down there and the kids say, "Are you sober today?"

**T:** "Can you walk by yourself today?", they said. The little punks. I don't say nothin' to 'em. Just let 'em shoot their mouths off. Ya don't know if they'll fuckin' pull a gun on ya. Well, let's get back to the story -- Where was I?

**R:** Ya left the second time.

**T:** Yeah, the girl came over, I can't remember her name. It was thirty years ago. I got fucked up. I wound up in St. Joe's ER.

**R:** How did that happen?

**T:** I don't know, I think I wanted to go back

and I think they put me in a psyche ward up there. But my sentence was at the Embreeville State Hospital. So in the ER I broke one of them fuckin' windows with the wires in 'em. I popped one of them with my fist.

**R:** Oh yeah?

**T:** Yeah. I broke it. That's how angry I was at the world. Well, then they shot me up with drugs. Between the alcohol and the drugs they gave me, I was disoriented. To the max. We get back to the hospital. This fuckin' doctor -- I mean, it was like a nurses station, where they watch everybody. He's in there rappin' to me, I fuckin' -- BAM! Popped him one. Popped the doctor. And you ain't supposed to do that. That's a cardinal sin. DO NOT POP NO DOCTOR! But I didn't know what I was doin'. So I wound up in seclusion with no fuckin' clothes on. "Take his fuckin'

clothes off. Lock him in the room." Stark naked. And they shot me up with Thorazine every four hours. My fuckin' ass was so sore. When I got out of there three days later those nurses would come over there. I guess they wanted to look at my dick but I told 'em I wanted to take a bath and get that soreness away from my ass, man. So I took a bath and I felt like drownin' myself, I was so fuckin' down. I hurt. I was gonna drown myself in that fuckin' bathtub. When I got out of there three days later, I had to sit on a fuckin' pillow, my ass was so sore. And all them pretty nurses was there, ya know? Feelin' sorry for me. Askin' me why I popped the doctor. I didn't know why I popped the doctor. Under the influence of alcohol and drugs, I guess. So I'm back and this girl wants me to run away with her. She's pregnant. I ain't got a fuckin' job. Where are we gonna go? What are we gonna eat? What are we gonna do when we run away? So eventually I went to the director of the hospital. I said, "I wanna get discharged from this place." And then in about a week I got discharged. Then I went over to see my kids. I was sittin' in the kitchen. Me and my old lady were split up. My first old lady. And here's somebody comin' out of the bedroom. It's my old lady's boyfriend, with a handgun, OK? "What the fuck are you doin', man? Pull the fuckin' trigger you asshole, you. GO AHEAD! I FUCKIN' DARE YOU! KILL ME IN FRONT OF ALL MY KIDS! SEE WHAT YOU'RE GONNA BE LIKE!" He pulled a handgun on me, right?

**R:** Ya called his bluff.

**T:** Yeah. So I go across the street. I call the fuckin' cops. The cops came over and they go in the house and took his arsenal out and they told me to stay away from there. Yeah, old George had me excited for a long time, man, 'til I beat him up that time. That was the end of it. And that's the end of the story about Embreeville State Hospital.

### THREE DUI'S

**Tony:** The first DUI was 1970. '70 wasn't my fuckin' year. I'm up at Floyd and Mary's. I called up my old lady. I said, "Do you have anything for lunch for me tomorrow?" She says, "No." I says, "Hey. Woman, you're sittin' around the fuckin' house all day long watchin' them soap operas and you ain't got time enough to go around the motherfuckin' car and get me some lunch-meat so I can have some lunch tomorrow?" She says, "Well you got to go get some." I'm fuckin' drunk, right? I drive my car over past McCaskey High School. Go over to this fuckin' store and it's closed, turn around and come back. Comin' back past the high school I was so fuckin' drunk and I pass a cruiser. A police cruiser. And it was in a no passing zone. So he pulls me over, right? And that was the first one. The second one was in the chapter: Toasted to the Max.

**R:** Oh, you got a DUI that night?

**T:** Yeah. That was two in one week. One on a Tuesday night. One on a Friday night. Third one. 1986. I'm on probation. State probation. I don't know how I got on state probation. I had my probation transferred from Virginia, Alexandria. To Pennsylvania. I should've been on County Probation. I used to have a 1969 Volkswagon back then. Me and this guy went up to Brickerville. We were drinkin'. That swimmin' pool up there?

**R:** Spring Lake Park.

**T:** Spring Lake Park. I used to like it up there. Ya could drink up there. I used to like to play volleyball. Get fucked up from drinkin' and play volleyball and havin' fun, ya know? So this guy was up there. I said, "Ya got any marijuana?" "Yeah I got some, Tony. Ya want some?" So he gave me some. I didn't have any money to give him. So he gave me some. I knew him. Turned out later it was PCP, right? Ouch.

**R:** Heavy duty.

**T:** Heavy duty shit. So I came back in town that afternoon and I got into a fight with this dude. He hit me in the ribs. I went to the General Hospital and they gave me Codeine. So now, I got beer, PCP and Codeine in me. So we're back at my brothers partying, smokin' this PCP, drinkin' and poppin' these Codeine pills. For my pain. So about two o'clock in the mornin'. These two guys that were with me, I said, "Let's go get this motherfucker that hurt my ribs today. Beat his ass up." That was stupid. Three o'clock in the mornin' we're gonna bang on his door. I couldn't



remember where it was at. So I'm comin' down Chestnut Street. This cop's behind me. Got his siren on, right? I says, "Fuck that motherfucker." I floored it and hit the first fuckin' alleyway, ran a couple of red lights, drove up a one-way street. I got to the back of my brother's place, where I usually park the car. Now if I wouldn't have had them two fuckin' kids with me, I would've bailed out of that motherfucker and reported it stolen. That PCP made me think, I got to get this car home. And they charged me with about twelve hundred dollars worth of fines. So I got the car to the parking space where I always park it and there's cops everywhere. Well I found out later it had Virginia tags on and they thought I stole that motherfucker. The cops were all over the place. The back. The front. They had me blocked off. All I want to do is get the fuck home. So I went to jail and I got out on my own recognizance. Now I'm on state probation, right? And this fuckin' shit's startin' to worry me. So my probation officer calls me up, right? I got a years probation. He calls me up. I found out later he read in the paper that I got a DUI. So he calls me down to his office, at the Griest Building? Get to the sixth floor. He's askin' me all these questions and he's got all the answers. But I didn't know that. Well, he says, "Let me call down to Virginia." Heh-heh-heh-heh. OK, here I go. "Yeah, he violated his probation." So he handcuffed me like I was some fuckin' gangster, ya know? DUI, right? Put me in that elevator and people were gettin' out of the way of me, ya know? And they got a car waitin' on me downstairs. Jump in the car out to the county prison. I was fuckin' raisin' hell with 'em, too. I was screamin' at 'em. I thought it was my ex-wife tryin' to pull some shit on me. I was accusin' everybody. So I spent five months out at the County before I even went to court. And this fuckin' lawyer of mine; public defender, tryin' to fight extradition. Fuck it, I wanted to get it over with. Just do my fuckin' year and that's it. And he was fightin' it. I guess he gets paid extra money for doin' that shit. But that don't do any good. They're gonna come after me anyway. So I was there five months 'til I went to court. Pled guilty. And they brought the other two DUI's up. But they don't count anyway because after seven years they're done with. They always bring 'em up though, to let the judge know. So the next day Virginia was there. The detectives. It's time for me to go back to where I started from. I should've started the story on how I got into this situation. So we head back to Virginia. These motherfuckers come up here and they're lost. They don't even know how to come to Pennsylvania. I don't know how the fuck they ever become detectives. I had to tell 'em how to get back 'cause I went

that route many times. We get over in York and I need a cigarette break. My legs are all shackled up. Chains on 'em. I got handcuffs on. They get out of the car. They're gonna put some gas in and I got to go to the bathroom. But I needed a cigarette. I was nervous that day. And everybody was lookin' at ya like you're some kind of -- DUI man.

**R:** Mass murderer.

**T:** Yeah, mass murderer bein' taken somewhere. It's embarrassing. Very embarrassing to me. So we finally go back to Virginia. I got my old job back in the laundry. I was there a couple times and I had to do several more months. Then I got out. Midnight. In the middle of fuckin' winter and I got spring clothes on. Twelve o'clock. Get out! Time! Times up! No fuckin' money. Out! Well what the fuck am I gonna do 'til morning. I had it set up with some people that help ya out. But it was the next mornin' though. They give ya money to go home with, a bus ticket. But that's eight o'clock the next mornin' and it's midnight. It's freezin' out and I got spring clothes on. So I started walkin'. I was thinkin' of walkin' to my brother's in Springfield. I think I had clothes there. But it was twenty miles away and I was out of shape, too. All I did was sit around for a year. So I got to this overpass and crawled up in there. All night long. Movin' back and forth to keep warm. Then daybreak started comin'. I could tell by the frequency of cars drivin' past it was gettin' daylight. People goin' to work. I was way underneath. I emerged from the underground, went to the agency and got the bus ticket. The lady there drove me to the station. She gave me ten dollars to eat so I tried callin' my ex-old-lady. And this bitch ain't come to see me in a year. I'm pissed off. She only lived right over in Fairfax County. She didn't come to see me once and we were married for about seven, eight years. I knew I'd lose her because she liked her dick. She had to have it every day. I knew I'd lose her one month after I was in jail. So I called her at work from the bus station. She was kind of scared of me, too because I told her, "If you ever run around on me, I'll kill your motherfuckin' ass. You are a dead bitch!" Heh-heh. I told her that one time and I guess she believed me. I was just tryin' to scare her. And I tried to call her at work, but it was busy. Then I got into D.C. and tried her again. But I had to catch the bus right away so I hung up. I got to Lancaster and I sure needed a drink. So I hit the Catalina. I hadn't had a drink in almost a year. It only took about two beers to get me drunk. Then down to Queen Street, to my brother's house. Now, this bitch is already callin' me and she's scared. She thought I was gonna hang around D.C. and wipe her out. She wanted to find out where

I was. So it would be safe for her. She knew exactly when I was gettin' out. To the 'T'. She told me one time, she was gonna come to the jailhouse at twelve o'clock and pick me up. She never did. I wished she would of. I would of fucked her and went home. So my brother said she called. I said, "Yeah? What's that fuckin' bitch want." She ain't seen me in a year. She called me later that evening and told me how much she loved me and shit. I go, "Get the fuck out of here. What's goin' on with you. I don't wanna hear that bullshit." Then two days later I got divorce papers.

## TIGHTENING UP IN HOUSTON

**Tony:** OK, back in 1974 I was tired of all this bullshit in Lancaster. Now I'm into marijuana. Fuckin' heavy. I got an ounce in my pocket everyday. I got to have it when I wake up in the mornin'. That's four years of smokin' now. The boys up in the hospital introduced me to marijuana. The drug boys. I got hooked on it. I like it. It keeps ya buzzin' all day. I just got tired of Lancaster and all the bullshit. So I take off. South Carolina. I was a drifter. I was driftin' then. Florida. New Orleans. And wound up in Houston. I had a brother there. That's why I went there, I guess. So I got a job there. First thing I was thinkin' about was marijuana. How I could get a connection in this town? First fuckin' guy I talked to, that I worked with that day took me up to the highway and got me an ounce. It was only ten dollars back then. Three fingers. I stayed with my brother for a while 'til I got enough money, 'til I got my own apartment. I had a pretty nice apartment, too. A swimmin' pool out front, right in front of the apartment on Missouri Street. A lot of streets have the names of states in that area. The main street was Westheimer Road. All fag bars. Everyone of 'em on that strip down there. Maybe a straight bar every once in awhile. And all strip joints. I call 'em 'tit' bars. All the way up there was gays and strip joints and the whole works. This was about a block from my house and I used to hang out at a lot of them places. Not the fag bars, the strip joints.

**RS:** Did ya ever meet any of the dancers?

**T:** Oh yeah, I knew 'em all. Then I started hangin' out at this pool hall and there was a disco right next door. The guy owned both of 'em and it was open twenty-four hours a day. I used to hang there and I was shootin' real good pool back then 'cause I was into it. These guys used to shoot for one hundred, two hundred, three hundred dollars. And I used to shoot with the cue behind my back. So I met some people there, fuckin' around with the girls at the disco bar there. I used to take 'em home with me every once and awhile. Then I fucked around and lost my job hangin' out up there and then I found this credit card.

**R:** Where did you find it at?

**T:** I found it on the streets. About six of 'em. Somebody must of rifled some place, kept the cash and threw out the cards. Scattered 'em all over the street. So I scarfed 'em up. I hit the department stores a little bit. I knew this little boy I liked, this girl and this guy I used to hang out with.



She didn't have much money and the little boy was goin' through school that year. I liked the little kid. I was hangin' around for about a year and I took him to the store and I fixed him up for school, school clothes. I spent maybe four, five hundred dollars on him. Well, I didn't. It was somebody else's card. I used to go to this gas station, the guy would ring up a sale but I didn't get no gas then he'd give me the money. Cash. I knew the guy. Ya know, ya can only run a credit card a certain amount of time until they catch up to ya. So I checked into a motel. I put some of the credit cards behind the receptacle plate. They're prob'ly still there at that motel. I had some other shit I used to stick up in a loft up there. So this particular day -- I wound up in jail over this shit. This particular day I asked this guy to take me over to the store to buy some clothes. So I'm in there, right? I had about three credit cards with me and the cashier's takin' an awful long time. Well it fuckin' scared me and I found out later, they were watchin' someone else. They weren't even worried about me. So I went out the door, runnin'. Well they ran after me, right? So I'm runnin' as fast as my legs can carry me and this guy got behind me, grabbed me and slammed me into a car. Fucked up my ribs bad. So they brought me back into Sear's to the security office. I tried to slide the other two credit cards out of my possession on the desk. The guy sort of seen me and he says, "Tony, do ya have any drugs on ya? If ya do, get rid of 'em right now 'cause the cops are comin'." They thought I was wired up. So the cops came, right? They took me away. We're goin' down the road and these Houston cops are fuckin' assholes, right? This one said, "Ya know I fucked your mother last night." I said, "Ya did? I don't see how." He said, "You're fuckin' mother's a cocksucker, ya know that?" Tryin' to antagonize me. Well I wasn't fallin' into his shit. Really, really antagonizin' me. I felt like crackin' him. But that's what they wanted me to do. So they put me in a jail in Houston and I was wired up. I kept walkin' back and forth in the common area, ya know? 'Cause I walked everywhere when I was down there and these guys thought I was spyin' on 'em.

**R:** The other inmates?

**T:** Yeah, these guys are in there fuckin' some guy, or some guy was suckin' their cocks or somethin'. I wasn't even nowhere's in their fuckin' business, ya know? But they thought I was and this one guy says, "Man -- and I'm outnumbered, ya know? I'm outnumbered to the max and this guy come up and gives me this grief. But we got it all straightened out and these guys are in there, "I'll give ya a pack of cigarettes if ya suck my

dick." I said, "I don't think so guy." And they get on the young boys, ya know? I remember they had that young boy in there. They fucked the livin' shit out of him. Up his asshole. Right in the county jail and that kid was in my cell. These black guys fucked the shit out of him. I didn't think that was kind of right, at the time, but what the fuck can I do about it? So I got transferred from there to -- they call it, 'The Tanks'. It was on '60 Minutes' one time. Overcrowded to the max. My place to sleep was on the floor. I had a little corner there. It was *my* corner. I only got three months out of the whole thing. But it was a long three months. I would've died like Carter got liver pills to get out of that one. So I went back over to 'The Tanks'. They were run by the prisoners from Huntington. They're lifers. Huntington, Texas. It's a nasty jail. The fuckin' guards can't even come on 'The Tanks'. There's like a perimeter around it. They don't even come inside. I got in a fight there, the first week I was there with two black guys. We were fightin' over a pencil or a pen. "This don't belong to you, I don't belong to you," bla-bla. They're fuckin' assholes, man and I was in my thirties back then, too. They all thought I was a fuckin' college boy. I guess 'cause I looked young back then. The guard asked me what happened. I told him, "Aaaaa, I slipped in the shower." I can't snitch on anybody. "You college kids, I don't know about you guys," bla-bla-bla. They cut my hair while I was in there, too. I had a fuckin' baldy and it was growin' out, right? And I came out of the cell one day, "YOU! GO GET A HAIRCUT. IT'S GETTIN' TOO GODDAM LONG. IT'S GETTIN' ON YOUR EARS, BOY!" They used to call everybody 'boy'. And everybody used to call them 'bossman'. "Oh, my God, it's just growin' out, ya know." I love my fuckin' hair, right? Oh, this motherfucker, man. He's tryin' to tear me down. I said, "Hey man, just take a little bit off." This son-of-a-bitch wants to give me a baldy again, I guess. Then I got transferred again. I got transferred out of that block. Oh, and I had a fuckin' job, too. I got a job there when I was in the maintenance crew and they had all the faggots by themselves, right? And them bitches all dress up like women, right? All lipstick. So me and this maintenance guy, I was helpin' him. We had to go in that cell block, right? And these guys had plenty of cigarettes. They had plenty of stuff, I'm workin' there, this one guy comes up to me, he says, "Can I feel your dick? I'll give ya a pack of cigarettes." "GO RIGHT AHEAD, GUY." I'm out of cigarettes. You can touch it. I don't care. All he did was squeeze my dick, right? And I got a pack of cigarettes. That was cool. Now these 'Tanks'; right in the middle there's a guard and these 'Tanks'

are spread out. I was sittin' there waitin'. Here comes these guys from the store, right? Store people. Cigarettes. Candy. And I see these fuckin' guys shufflin' all this shit in this faggot cell, 'Tank'. What the fuck's goin' on here. They must've run twenty cartons of cigarettes in there, ya know? What the fuck? I said, Hey, hey guy, I seen what the fuck you're doin', man. How about givin' me a carton? They thought I'd snitch on 'em, right?

**R:** Right.

**T:** They gave me a carton of cigarettes. They were stealin' 'em. I don't know what they were doin'. They had this shit goin'. So I come back to the cell block and then these guys are wonderin' where I got a fuckin' carton of cigarettes. Well that's my business. Cigarettes are like gold in any institution. And everybody used to eat in this big chow room. That's where everything was passed. That's where all the marijuana was passed; pills and marijuana. And the fuckin' guards are down there in the mornin', snorin' up a storm, fast asleep. We got Mexicans in there, whites, blacks, Indian boys -- it's all mixed. Ya have to watch out for them Mexican boys. They'll knife ya in a minute. Then one night, here they come. They want to shakedown this tank. The toilets were flushin' every-fuckin'-where. Everybody was flushin' everything down the toilet and they brought us all out, right? Fuckin' had to strip down, bend over. They were checkin' assholes, too. They transferred all of us in that tank. Over to another tank and gathered all the other guys up and put 'em in our tank. I don't know why they did that. Then I got transferred again. And I kept writin' to the warden. Every fuckin' day. I want out of here, man, on my date and I want all my good time, bla-bla. I finally got out of the place, midnight, 1975.



## THE ORIGINAL LANCASTER BAR FLY, 1975

[The following appeared in the Lancaster Independent Press (LIP), 9/5/75.]

There are two things Lancaster definitely has a lot of: Churches and bars. Of the two, I have to admit I find bars much more real and far more interesting. Now there are quite a few 'mating-and-dating' bars around town that most everybody knows about and the places you go to find your friends, down a few pitchers and leave pleasantly blustered. But there are many more neighborhood places that are interesting too--where Lancaster life trudges on, and the feel of things historical (sober or drunk) can get you off into another time and world. And since LIP folk seem to be incorrigible bar flies, we thought it was high (ahem) time we shared some of our finds with our readers. Thus the idea for an occasional column, 'BAR FLY,' was born.

If you've got a couple of bucks in your pocket, grab a friend or two and try some of these less well-known day-or-night spots. Let us know what you think ... and pass along any good tips.

### **\*SOLDNER'S CAFÉ, 217 W. King Street.**

This place is definitely right out of 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue in New York City. The atmosphere is moderate-to-heavy down and out, but authentic (key word). There's no telling who you'll find there (especially on Thirst-day night), but surely some of the West King Street regulars, together with some wanderers-in and other assorted folk. And attention, women. We are not allowed service at the bar. 'Just an old custom,' explained the bartender to me one day. 'Been that way as long as I can remember.' (I know it would positively break some of those old men's hearts to see women-folk at the bar, but let's get to it--!)

There are lots of reasons for either 1) loving or 2) detesting Soldner's. I love it because I've had some high times there with friends, I get off on the populace, and ... as far as I know it's the only bar anywhere in the area that serves limburger and onion sandwiches on dark bread (food, food, food!). That, together with their porter (mixed with draft, 3-to-1), and I'm transported back to New York City, where I first became an addicted bar-fly. (I couldn't help it--I fell in love with one.) Soldner's also serves up some tasty looking ham sandwiches, and other fare, listed on the menu over the bar.

Soldner's is definitely not classifiable as a 'cheerful' bar. It's for the



heavy drinking set, though you're liable to experience a few comedy scenes anyway. A word of warning—take a table down by the bar, or up above away from the bathroom entrance, which room is heartily 'perfumed' by some sort of sulfur cleaning compound that absolutely dizzies the nostrils.

I know—you've read this far and you're thinking 'Why the hell would I want to go to that bar?' Because ... it's Lancastrian to the (bare) bones ... and limburger/onion sandwiches are out of this world!

And while you're in the area, you can dash (depending on how much of the frosty liquid you've imbibed) down the street to the Lauzus Hotel, which has probably the biggest selection of imported beers of any bar in town. Also authentic down-and-out Lancaster, but with a slight touch of flair lacking Soldner's. Ah, you too can become a King Street regular.

Drink up, friends. You can never know about the days to come.

[\*Twenty-four years after this article was published, the first session for this book took place on February 26, 1999, where Soldner's used to be. They still serve booze and women are finally allowed service at the bar, but gone is the limburger and onion sandwich. In it's place is a genuine Jamaican cuisine at the Caribbean Breeze Restaurant and Lounge.]

## ONE LAST CHAPTER ON 'THE ENGLISH GIRL'

**RS:** Have ya seen 'The English Girl' around?

**Tony:** Yeah, I seen her Monday. I've been to her house a couple times in the last week or so, while her old man's at work. Won Hung Glow. Goddam, fuckin', Vietnamese motherfucker. I'd like to strangle him. He's got a dick on him like a peanut.

**R:** What about when you used to call up their and he'd answer the phone.

**T:** [Imitates Oriental English.] "Herro, who is cawrring, prease? " I said, "Yeah, motherfucker, this is Tony Straub, is your old lady home?" "Yes, I get her on the phone, Tony." Then he'd get her on the phone and she'd come over to my house. I seen her this past Monday, I was over at her house. It's very dangerous over there.

**R:** Is that right?

**T:** Yeah, if he comes home I got a problem on my hands. I don't need the problem.

**R:** Right.

**T:** I got angry with her on Monday and uh, I left. I says, "It's no good here. What if he comes home from work?"

**R:** Yeah, maybe he might show up unexpectedly.

**T:** Yeah, I can't deal with them problems. I'd pro'bly do his ass in, but, then I got a problem. Ya know what I mean? I don't need that problem.

**R:** She did have a good time, that time we all went out; you and me and Buggy.

**T:** Yeah, that was great. She had a good time. First time she had a good time in a long time. She called me today, too.

## A GUY LIKE ME; I DON'T GIVE A FUCK

**Tony:** I participated in that place for the last eleven months. I had a problem with XXXXXX one time.

**RS:** Is that right? Wha' did he do?

**T:** I was talkin' to his boyfriends and he got jealous. I came in there at five minutes to two; just got off work from 'The Studio' — I'm just comin' from work and I get there five minutes 'til two. I said, "I don't think I can have a beer but can you gi' me a Coke?" So the barmaid gave me a Coke. So I'm talkin' to these guys next to me and XXXXXX come runnin' out from the other end, the other bar, to the front bar raising hell with me. I didn't know what the fuck he was talkin' about. He got me all excited. I just told him off. I told him to suck my motherfuckin' dick. He says, "I wouldn't mind, Tony." I says, "You ain't gettin' my dick, motherfucker." I'm serious. I got barred for twenty days then. They all got a click down there. You know that. Every bar ya go to got a click. Ya know, they got their own rivals. They don't like -- get on a certain person in a bar -- I don't give a fuck what he is; popular -- especially the popular ones, that's the ones they want to throw out, because they're pro'bly -- a popular guy like myself is gettin' into their territory a little bit. They don't like that. "Well, all we got to do is get rid of him. Send him out." That's the way it works.

**R:** Down the road.

**T:** Down the road. Suspended for twenty days. He was in the wrong. A guy like me; I don't give a fuck. Who cares about that bar. I have no fear, either.

## JOY AT O'HALLORAN'S IRISH PUB

**Tony:** Do you know Trudy XXXXXXXXXXXXX?

**Joy:** No, I don't. I know the last name though.

**T:** Community Hospital, Emergency Room?

**J:** No, see I don't work down there, I'm up at the OR.

**T:** She is great.

**J:** I'm up two floors.

**T:** She used to be my county doctor.

**J:** Oh really? Yeah, that's where I know that name, okay, I've heard that.

**T:** Great doctor.

**J:** Yeah.

**T:** Everybody loves her. I remember I came down one time. She says, "Tony, you are going to be the death of me." I says, "Why?"

**J:** Why? I wanna hear why.

**T:** I was headin' to the VA Hospital. I was gettin' a little goofy.

**J:** When was the last time you went down there?

**T:** It's been a year.

**J:** Okay, good, 'cause the last time I talked to you was pro'bly about six months ago.

**T:** I was there last August because --

**J:** That's it, right after you came out.

**T:** I got dehydrated last August. I was very sick and St. Joseph's Hospital says, "Go home and rest."

**J:** Yeah, you don't do that

**T:** Well, I didn't need any rest, I needed nourishment.

**J:** Fluids.

**T:** Food. I already rested for sixteen hours at St. Joe's.

**J:** You should come to me, I got all that crap in my car. Look who you're talkin' to, honey.

**T:** And the next day I was so sick. I was sittin' in the public library. I went to the 'Breakfast Club' at the church next door, to eat. Then I decided to go to the Community Hospital and I could barely walk, I was



that weak. I got down there and Trudy was there, so I said, "Trudy, I need to go to the VA, I'm real sick." So I made up like I was real depressed and I wanted to commit suicide. I had to be in that hospital. I didn't give a fuck what I had to say. Then she came back and I said, "Nah, I'm only kiddin' about that. I'm depressed because I'm physically sick and I need to go to that psyche ward." Then they're gonna send me to a physical ward, but they'll send me to a psyche ward because I've been there a couple times already and they'll give me all the physical medicine I need. So it took me about a week and I was back to normal again.

J: Honey, you don't have to tell them you're nuts to do that, you really don't.

T: The one at St. Joe's kept me in for a week.

J: I don't understand St. Joe's. I've worked at the Lancaster General Hospital and I work over at the Community Hospital. If somebody walked in and I was sittin' there and I look at them, I can tell what they need, just by looking.

T: They kept me there sixteen hours in the ER and then this bitch came around, this nurse and she says, "Tony! This is not a motel." I says, "What are you talkin' about girl? I'm still dizzy, I can't even walk. I could walk down the fuckin' street and fall out."

J: I know what she means, we have a lot of people that come over there like that, that they'll just sit there and they'll eat, which I understand. Personally I'm sympathetic towards it, but to be honest it's prob'ly because I just started in the hospital again and I don't deal a lot with people. I deal with them when in the operating room.

T: Yeah, you like the cuttin', don't ya? Huh? You like the blood and guts, don't ya, honey?

J: You do what you're good at.

T: OK. My ex-wife used to work at the General Hospital in the OR. Her name was XXXXX XXXXXXXXX, it was before I married her.

J: I didn't know any XXXXXXXXX.

T: She had an IQ of 152.

J: I'm 158.

T: Really?

J: Yeah.

T: Close to genius, girl. Ain't that awful.

**RS:** Yeah, 160.

**J:** I don' know, I don't pay attention.

**T:** Yes it is.

**J:** I think it's 180 or somethin'.

**T:** Can't be 180.

**J:** I'm not sure, honestly. When I was in school, they told me I was advanced and all that crap. I said, "Yeah, whatever, just give me somethin' so I'm not bored.

**T:** I've had doctors tell me, "Why hadn't you been a doctor, Tony? You're bright enough."

**J:** When was this?

**T:** Lot's of times.

**J:** How long ago?

**T:** It was last year a doctor told me.

**J:** Oh yeah.

**T:** Yeah.

**J:** Who? Which doctor?

**T:** Up at the VA.

**J:** Oh.

**T:** Community Hospital doctor told me one time, "Why don't you be a doctor, Tony?"

**J:** Ah, okay.

**T:** Yeah. Woman doctor up there says --

**J:** Oh.

**T:** At the VA. "Why don't you be a doctor." "I don't wanna be a fuckin' doctor, I like to do other things besides bein' a doctor."

**J:** I just don't get paid as a doctor.

**T:** You can be a PA.

**J:** I don't wanna be one. I don't take orders from anybody, I like the job I have right now.

**T:** Well, if you wanna be that, but I don't wanna be that. Hell, I'm too late for that.

**J:** Oh, you're never too late, what are you stupid? You'll live for another

twenty years. You spend ten years goin' for what you wanna do and ten years of being happy.

T: I know what I wanna do.

J: Are you happy with what you want?

T: Yes.

J: And are you doing what you want?

T: Yeah.

J: Then ... why bitch?

T: I'm not bitchin'.

J: But why are you sayin' you're too late. You shouldn't be too late, you're never too late.

T: Let me reword that, alright?

J: Thank you.

T: It's never too late.

J: Thank you.

T: For anything.

J: That's right.

T: That's better.

J: Mm-hm. You know how I am, you should know how I am.

T: Yeah.

J: I don't accept that excuse.

T: Well I just explained it to ya, didn't I?

J: Yes, you did.

T: Okay.

J: You said, "It's never too late." So why don't you do what you wanna do?

T: That's what we're doin' right now.

J: This is exactly it.

T: Yeah, right at the present time.

J: See, most people haven't been there.

T: Ya got that right.

R to J: What is that, tea?

**J:** Yeah.

**R:** Tea and beer?

**J:** Yeah, I have a sore throat, tea with lemon helps.

**T:** Yeah, it's very good for it, Honey. I just got my voice back yesterday. I was takin' penicillin, bla-bla-bla.

**J:** Oh, I don't do that, I nurse myself. If I need penicillin, I go to the pharmacy and get it.

**T:** See, drink tea, tea, tea, tea, tea. Gargle your throat with salt water --

**J:** No, I put a little Amaretto in there just to make it nice.

**T:** I'm goin' out singin' tonight.

**J:** Are you?

**T:** You're fuckin' right.

**J:** Ah.

**T:** I haven't sang for a month.

**J:** Ah, where're you goin'?

**T:** Sanford's.

**J:** Ah, I haven't been down that way.

**T:** I rock that joint, right Rich?

**R:** He's a celebrity.

**T:** I'm an entertainer, Honey.

**J:** I know that. I've known that for a long time.

**T:** I can sing, too, sing like a bird.

**J:** Really?

**T:** What we plan to do, Rich and I. Create a band one of these days and we're gonna get that goin'.

**J:** How did you meet this man?

**R:** It was in a bar I'm sure.

**J:** You suckered him into your world, Tony.

**T:** Oyster Bay Restaurant, I met you.

**J:** Oyster Bay? Where is that?

**T:** It's Sanford's right now, Marion Court. Here's how we met: I had my jacket on, he had a leather jacket on. I said, "Nice jacket," bla-bla and then we started talkin' We've been friends ever since.



J: How long ago was that? Summer?

T: Six, seven years ago.

J: Oh, wow, a long time. I figured it was only over the summer, since ya just started the book.

T: No.

R: No, I've wanted to do this but I never had the right situation. But I've heard Tony's stories for years and I said, "Now's the time," so here we are.

J: You should -- yeah -- the only problem is, you have a legal problem.

T: So we got it.

R: Wha' do ya mean a legal problem?

J: Well, you go out and you start tape recording people, I come up and I say they used my name or they used a story and this was me, but I was intoxicated at the time.

R: I do not worry about those kinds of things.

J: Good, good.

R: We use a certain amount of discretion --

J: Yeah, you don't name the bar and you don't name the time, you don't name the names and you should be fine, but, like, if you would say, "I was down at O'Halloran's at this time of day and we ran into this female, we'll name her Joy," ya know?

R: Yeah, we change names sometimes.

J: But not something that I could come back and say, "Wait a minute, they said that I was there and" --

R: Yeah, but if your name's not in the book ...

J: It doesn't matter, if it's my story --

R: Then you can go to civil court and sue me.

T: Hey, why did you use Joy, I got it on my arm.

J: I know, that's why I looked at you when I said it.

T: Did you know I had that on me?

J: Yes I did.

T: Christ, you know more about me, than I know. We just came from a bar and that barmaid was so goddam airheaded, we had to get the fuck out of there.

**J:** So ya came over to me.

**T:** Yeah, ain't that nice? Joy, ya see that trophy over there, can ya look around?

**J:** I know which trophy, I've been in here a few times.

**T:** I have two of 'em in my apartment, for swimmin'. I'm a swimmer.

**J:** Oh yeah, I believe it with your build. I tried it for a few years but I got these natural floatation devices.

**T:** Yeah, so what happens?

**J:** It slows ya down.

**T:** What slows ya down?

**J:** The natural floatation devices.

**T:** Which ones are they?

**J:** Stop looking at my chest as you're saying it.

**T:** That was funny.

**J:** I know and I know you know what you were saying.

**T:** I hope so. I knew what you were talkin' about. I just like to play around. Play ... play, play, play.

**J:** See, if I stick a pin in my head you don't hear; psssss.

**T:** No, ya see smoke.

**J:** Yeah, it's smoke.

**T:** You're not an airhead, huh?

**J:** Nah.

**T:** Psssss. I never seen that one before, that's a good one, I like that. She's got a good sense of humor, too, doesn't she, Rich?

**R:** Yeah.

**T:** I like women like her, man.

**J:** I scare most people.

**T:** Not me.

**J:** I know, I know. Excuse me, I have to use the bathroom.

## SPY HOUSE EPILOGUE

**Tony:** A lot of people don't like it there.

**Bar Patron:** I thought they were pretty nice apartments.

**T:** They're nice apartments but ... too many assholes in there; too many spies. Spy house. Motherfuckers.

**BP:** Is that because everybody knows your business?

**T:** You got it. I was pimpin' in there and I was runnin' drugs.

**BP:** Well ...

**T:** That's what they said.

**BP:** Oh.

**T:** I wasn't doin' neither one of 'em.

**BP:** Is XXXX XXXXX still down there?

**T:** I don' know. I've been away since May. The landlady's son said farmer Brown was drinkin' a fuckin' fifth of liquor a day. And they were on *my* case about drinkin'. Shit. Go to your own fuckin' back door, man, right? Oh, and Farmer Brown had a fuckin' nervous breakdown. Yeah, he brokedown and they had to take him to the fuckin' St. Joe's mental hospital. Yeap, since I left. Now they're gettin' paid back for fuckin' with me. I don't know what it is, but anybody that fucks with me; there's always a payback. He got a DUI since I left, a drivin' under suspension and a fuckin' nervous breakdown.

**RS:** Serves 'em right.

**T:** Fuckin' right.

## RADIO, RADIO

**[Bartender brings up some salty snack crap.]**

**RS:** Hey, snacks today.

**Tony:** Alraaht. Snack time.

**R:** Do you like the peanuts?

**T:** Yeah, I like peanuts. Hey ...

**[Tony opens up a flap on his backpack, revealing a pouch full of peanuts.]**

**R:** Oh ... where did ya get them at?

**T:** The Shamrock. Beer last night from 7 to 9 was 25¢ a glass. The Marines' birthday; the Marine Corp. United States Marine Corp. I was tired, I couldn't get down there. That don't happen around here *too* often. Plus they had chicken over there. They pro'bly got some free grub over there tonight. Veterans Day.

**R:** Oh, that's why everything was closed today.

**T:** Yeah. I went to the town square today for the Veterans Day memorial. They put a plaque for World War II on the monument and one for the Korean War on there. They had that this mornin'. I was there. The TV cameras were there. I'll pro'bly be on channel 8 tonight.

**[Tony brings out his Walkman radio.]**

**T:** I bought this up at the VA yesterday. It sounds great, too. Then when my roommate snores I can --

**R:** Does he snore a lot?

**T:** Yeah, he's got this machine now. He's got some kind of breathing problem. He snores like a fuckin' -- two saw mills goin' at one time.

**R:** That'd drive me nuts. I can't put up with that.

**T:** It drives me nuts when people keep me awake all night. "SHUT UP!", I say to 'em. My roommate sleeps in the living room. I walk in there and tap him on his foot, "Get up, man! Smoke a fuckin' cigarette." I was in a room one time, at the VA? Four guys to a room? Three motherfuckers snorin' at one time. So I bought one of these radios with the headset, same identical thing. I was supposed to go to Bowman's seminar tomorrow.

**R:** Bowmans?

**T:** Yeah, modeling agency. I forgot all about that fuckin' thing. What I'm



gonna do is get my boss --- I'll take some clothes down to 'The Studios' and get her to take maybe eight, nine, ten pictures of me. I still wanna be a fuckin' model, man! I can make some fuckin' money off this shit, man. I got the fuckin' looks, I got the body. I wear my clothes nice. Everybody always tellin' me how nice I look.

**R:** Hell, yeah. **BIG** money, too.

**T:** **BIG** money. And you can meet some gorgeous, gorgeous females. Mick Jagger had some sweethearts.

**[A husband and wife come up to the bar.]**

How you guys? ... They're made for each other. Them two are made for each other. You were made for each other.

**Wife:** I heard ya the first time, Tony.

**T:** I know that, I know that. ... This radio only cost ten dollars; up at the hospital.

**W:** Rich, your hair's gettin' real long, honey.

**R:** Yeah, I know. It's low maintenance. I'm not gonna get it cut anymore, the hell with it.

**T:** Mine is, too.

**W:** Like yours?

**T:** Yeah.

**W:** I see you sportin' a mustache now, Tony.

**T:** I always had a mustache. Boy, you're observant.

**W:** Only when I have to be; only when I need to be.

**T:** Well, you're usually drunk in here when I see ya.

**W:** Oh, and you're totally sober.

**T:** All the time.

**W:** Let me tell ya somethin' sweetheart, the first drink impairs.

**T:** You?

**W:** You.

**T:** You.

**W:** Anybody, anybody.

**T:** Oh, OK.

**W:** OK? You're very agreeable today.

## I KNOW HER TWO DAYS

**Tony:** It all started when I took this girl out in the back. And this guy said, "Well, I went with her for four months. She wouldn't even let me in there." "Yeah, I known her two days." That was the end of that conversation. I let him sweat it, ya know? "Wha' do ya do out there?" I said, "What do two people do when they're hangin' out at three o'clock in the mornin' and drinkin' champagne and wine? Wha' do they do? Look at each other?" I wouldn't tell him anything. I let him guess. It's none of his fuckin' business in the first place. I don't go around braggin' about my sex life to everybody. Little kids do that, right? Let the whole fuckin' town know about it, "I FUCKED SALLY!" ... right? The whole fuckin' town -- the whole school knows about it the next day. "SALLY GOT FUCKED." That's the way it is, ya know it? He got his fuckin' dick wet, right?

**RS:** Yeah, Sally got fucked by Dick.

**T:** Exac'ly. Heh-heh, that's pretty good.

## THE GHOSTY MYSTERY STORY

**Tony:** You know XXXXXXXX, don't ya. Ya know XXXXXXXX?

**RS:** No.

**T:** She works up at 'The Studio'.

**R:** I don't think so.

**T:** I told her last Saturday to go fuck herself upstairs.

**R:** Wha' did she do? I mean what was she doin'?

**T:** She's on the reception desk. Me and the other guy were upstairs and I didn't know what the fuck to do with the decorations for the reception. I'm standin' around waitin' for her, ya know? Then she comes up.

[Tony imitates a miserable old woman.]

"YOU! WHY DON'T YA ALL MOVE THAT LADDER -- YA ALL STANDIN' AROUND!" I said, "YOU! GO FUCK YO'SELF, GIRL!" I walked the fuck out of there and went down and said to the boss, "I just told that girl in there to go fuck herself." And then she comes down and I said, "I mean, you got to change your fuckin' attitude, girl. I ain't workin' with you. You're too fuckin' smart to start out with" A smart-assed mouth. She thinks she's goin' to Iowa. That's a fuckin' story, there. The way me and YYYYY are figurin' out, she's bein' blackmailed, right?

**R:** She's bein' blackmailed?

**T:** Yeah. She's always askin' for money. She's always all around town borrowin' money off of anybody. Me and YYYYY thinks she's bein' blackmailed for murder. Boy, that'd be a fuckin' story if we ever got a hold of that.

**R:** Why do ya think murder, though?

**T:** What else would anybody blackmail ya for? Think about it. It has to be murder. She pro'bly killed some guy and somebody found out about it. I'd like to choke her to death my-fuckin'-self. I call her 'Ghosty'. She looks like a fuckin' ghost.

**R:** How do ya mean?

**T:** All skinny; ain't even got a fuckin' ass on her. I said to the boss, "Does she still have a key the place?" "Yeah." I said, "You better get that key back, girl. She'll come over and steal your paintings some night." There's another story behind this whole thing. The Ghosty Mystery Story.

## THE EYES ARE THE MIRROR OF THE SOUL

**Tony:** I watched the expressions on her face. They're startin' to do that instead of that other shit. What's that other stuff? Lie detector test? They say ya speak through your face, your actions, especially your eyes.

**RS:** Well, a polygraph isn't a hundred percent.

**T:** Yeah. You can tell when a person's angry by their eyes. Your eyes tell ya a lot. There's a favorite expression: The eyes are the mirror of the soul. And that's very true, too. You're talkin' to somebody, like -- I was talkin' to XXXXXXX one day, she had me angry. I knew my eyes were -- I could feel it and they were really piercin' at her, ya know? Dagger eyes. Like I wanted to fuckin' kill her, ya know? She felt it and seen it. The bitch.



## THE DISAPPEARING TV

**Tony:** Ya have to pull teeth to get some people to work but I try. Just like my roommate, Uzi, I said to him this mornin' when I left, "Would you try to get the dishes done and take out the trash? Would you try that today? I mean if you got the time." Shit. We had a little talk. "Man, I work every fuckin' day, you sit here, lay here and watch TV and smoke cigarettes. What's up with this?" "I don't like doin' dishes." I said, "Well, if ya dirty the dishes ya got to do 'em." He's a good guy and all -- he's a paranoid schizophrenic. That's his diagnosis. He's fuckin' dead. It's a wasted life. No accomplishments. Nothin' during the day to make ya feel good. No serenity.

**RS:** Well, he's got his cigarettes.

**T:** He's got his cigarettes, alright. He's nuts. I mean he's diggin' in the butts, he's diggin' in the fuckin' trash. What was it?, last week he ran out of cigarettes. I was tryin' to sleep in the back. In and out of that fuckin' door. In and out, in and out, in and out. I said, "I got to get this fuckin' guy a pack of cigarettes." I bought him a pack yesterday, I bought him a pack today. What satisfaction does he have? The only outlet he has with the outside world is me tellin' him what I'm doin'.

**R:** His buddies come over.

**T:** I put a stop to that, too. I can't believe -- he's got thirty dollars; I loaned five and he spends twenty-five on crack. Got ripped. What's he thinkin'? He's not thinkin'. That nice TV we had and that nice stereo? He day he sold it he said, "You wanna buy my TV for fifty dollars, Tony?" I said, Nah, I don't want your fuckin' TV." But I didn't think he was gonna sell it ... for crack. Ha, then he called the cops up -- lied to the cops and said someone stole it. He told 'em he gave a key to a black girl and he couldn't remember her name. He kept tellin' me that someone stole it. I said, "Wait a minute, I've been around there, pal, I know what you're up to." The cop came over, too. I took off because I didn't know if they had a warrant out for me through that 'Unfriendly Taxi' episode. I didn't want to be in that house and have him askin' my name and runnin' a check on me. I owe them son-of-a-bitches \$71.00 more dollars on that unfriendly taxi-cab driver. And all I wanted to do was go to my tent.

## UZI'S VERSION

**RS:** Wha' do we have here, now? The TV got wiped out.

**Uzi:** Yeah, the TV got stolen, got ripped off --

**Tony:** Nah, it didn't get stolen.

**U:** Well, it got ripped off.

**T:** No, you sold it.

**U:** Well, I sold it but I didn't get nothin' for it.

**T:** Yeah and I bought both of 'em to give towards the rent. Brand new. And now all's we have is a small black-and-white TV. And no stereo. Now, let's hear your side.

**U:** It all started when my neighbor, Ismail came over to my place to use my phone. Then this drug dealer showed up at his place and knocks on his door. Well, Ismail's apartment is right across the hallway and the drug dealer heard Ismail talkin' on my phone. So, he came over and knocked on my door and asked for Ismail. I said, "Well, he's on the phone." And the drug dealer said, "Does Ismail have any money, he owes me money?" I said, "I don't know." And the drug dealer said, "Well, I think he does." So, anyhow, Ismail gets off the phone and the drug dealer ask's Ismail for his money and Ismail didn't have the money so he comes over and whips out a butterfly knife. I was afraid he was gonna stab Ismail, so I said, "How much would you take off for my TV, that he owes ya?" "Well, I'll give ya a sixteenth plus I'll take off what he owes me." So he cleaned up the TV and put a shirt over it. He said he was gonna go to his bag and get the drugs but he said I had to help carry the TV to King Street. So he carried it over to his girlfriends on King Street and when we got there, he went in the front door and tried to break down the door to his girlfriend's apartment. Then he put the TV down and he went around the side and yelled for her, then we went back through the front door and all of a sudden he shoved me out, then he goes, "Out in the street!" And he gets somethin' from somebody on a bike, then a car stopped by and he said, "I got friends in trouble, I'll meet ya back at your apartment and I'll bring the drugs back there." And he never showed up.

**T:** Then what happened about the stereo?

**U:** I went to Hildy's. I had a dollar on me and I met this guy. He had long hair. And he interduced himself and said he had to meet a friend that owed

him some money. So he was waitin' around for about a half hour, then he asked me if I partied and I said, "Yeah." So, he goes, "Wha' do ya do?" I said, "Well, I smoke marijuana and I do crack-cocaine." He said, "Well, would ya like to do some tonight?" I said, "Yeah." "Well, do ya have anything to sell?" I said, "Yeah, I have a stereo." He goes, "Is it in good shape?" "Yeah, I just bought it about a month ago." So, we go back to my apartment. He checks out the stereo and he calls one of his friends on my phone. He was busy with somethin' -- I guess he was makin' a drug deal, so he called somebody else and he made out with him. So we carried it down past King Street to Chris' Buy and Sell. We sold the stereo and I got crack for it.

T: He got an eight-ball. It takes an hour to smoke up an eight-ball. So we lost the stereo for an eight-ball and I was pissed, too, wa'dn't I?

U: Yeah, ya were.

T: I was pissed to the fuckin' max. I was fuckin' angry, he was gonna throw me out of the apartment house. I was so fuckin' mad, 'cause that TV was gone, the stereo was gone and he smoked it the fuck up. One hour. Gone.

R: For one hour of pleasure.

U: Yeah.

T: One hour of pleasure. It's gone. I was so fuckin' mad. I was like a madman around here, wa'dn't I?

U: Yeah.

T: Huh?

U: Yeah, he was tryin' to drill some sense in my head and I wasn't listenin'.

T: I think we got it straightened out now.

U: Oh yeah.

R: What happened with the cops?

U: I called the cops --- I was tryin' to outsmart Tony.

T: You can't out smart Tony, you know that.

U: Tony goes, "WHERE'S THE FUCKIN' STEREO? I said, "I got home and -- I don't know, where it's at?" He goes, "YOU KNOW WHERE IT'S AT." YA SOLD IT DIDN'T YA!" "No", I said, "It got ripped off." "WELL HOW THE HELL DID THEY GET IN HERE?"

Then I gave him the story, which was true about my keys with this one black girl. She showed up here one day and we were smokin' crack and I loaned her some money, I gave her my keys so she could come back in. And she never came back with the keys or the crack. So, I gave Tony a cockamamie story about this black girl havin' the keys and she must've stole it. And the next day, Tony says, "There's no way she stole the TV, 'cause they would've took the cable box with it." So he figured that out.

**T:** Real quick.

**[The telephone rings.]**

**U:** Uh-oh.

**T:** Who the fuck is it? ... Who is it? ... Steve ... What are up to, guy? ... Huh? ... Over at Jed's house? ... No, we're doin' some tapin' ... TAPIN' ON MY BOOK! ... Go get fucked, I'll see ya later.

**T:** It was Steve. Who's that?

**U:** Steve XXXXXXXXX.

**T:** Oh, that guy. Go ahead.

**U:** So, anyhow I call the cops and they show up and I told 'em the TV was stolen and —

**T:** And I got scared. 'Cause they have a warrant out for my arrest. He calls the fuckin' cops and I'm drunk, right? He's lyin'. I know he's lyin'. I take off.

**U:** So, anyhow the cops come and I told 'em the TV got ripped off. I told 'em that a black girl had the keys months before and I think she's the one who stole it. They asked her name and I said I didn't know it, which I really didn't. Then they asked what the serial number to the TV was and I said I didn't know. Then he saw the remote layin' there and he said, "Is that the remote to the TV?" I said, "No, that's to the stereo I had." Then they said there was nothing they could do without the serial number.

**T:** So, he lied to the cops. He made a false accusation. You can get busted for that, too, ya know that.

**U:** Yeah, I know.

**T:** I could haul you're ass to jail right now, if I wanted to and you'd spend about 90 days in jail. If I wanted to. But I'm not going to. This is all over crack-cocaine.



## READY, STEADY, GO

**Tony:** I met her -- I was goin' up to Sanford's. I had a hit of crack. I was savin' it for later. I'm goin' up the street and I ran into her. She says, "Do ya got any ready?"

**RS:** Any ready?

**T:** Yeah, that's a street name for crack-cocaine. So I said to her, "Yeah, I got some. Come on up." So we went up to my apartment, at 'The Stevens Spy House', blowed it up and I said, "I'll get two more bags. You stay here." And I went out in the streets and I got two more bags, came back and I said, "We'll do one bag, right?, and then we'll go up and -- I wanna sing Karaoke. At Sanford's." So we did a bag. In the meantime she's runnin' around my fuckin' apartment with no clothes on. That crack-cocaine makes them bitches, uh ... sexy as a motherfucker. Horned up. Every woman I ever had in my apartment that had smoked crack-cocaine -- all horned up! I mean, off comes the clothes.

**R:** Just like that?

**T:** Yeah! It's easy. Ten bucks and ya got a fuckin' female out there dancin'. With no clothes on. Ain't that a fuckin' trip. Then we went up to Sanford's. Of course I was fuckin' tuned in, right? I was fired up. I was sittin' in her lap singin' to her. She was up there pullin' her fuckin' blouse up, showin' everybody her tits. I had a lot of fun with her that night. She was crazy like I was, ya know what I mean? Our heads were the same, ya know? We were all fucked up on crack. We came back home, right? So we had another bag, right? So we done that up. She ain't in the fuckin' house two minutes, her clothes are off. She didn't want no clothes on. I got her in the bed -- she had the rag on so I didn't pump her or anything. Did everything else but pump her, ya know what I mean? About four or five in the mornin', she wanted to go home. We were layin' in bed naked, right? She says, "Walk me home." I said, "Why don't you stay a couple more hours? Ya know? Daylight. "You wanna go home, you go home by yourself. I ain't gettin' dressed and walkin' you the fuck home." That was back in February and I ain't seen her 'til last night. November. So I ran into her at the Shamrock last night and the first thing she said to me, "You got any ready?" I said, "No, I'm out of that scene, I don't do that shit no more." So they threw her out of the Shamrock and they said, "Don't come back!"

**R:** What did she do in there to get thrown out?

**T:** I don't know. She had a problem with 'em before. She's a manic-depressive and acts a little fuckin' strange. She speaks French, too.

**R:** She's not from France, though.

**T:** I don't think so. They threw her out of the YWCA she told me, too. She's livin' on East Orange Street somewhere. So last night I said, "C'mon up to the house, ya know? I'll fire ya the fuck up if ya wanna get fucked." She started my way and all of a sudden -- she's in that confusion state of manic-depression, right? When you're in a manic state like that, ya get so many thoughts runnin' through your brain, ya get confused.

**R:** Ya don't know which way to turn.

**T:** Yeah, it's one thing, than it's another thing. She asked me to walk her home. I said, "I ain't walkin' you the fuck home." That was 2:00 in the mornin'. Your out, that's your problem. Not mine. Ya ain't my girlfriend. So I went home then.

## **I WAS WEARIN' MY MOTHER'S CLOTHES AND SHE DIDN'T LIKE IT**

**Tony:** I came back from Levittown. I was workin' down in Philly and I fell down this motherfuckin' ravine, right? Fifteen feet. I fucked myself up and I was losin' my job. So I got a six-pack of Lowenbrau and when I got back to the office, I knew I was gonna lose my job 'cause I didn't go to work. I was sick. Mentally and physically. My wife met me in Lancaster over at East End Avenue and we went to the Community Hospital. I was all fucked up. My arms were fucked up, my face was fucked up. Plus I was nutty at the time. So they put me in the psyche ward and that's where I met Uzi. That was 1990.

**Uzi:** Yeah.

**RS:** So, you guys known each other for —

**U:** For a long time.

**T:** Nine years. And when I met him, he was dressed up like a woman, right? I said, "Hey, come 'ere sweetheart!" I slapped him, grabbed him by the shoulders. "This is my fuckin' sweetheart, guys."

**U:** He was embarrassin' me.

**T:** We were at the nuthouse, right? They fixed me all up; physically, mentally. Then my wife said to me, "We're gonna break up." It was like a fuckin' secret, 'til the time came. Then she came and we all had a meeting. She said she wanted to split up for fifty days; trial period. I got angry about that. I said, "It's over. Now." I got out of the fuckin' hospital and I gave her — I was makin' \$30.00 an hour and she got my last paycheck. I went out to the house and got my clothes and left. That was the end of her. There ain't gonna be no fuckin' trial.

**R:** What got you out there Uzi? I mean, what was the catalyst?

**U:** Well, I was dressin' up in my mother's clothing and she didn't like that. She was pissed. I wore her bathing suit. I wore her dresses. She didn't wanna wear her own clothing that I was wearing.

**T:** Why?

**U:** I guess she thought I was dirty, I don' know.

**T:** No, I don't think so.

**U:** I don't know. Women are funny like that.

**T:** Yeah.

**U:** She thought there was somethin' wrong with me. So she got me committed. Tony was a trip. He embarrassed the hell out of me. I was gettin' all red in the face. He was just being nice. Yeah, he was just tryin' to kid around. And I was like, "This guy's a trip."

**T:** You were dressin' up in your mother's clothes?

**U:** Yeah.

**T:** Ain't you a bitch. Why did you do that?

**U:** I did it for attention. I would go out on the streets but I would never go out to a bar or nothin'. I never went to the Tally-Ho or nothin' like that. I'd just walk around on the streets.

**R:** Ya got attention?

**U:** Yeah, some negative attention.

**T:** Why negative?

**U:** Well, some people don't like ya dressin' up in women's clothing. Some guys, they think you're gay or somethin' and they say, "What the fuck's wrong with you?" Some guys take that as an intrusion. The good attention I liked and I used to get off on that.

**R:** The good attention came mostly from what? Male? Female?

**U:** Basically female.

**T:** So, why were you so obsessed with wearing women's clothing?

**U:** Well, when I was in the Marines I got this magazine about lesbians and I wanted to really be a lesbian. I saw these two beautiful girls together and I thought that's a good way to pick-up a girl. I started wearin' women's clothing and wantin' to be a woman.

**T:** So, that was gonna get you women.

**U:** Yeah, I'd flirt with 'em and I'd talk about women's stuff with 'em. Like what kind of nail polish they're wearin' and I used to get tickled pink by that.

**T:** So, you could get next to 'em, in your mind.

**U:** Yeah.

**R:** In Lancaster.

**T:** In Lancaster.

**U:** In Lancaster.

**T:** LANCASTER, PENNSYLVANIA!



U: I'll tell ya, a lot of people didn't take to kindly to that because this is a Bible Belt.

R: Well, it's a conservative area. Some of the churches get a little upset about that.

U: Yeah, they do.

T: Ya know, we got the Mennonites, right? They're a fuckin' bunch of assholes.

R: Well, there's a lot of different churches. Ya got Presbyterians, ya have Episcopalians, uh, where do you go, Tony?

T: Lutheran.

R: Lutheran. Maybe some are more liberal than others but I don't go to church, I don't know whose liberal, whose more --

T: Lutherans are more liberal. And Catholics. We think about helpin' everybody. We're always thinkin' about what we're gonna do to help people. All over the world, too. Now, ya got the Mennonites around here and ya got the Amish. They're dirty people, the Amish. Fuckin' very dirty. They stink like dogs. They don't use no deodorant -- ya know, keep your body clean.

U: Air your clothes out.

T: Baby Powder, ya got to have fuckin' deodorant under your arm pits and cream to keep your body clean. We got to do a lot of things to keep ourselves clean and Amish don't believe in that stuff.

U: I'll never forget the time I went -- when I was dressed up in my mother's clothing, I went to church; St. Paul's United Methodist Church and she was embarrassed.

R: She was there?

U: Yeah and she said, "Well, we gotta get out of here. Let's go for breakfast." She was pissed.

T: I bet she was.

R: Wha' did the church people do?

U: They just looked.

R: *"We're not seein' this."*

U: Yeah, it was Easter Sunday.

R: Oh, on Easter, yet!

T: Oh, my God! Yeah, his mother worries about him all the time. I'm

pro'bly his guardian angel.

**U:** He's lookin' out for me.

**R:** Yeah, ya might be dead by now if it weren't for Tony.

**U:** Yeah.

**T:** And I might be dead if it weren't for him gettin' drunk all the fuckin' time.

**U:** Well, I knew Tony and I knew he'd be a good roommate. He came to me for help and Tony was drunk on his bike and he says, "I need help, will ya help me?" I said, "Sure." He goes, "I need a place to stay." I said, "No Problem." I don't know why we didn't figure about that earlier. He was worried down at 'The Center' that he had to move his stuff out of the Stevens' House and he asked me if he could come here to take showers, I said, "Sure." I don't know why I didn't think about him movin' in here earlier. It didn't strike me -- I guess 'cause he said he was gonna camp out and I guess I thought that's what he wanted.

**T:** That's what I wanted at the time.

**R:** I think you're done with that campin' out business.

**T:** Yeah. So, what ended your tribulation?

**U:** Well, then I got smarter and I figured that it's not right to put on women's clothing. I didn't want to be a lesbian 'cause people thought that was crazy.

## YOU! YOU! YOU!

**Tony:** He had all these bad-ass motherfuckers over here. That black guy that I ran out of the fuckin' house -- I came home one day and I says, "EY! THE FUCKIN' PARTIES OVER. GET THE FUCK OUT OF HERE, NOW. YOU! YOU! YOU!" There was three of 'em there. "GET THE FUCK OUT OF THIS HOUSE, I WANT TO GO THE FUCK TO SLEEP. YOU MOTHERFUCKERS AIN'T ALLOWED" -- The one goes, "This ain't your fuckin' apartment, it's Uzi's." I said, "I pay half the fuckin' rent, GET THE FUCK OUT OF HERE." The next night that motherfucker kills somebody down on King Street. Yeah, he's over here tryin' to kill us. I don't think so. ME, a fuckin' Vietnam Veteran. I don't think so. Not in my fuckin' home. Yeah, he had me all fuckin' nervous and shit. I'm layin' back there, I had money in my pocket and I got to hide every fuckin' thing in my pillow case. Right by my fuckin' head. I got to hide my wallet and I got to hide my money. In my own home? I don't think so. I was gettin' angry because he was bringin' all these druggies in here. Weren't ya?

**Uzi:** Yeah, I was.

**T:** And I was gettin' pissed off about it.

**U:** I don't do that no more.

**T:** You better not.

**U:** I won't.

**T:** I'll throw *your* fuckin' ass out the window, next time.

**RS:** Yeah, ya start bringin' one crackhead around, two show up, then three --

**T:** I already told Uzi about my situation and I' been through it. Tex, ya know? They made good stories and shit but I already been through that shit. Uzi's mother and somebody else came over one time. I said, They're fuckin' around with a black guy and a black girl; they're all smokin' dope and they're crazy. Ya get crazy on that crack-cocaine. I get crazy on it. I'm crazy myself but I still get crazy on it. They wanted to know who was involved there and I told 'em.

**U:** He said two people showed up Saturday when I was gone; to smoke crack with me.

**T:** Yeah.

**U:** I don't even know who they were.

**T:** I told 'em Uzi don't smoke no more. So they went to --

**U:** Ismail's.

**T:** Nutcase's place.

**U:** Yeah, nutcase.

**T:** Well, he's gettin' thrown out of this fuckin' apartment building. Nutcase over here.

**R:** Too noisy?

**U:** Yeah, he's always screamin'. I don't know what he's screamin' about.

**T:** Yeah, he hears voices all the time. In his mind. So he's gettin' thrown out in twenty days.



## TONY STUBS HIS TOE

**Tony:** I stubbed my toe last night.

**RS:** That hurts, ya know it?

**T:** Oh man, you stub your toe on that corner -- and there's that pipe there that sticks up through the floor about two inches.

**R:** I see that! Shit!

**T:** I hit my motherfuckin' toe on that last night on my way to the bathroom. Drunk.

**R:** That could really fuck ya up, too.

**T:** That hurts, too. Ouch!

## VOICES TELL ME TO KILL PEOPLE

**Tony:** He's diagnosed: Paranoid schizophrenic.

**Uzi:** Right, you're right.

**RS:** Wha' does that mean exac'ly?

**T:** Schizophrenic means you got two personalties. Paranoid means --

**U:** Scared.

**T:** Scared of everybody. Scared of you, scared of me ... he's scared of me sometimes. He can be scared of anybody out in the streets. He's scared of the cops; thinks the cops are gonna pick him up. That's a paranoid schizophrenic. They got two personalities.

**R:** Multiple personalities.

**T:** Multi! Yeah and Uzi's got it.

**U:** But I don't hurt nobody.

**T:** No, he don't hurt nobody. If he does I'd throw him out the fuckin' winda! Personally!

**U:** It's usually controlled through medication. I take --

**T:** And he hears voices, too.

**U:** Yeah, I do.

**T:** Voices come in his brain.

**R:** Like what? Ramblings?

**U:** It could be anything. Off the wall shit. Insane shit.

**T:** Elaborate on that, will ya?

**U:** Well, this one time the voices were tellin' me to kill people. But I wouldn't do it. There's no way I would do it.

**R:** Any voices ya recognized?

**U:** No, no, I don't recognize 'em.

**R:** It isn't like a dream, where ya recognize people in a dream.

**U:** No, it's not.

**R:** Kill people. Is that what they just ... chant, like kill --

**U:** No, they say, this person's plottin' against you --

**T:** What are they saying to you?

**U:** Well, they tell me this person's plottin' against you, he's out to get

you, you should kill him, he's gonna get you in the long run, ya know? Stuff like that. And I don't believe it. I just let it go out of my head. There're some times I do believe it and I get scared. Then I have to be alone by myself for a little while. I sleep a lot during the day. A lot of the times I stay in my apartment because I'm paranoid.

T: Yeah, he sleeps about sixteen hours a day.

I really don't like his life. He should be active, like I am. I'm here, there. I'm everywhere. I'm on top of things.

U: Yeah, I should be more active, like Tony.

## CONFRONTATION WITH ISMAIL

[Neighbor, Ismail begins to yell and scream to himself from his apartment. The racket is so loud, it can be heard from Tony and Uzi's apartment. Uzi takes the recorder down to Ismail's door, while Tony knocks.]

**Ismail:** Who is out? Who is out?

**Tony:** TONY STRAUB ...

[Door opens.]

**I:** (Unintelligible Spanish or English.)

**T:** WHAT THE FUCK ARE *YOU* HOLLERIN' ABOUT?

**I:** (Unintelligible.)

**T:** WHAT THE FUCK ARE YOU HOLLERIN' ABOUT?

**I:** (Unintelligible.)

**T:** HUH?

**I:** (Unintelligible.) ... Who a' you?

**T:** KEEP YOUR FUCKIN' NOISE DOWN, GUY!

**I:** (Unintelligible.)

**T:** KEEP THE FUCKIN' NOISE DOWN.

[Door shuts.]

**T:** Well, we got Ismail on tape. He's a fuckin' nutcase. He's out of here in about 20 days. They gave a 30-day warning. Yeah, him and Uzi -- YOU, motherfucker, ya all did your dope together.

**RS:** Is he better when he's high?

**Uzi:** No, gets he's worse.

**T:** He's a real fuckin' nutcase on marijuana, er, uh coca-caine.

**U:** Yeah, I go over there, when I used to smoke crack with him, he used to go to the door and yell at the door. And then he used to go in the bathroom and yell in the bathroom, like he's talkin' to somebody.

**R:** Well, maybe he hears voices, too.

**T:** Yeah, he's got voices in his head, too. That must be weird, ya know that? Somebody tellin' ya what to do in your head, beside your own mind.

**U:** It's aggravating sometimes.



## FACES LOOKIN' IN THE WINDOW AT ME

**Tony:** She's the one that has all them ghost stories. Should we tape her sometime with those ghost stories?

**RS:** Aaaa ... everybody has a ghost story, ya know?

**T:** Yeah, it's not too realistic. There ain't no fuckin' ghosts anyway. I don't believe in that shit anyway, do you?

**R:** No.

**T:** I think it's imagination in the mind, ya know what I mean? Ya know this last drunk I was on?, I had illusion's. Most alcoholics have 'em all the time. It was the first time I ever had 'em. I'd look at the coffee pot in the bedroom and it'd look like a face. Faces lookin' in the fuckin' windows. It was weird, too. I had to close my eyes and they'd go away. I'm walkin' down the alleyway; faces. Then when you walked up to it, it was just a pole there. They went away. I only think I had 'em for a day. It was trippy. I knew what was goin' on in my mind. And I went to that fuckin' Emergency Room -- I didn't need penicillin or decongestants. I didn't need that shit. I needed somethin' for withdrawal of alcohol. That's what I needed. I took the penicillin tablets and they were makin' me goofy. All I needed was Librium or somethin' like that, ya know? I flushed it out, then it went away. I said, "Thank you withdrawals, they're gone." It took about two, three days. "Please don't get yourself in that situation again." Man, I drank tons of fuckin' beer, man. I had a whole trash bag full of cans in my bedroom. I'd go to the bar in the mornin' and buy a 6-pack and bring it home. Chill out for awhile, go back and get another fuckin' 6-pack. I had a half of case at home. I did that every day for about three weeks. Hildy's and the Shamrock, Hildy's and the Shamrock, back and forth. I hit Hildy's from 11 to 1; 50¢ for a mug, right? And I was toasted by the time I got out of there. I didn't shave for three solid weeks. I looked like a fuckin' wildman. Goddam. Yeah, I said to myself, "Tony, it's time to straighten out." I run out of money, too. It took me about five razors to get my beard off. I looked like a total fuckin' bum from the mission down on Prince Street. Actually, I thought I was gonna die. And I didn't give a fuck either. I don't feel that way now, but I did then.

## LIGHTNING STRIKES (NOT ONCE BUT TWICE)

**Tony:** We all want our names in lights. I don't want mine there. I know what I did in my life time. If I would die tomorrow, I would be very happy and satisfied. What I did in my life time, but what we're gonna do in the near future. Oh my God, I can't even comprehend it.

**CG:** Do you play the lottery, Tony?

**T:** No, I don't play the lottery.

**C:** Seventy million tonight. I almost bought a ticket, but I didn't. Didn't do it.

**T:** I'm not a gambler. If I'd of gave 'em five bucks I would of lost. Now I got five bucks in my pocket. That's the way I feel about it, it's one in a million.

**C:** It's prob'ly even more than that, isn't it. It's prob'ly --

**T:** One in two million. Or how about one in a trillion.

**C:** They say your chances of getting struck by lightning are better than winning the lottery.

**T:** I already got struck by lightning. Twice. I'm glad she reminded me of that.

**RS:** Is that right?

**T:** Yeah, when I was young.

**C:** How did that happen?

**T:** I was on a baseball field. That's another story. Very young. Eight years old.

**C:** Did it knock ya out?

**T:** It put me on the ground for a little bit.

It put more energy in my body. I got hit by electricity a lot of times with my work.

**C:** What's your work, electrician?

**T:** Yeah, that's my trade.

**C:** Oh, OK.

**T:** I closed a couple plants down already. With my screw drivers. Just a little tiny screw driver, so long with a rubber handle on it. I shut two plants down with that little screw driver. Just by one mistake

**R:** Intentional?

**T:** No. You know where AMP Corporation is?

**R:** Yeah.

**T:** I'm there with a screw driver. I got to put a white wire on a neutral bar and I didn't know that the Buss bar was the hot one. The Buss bar controls the panel. There's three of 'em. That was real close to the neutral bar. About a sixteenth of an inch. I was too lazy to go out to the truck to get a ladder to get up to watch what I was doin'. I touched the wire to the hot bar. BOOOOM! Flash. I was in the hallway, right? I jumped back to the end of the wall and hit my back. It scared me and a big flash, right? The whole plant's down. Now, what do I have to do to solve this problem? I got to find a maintenance man and find this fuse I blew out. So me and the maintenance man run around together in that place and we found it. Got a new one. Put it in and flipped the switch. Got the power back again. One fuse.

**C:** What was the other -- what was the other situation? You said you did that twice?

**T:** I was over in Jersey. I was workin' in a plant. Same thing. Screwin' Buss bars in. There was a huge flash. Right into my eyes and when the plant shut down all the lights went out. I thought I went blind for about one eighth of a second. So we put the fuse back in. Same thing. I seen guys get burned up on the job already not watchin' what they're doin'. Drunk the night before. Got a hangover. Runnin' fish tapes through them wires and they go through the bus bars. Gigantic blue flash. Burns your whole face up. Burns your hair off. Your whole body burned up. Ya lay there burned up 'til somebody picks ya up. Electricity ya don't fool with. No way. Not in my campsite, guy!

## **“YOU’RE RUNNIN’ YOUR OWN PROGRAM, TONY; YOU CAN LEAVE TODAY!”**

After a week and a half drinkin’ binge, Tony checked himself into the Substance Abuse Center at the Lancaster General Hospital/Susquehanna Division in Columbia, PA, where he was asked to leave early because he was ‘running his own program’.

**Tony:** February the 18<sup>th</sup>, double zero. I got real sick, from a binge; a week and a half; didn’t eat right. I didn’t think I could pull myself out of it this time. I needed some help. So I went to St. Joe’s Hospital at five o’clock in the afternoon; Emergency Room. They hooked me up with Columbia Hospital -- I talked to ‘em on the phone --

**RS:** They didn’t have any room at St. Joe’s?

**T:** I don’t know what the deal was. They hooked me up with them for some reason and I stayed there ‘til eleven o’clock; in the Emergency Room and then they took me up to Columbia, in the ambulance. I got there at about 11:30 p. m. Lots of paperwork, I mean, big time paperwork to get in that place. Ho, Christ. Then I finally got upstairs and more paperwork. I finally went to bed at about four in the mornin’, after all the paperwork and a shower, shavin’ -- I didn’t shave for fuckin’ two weeks; looked like a fuckin’ bum. Aaah, I hate myself when I do that. So I was in detox for -- the 18<sup>th</sup>, that was a Friday ... Saturday. Sunday I started to participate in their activities. I was startin’ to feel better; eatin’ right. They gave me librium for the shakes, a pill to make ya eat and Monday I was in the rehab.

**R:** Gettin’ with the program.

**T:** Program ... in with the group. A group of fuckin’ assholes from the courthouse; sent there by the court; court-committed by P.O.’s. There must’ve been -- at one time there was about thirty-four of us -- there was thirty-four of us at one time. When I think about it, maybe five of us were there to get help, self-committed. Now, if you don’t have insurance, you can only stay there twelve days and that’s it; you’re out! Welfare’ll pick up that tab. So, they didn’t have no program up there. They had this asshole named XXX, a black guy. I called him ‘XXX the Clown’ ...

**R:** (Chuckles)

**T:** A counselor. A fuckin’ clown. Nothin’ but a clown, been there a long time. No program or whatever, no organization; nothing! A woman named



YYYYY, another counselor -- she was in a fuckin' car wreck; got thrown out of her fuckin' car; she got pain all the fuckin' time. And I think she creates her pain on alcoholics and drug addicts ... to relieve her own pain.

**R:** Right. She has pain, so she wants everybody to have pain.

**T:** Yeah, let's all have pain.

**R:** Yeah.

**T:** Yeah. Fuck you!

**R:** (Chuckles).

**T:** And a nurse up there named ZZZ. Most obnoxious bitch I ever seen in my life. I said to her one day, I says, "I'm sure glad you don't work in the Veterans Hospital, honey."

**R:** She wouldn't last.

**T:** She wouldn't last two seconds, 'cause I'd tell her to -- "Go fuck your motherfuckin' cunt bitch!"

**R:** (Chuckles).

**T:** And you cannot throw me out of this fuckin' place, 'cause I belong here. Nobody can throw me out of the Veterans Hospital. You go get fucked, bitch!

**R:** (Chuckles).

**T:** So ... very obnoxious and one mornin' I was down for breakfast and -- oh, breakfast ... chow. Rehab - chow at the Columbia Hospital sucks to the max.

**R:** Food's no good.

**T:** Food's no fuckin' good, either. And they said I was a borderline diabetic. So I filled out my own forms in the morning. I forgot my fuckin' glasses, right? So I had to take it upstairs and this ZZZ said somethin' smart to me, "Ya gotta get it down right aways." I says, "Yes, ma'am." And she took that off of balance, the wrong way, right? So she got cocky with me. I said the right thing, so, what're they fuckin' gonna do with me, right? And that bitch called the clients animals. She said, "You fuckin' animals," no, she didn't say fuck, but she said, "You animals," uh, "You're supposed to do somethin' else," or somethin' like that.

**R:** That's very unprofessional.

**T:** Very. And I'm gonna do somethin' about it, too. I'm gonna shut that fuckin' place down.

**R:** (Chuckles). I'll help ya.

**T:** Yeah, alright. So, one day I was in the group, which they showed movies most the fuckin' time because they weren't organized; that was to keep us busy; in a room. That's all they had; was movies, movies; movies about alcoholics and drug addicts, ya know? So they gave us some literature and you're supposed to write down grudges, right? And I ain't got no fuckin' enemies at all, right? I don't know anybody in this whole fuckin' world that I hold a grudge against. I said to YYYYYY, "I don't have any enemies in this whole world." "Well you're not doin' your work, you leave the group!" So, I said to myself, "Thank-you, bitch!"

**R:** (Chuckles).

**T:** "I didn't fuckin' wanna sit here anyway." So I had to go to my room, right?

**R:** Like they're tryin' to create fuckin' turmoil.

**T:** Yeah, exactly. Yeah, ain't that somethin'?

They drive people to drugs and alcohol, while they're there. The day I left ... the day before, a guy I knew from the VA Hospital, AAAAAA ... he's a fuckin' clown. Heroin addict. He left, uh,BBBBBB left; alcoholic; cirrhosis of the liver; already gettin' a stomach. Ya know how ya get; look like you're pregnant? *He's* on his way out. A girl named CCCCCCCC; I kind of liked her. I was fuckin' around with her. She looked like Madonna; her face. Stoned alcoholic. She told me they spent a thousand dollars on crack cocaine before she came in. She was a fuckin' ... trashed out, too, boy.

**R:** A thousand dollars?

**T:** Yeah.

**R:** It goes quick.

**T:** Yeah, you can spend that in a couple nights ... a couple days. You can go through a thousand dollars worth of crack in two days. Easy. Ya got four people, four partyin' people, plus one girl to suck your dick. But once ya smoke crack ya don't want your dick sucked. All ya wanna do is smoke crack. I've already been on that trip. So, CCCCCCCC got caught smokin' cigarettes in the bathroom; they threw her out. So, AAAAA,BBBBBB and CCCCCCCC left, together up to Manheim. They had a trailer up there. AndBBBBBB had \$23,000. So, I imagine right now these people are really --

**R:** Gettin' cracked out.

**T:** Oh, about the last twelve days, uh, pro'bly spent about ten thousand of that twenty-three. I'm sure they did. If I run into 'em ... I'm sure they spent at least ten in the last ten, twelve days. And AAAAA, we ought to get him on tape. I'd like to take that motherfucker to Las Vegas. He is a clown. He makes everybody laugh. He's kind of a phony, phony, phony clown. If ya can pick it up; it's bullshit, ya know? If you're smart enough to pick-up his bullshit? He talks about things he did but other people did it. He puts himself in their place. So ... stop that thing (the tape recorder) a minute, will ya? ... So while Tony Straub was there -- we just got finished with a group and I went to the nurses station. This guy was walkin' around; he was in detox and he didn't have a shirt on. That's a no-no in the rehab. I just come out of the shower and I told one of the counselors, "YYYYY, this guy's runnin' around without a shirt on." This motherfucker said to me -- he was goin' in his room, he says, "THAT'S NONE OF YOUR MOTHERFUCKIN' BUSINESS!" I said, "FUCK YOU!" He come walkin' towards me, real fast. I thought maybe he wanted to carry on a conversation, but the motherfucker hit me in the chest and knocked me on my fuckin' ass, 'cause he was movin' fast, right? Plus the blow, right? Didn't hurt me a fuckin' second. But I was kind of pissed off a little bit. So I was on the fuckin' floor before I knew it.

**R:** Did the nurse see it.

**T:** Yeah, everybody seen it. He got thrown out. He's gone. They don't allow that stuff. I could of pressed charges; simple assault. Now in the VA Hospital, if somebody hits you, they're automatically charged. So, that shit don't happen there. I seen that once; two guys gettin' it on. They didn't get thrown out or anything. They got charged for it and they had to pay for it; a couple hun' red bucks; for one fuckin' crack. That'll teach ya a fuckin' lesson. So, that happened to me and I tapped a guy some guy on the back with my finger --

**R:** (Chuckles).

**T:** And he says, "I don't want you pushin' me." I said, "Fuck you. I didn't push you. All I did was tap you on your back. Get the fuck away from me." We're right at the nurses station and I'm shootin' my mouth off. That place was drivin' me to drink. And then I quit smokin'. And that had me jumpy. When ya quit smokin' it irritates ya. Ya get irritable, Very,

very irritable. And that was on my head, too. So, them two incidences happened. Then you and Uzi came up with my clothes. Then Uzi said he wants his keys. And I'm sayin' what the fuck's up. Well, I know what's up. All I gotta do is think. This fucker's movin' out. His day's comin'. His days are numbered. (Chuckles). That motherfucker. I'm gonna scare him so fuckin' bad. So ... February 29<sup>th</sup>. I'm shootin' my mouth off to a couple clients that are there, that I was gonna ask the doctor to leave on Friday, 'cause this place is not doin' me any good. At all. They could drive me to go back to drink. And one of the clients said to one of the counselors, YYYYY, the one who got hurt in the car accident? When I walked up to her, "Well, you're runnin' your own program, Tony. You can leave today." I says, "No problem." Ya know, I didn't get pissed at nobody. No problem. I'd like to see the doctor. And I went back and seen the doctor -- the doctor -- he was pretty nice but -- he wrote all my scripts out and wanted me to go to counseling to make more money off me and my insurance company. He called for me here, too. I didn't call him back. Fuck him. I know more about alcohol than he does. Why the fuck should I go to him and tell me what I need to do? I don't think so. I know what I gotta do. So fuck that. So, I left there on February 29<sup>th</sup> and I'm fuckin' homeless and broke. So, one of my books got me ten bucks from one of the male nurses. He loved the book. I think we can sell the book in the AA program. Them motherfuckers would go like wildfire. Then you and Groovy came to pick me up and we missed each other and I took the bus back. So, I was homeless and I came to the owner at 'The Studios' about my situation. She's lettin' me live in the basement of the building 'til I get my own place, plus I'm workin' for her again. So, I got a nice place to live and everything turned out the way it's supposed to be. Everything's fine as wine. I couldn't be any fuckin' happier in my FUCKIN' ENTIRE LIFE!



## MODE INTERVIEW

[Maria Rotondo interviewed Tony for Mode Magazine of Harrisburg, PA in the March 16, 00 issue a couple days after he got out of rehab. Here's the interview in it's entirety.]

**MODE:** What made you decide to go into rehab.

**Tony:** I'm a binge drinker and it was interfering with life [again], so I decided to do something about it. But I didn't go through the whole thing. I was there twelve days and I thought I had enough. I'd been to one before, about ten years ago -- they gave me these pills this week to stop the craving of alcohol. It seems to be working, I ain't picked up since -- I've been out since Tuesday and I ain't picked up yet. Working helps keep my mind off of things, too.

**M:** Where do you work?

**T:** Mulberry Art Studios in Lancaster. [I do] everything but the paperwork. I set up for receptions, parties -- I get all dressed up and look cool.

**M:** What part of *Barroom Transcripts* best describes Tony Straub?

**T:** The Spy House. It was where I lived at the Stevens House. I had a lot of problems over there with them people. They thought I was a drug pusher, a pimp, 'cause I had a lot of women up there. Girls like me a lot.

**M:** Why do you think that is?

**T:** My looks and intelligence. I sing, too. I've been singing for seven years.

**M:** In a band?

**T:** No, Karaoke. I'm the best one in Lancaster. Just ask me. When I walk in people say, "Here comes Tony the entertainer."

**M:** Do you have a lot of regrets?

**T:** None. None whatsoever. I wouldn't have lived my life any different. I mean, I have my ups and downs, right? But I'm a survivor.

**M:** Your book shows your best side and your worst side.

**T:** Exactly.

**M:** What's the most important thing to you right now?

**T:** My job. I love working there. [I've been there] for two years. I was an electrician for twenty years and I got tired of that. I work in high society now and I really love that type of atmosphere.

**M:** This is your first book. Do you think you'll write another?

**T:** Yeah, I've been married three times and I have seven children. I have many stories to tell, but I do not want to talk about my military life. I'm very sad about that. [Vietnam] had a positive affect on my life, but who wants to talk about war?

**M:** Where do you think the future of the book lies?

**T:** I figure we're going to sell about five or ten thousand in this town. Then if we get some contacts out of this town, like -- what's his name? Stern? Howard Stern. If he gets a hold of it he'll go nutty, that guy. He's a fruitcake, I don't even like him. I seen his life story in the movies and he made a billion dollars off of a three-letter word; S-E-X. But I mean, he could really do a lot for us.

## THE \$15,000 SETTLEMENT

**Introduction by Tony:** We're sittin' off of Harrisburg Pike, back in the woods, where all the unhappy campers hang out. (Chuckles). Right?

**RS:** Right.

**T:** All the homeless people come back here. So we're gonna start tapin' me from April 19 (00), one o'clock in the afternoon. I was in a rehab, another rehab. My time at 'The Studios' was cut short because the owner didn't like me smokin' cigarettes and drinkin' while I was livin' there. She thought I might pass out with a cigarette in my hand and burn the fuckin' place down. So, no job, no home. OK, so, I got her to take me to the Veterans Hospital, Lebanon, Pennsylvania. I was there for 27 days. Finished with flyin' colors. Everybody thought I'd be a role model, but why should I quit drinkin' at 62 years old? I don't think so. All the happy times I had with that booze. Uh-uh. And die next year. I don't think so. Slow my body metabolism down right? I wish we'd of brought some water out here. So I got back to Lancaster, I thought everything'd be fine, man, I went through the rehab and got my act together – everything, everything'd be fine. And I got home and I didn't have a job and I didn't have a place to stay. I didn't know what the fuck to do. I knew a buddy of mine named Bob, up on Orange Street and I went up and seen him, he said I couldn't stay there. OK. In the meantime I went to the House of Pizza. I just got out of rehab and I'm already drinkin'.

**R:** (Chuckles).

**T:** Shit! Twenty seven days clean. So I seen this guy in there named Guy. But then I left, I wanted to see Bobby 'cause – I did wanna stay straight for some reason. I don' know. I think I drank one in there. Maybe I drank a coke. I don' know. Then I came back to the bar and Guy was still there and Guy says, "What are ya up to, Tony, can I buy ya a drink?" I said, "Sure." So he says, "I got a \$15,000 settlement, Tony." "Yeah?" He says, "Ya know where to get some stuff?" I said, "I sure do and I can get us a girl, too." He said, "We can go out to The Super 8 Motel." I said, "Nā, that's too far out of town out there on Lincoln Highway. Let's go out to The Parkside, it's closer to town. So we drank a couple beers at the House of Pizza. I might as well tag along with him he got fifteen grand in the tank from the VA and I ain't even got a place to stay. I might as well hang – I knew him for about fifteen years – he didn't mind. He threw his money

away, anyway. He'd give his money to anybody. So we went down to the Rendezvous Steak Shop and we sat there and drank. I said, "It's a little early, man." It's five o'clock in the afternoon. "Crack runners aren't out yet or heroin runners ain't out yet, they only come out about seven. And the girls don't come out till seven, either. So this one girl came over and sat with us. She said, "I don't wanna sit by myself." Guy says to the girl, "Yeah, I went out with you one time." I said to myself, "Oh my God, this ugly bitch!"

**R:** (Chuckles).

**T:** Ugh! So then this black girl came over. I knew her and she's already tryin' to hustle Guy. She's gonna set it all up for us and stuff, right?

**R:** Yeah.

**T:** I said ya gotta listen to me, man, I'm a street dude. I know these people. She already, like, ya hand her a pack of cigarettes, she'd take four or five out and stick them in her pocket. She's hustlin' him already, right?

**R:** Yeah.

**T:** Yeah. That ain't copesetic. And then she's fuckin' around and she got seven bucks out of him. I said, "Don't trust her, man, don't give her any money." So XXXXX wanted to tag along with us. I didn't want that goddam ugly bitch with us, man. He says it was alright, it was his money, right?

**R:** Right. This was the other girl, now?

**T:** This was XXXXX, the girl that went with us.

**R:** Right, not the black girl.

**T:** No, we got rid of her. No deals with her. So we went to the Fairmont House. That's the drugstore of Lancaster.

**R:** (Laughter).

**T:** (Laughter). As soon as we hit the streets up there, "Ya want some? Ya want some? Ya want - ?" These guys don't even know us, right? I guess they figured, you're on that block, I guess ya want some, right? We could of been cop, right?

**R:** Could of been an undercover cop.

**T:** Could of been an undercover cop. Could of cleaned that whole goddam street up. I said, "Hold on, man, we're comin' in here to get a beer." Ya gotta scope the place out a little bit, ya know? Gotta see what's goin' on.



Neither one of us are drunk; two or three beers in us. I guess they found out that Guy had some money, right? Oh, they're on him like fuckin' flies, right?

**R:** (Chuckles).

**T:** Then they went outside and XXXXX says, "You better go out there with him." They were swarmin' him; wantin' to sell him this, wantin' to sell him that. And I said, "Hey, guys, c'mon, back-off." So he got some stuff and he bought \$70 worth of crack and he bought - I don't know how much heroin he bought. So we went back in the bar and I said, "Let's get the fuck out of here. You got what you want, let's get out of here." Then we took a cab and went out to the Parkside. Me and XXXXX went to the bar next door and Guy got the room for two. She had to hide out until he got the key, 'cause there were three of us. And he finally came and bla, bla, bla and we sat there and I think we ate somethin', then went to the motel room. He was already gettin' all fucked up on that heroin, man. He was snortin' it. That stuff fucks ya all up, too, boy. Nods ya out. Ya can't even hold your fuckin' head up. I don't even know why anybody wants to use the damn stuff. I like to be alert, myself.

**R:** Yeah, you're just content to sit there and do nothin', content to sit there and stare off into space.

**T:** Yeah, that's it. That's not my cup of tea. So the couple nights we stayed there, they went out to Park City to do some shoppin'. He spent five hundred dollars that night. Drugs and the motel room, got a couple six-packs to go. He woke up the next morning, he was checkin' his wallet, right? It was pretty well empty. I think he had eighty bucks left out of five hundred. Then he paid for another night. That'd be the 20<sup>th</sup> of April. He stayed fucked up on heroin the whole time I was out there. Uh, I gotta think some more, cut it off.

**[Tony lights a cigarette while the tape is off.]**

So while he's fucked up on this heroin he's starin' in the mirror at himself and then he'd be on his knees and then he threw up and he had it all over his fuckin' pants. I can't deal with that. Then XXXXX goes "Which one of you guys are gonna fuck me?" I said, "I ain't fuckin' ya. No way in hell I'm gonna fuck you, girl." She got mad about that right? She wanted to get fucked. And, "Guy can't get his dick up, 'cause he's fucked up on heroin. And he ain't gonna fuck ya. What the fuck ya hangin' around here

for? Huh?" So she finally – no, she didn't leave then. Then he said he wanted to get an apartment together. I didn't have any money, Guy had all the money, so I'd pay my half when I got my money. So I went into town and called someone I knew who had an apartment for rent and the only place he had was the 200 block of west Vine. That fucked up place.

**[See the chapter: Shooting at 200 Block West Vine.]**

I said, "No, I don't want that place, man." So I come back out to the motel. That's when I ran into you I think. So I get back to the motel room and this black boy was in there layin' in the bed with XXXXX and she didn't have no clothes on and he's tryin' to make out with her and she says, "I DON'T MAKE OUT WITH BLACK GUYS!" I don't know why he after her as ugly as that bitch was. She's built nice and everything, but that face and that voice. Aaaaah! So he went to cover her up. I said, "What the fuck are ya coverin' her up for? I already seen her naked the past two days. Guy said she had a fuckin' Brillo pad down there, he didn't even like touchin' that son of a bitch. (Chuckles). He said her pussy felt like a Brillo pad. He said he didn't like puttin' his hand down there, it was scratchin' his skin off. She wanted him to play with her, ya know? So I got to lookin' at this little black boy here. I said, "Hey, guy, you gotta go." He says, "I ain't goin' nowhere." I said, "Wait a minute here," I was sober that day, too, ya know? "You gotta go you can't stay in this room with us, I don't even fuckin' trust you. I don't know ya and I don't trust ya. You get the fuck out of here and if ya don't I'm callin' the fuckin' cops on ya." So Guy gave him some cab fare. He went to the 500 block of east King Street, up around the Fairmont house? So we got rid of his ass and XXXXX says, "Oh boy, I'm glad you got rid of him, Tony, I didn't like him at all."

**R:** How did he get in, in the first place?

**T:** Guy seen him in town in the bar. Pro'bly at the Fairmont House. Then they came out in a cab with him. He said it was alright for him to come along. He was in jail with him. So we got rid of him, now it was time to get rid of XXXXX. So, I start raggin' on her and I got rid of her fuckin' ass. I got tired of her fuckin' mouth, man.

**R:** How'd ya do that?

**T:** Just started gettin' in on her. "What the fuck are you hangin' around here for?" I finally got rid of her fuckin' ass. And me and Guy went up to

the fuckin' Villa Nova next door. It was pretty late, twelve o'clock at night. The bar was full. Me and him sat in the back and the owner came back, "Uh-uh, uh-uh, (chuckles) we ain't servin' this heroin addict," well he didn't say heroin addict but, "We ain't servin' him, he can't even keep his eyes open."

**R:** Noddin' out.

**T:** Noddin' out already when he's in there. We're sittin' at a table, he said, "We can't wait on ya back here." I said, "The bar's full we can't sit." He didn't say nothin' to me. I kept my composure pretty good. So we got up and left and Guy said, "Fuck this place, there's other bars around." I went back to the motel room, hell, we had a half a case back there. All we had to do was ice it down. So I spent the night there and he never showed up. So I had to check out the next day. That was on a Sunday. Sunday mornin' that was. That's the end of that story.

## MY PILLOW WAS A PIECE OF PLYWOOD

**Tony:** OK, I left the motel that Sunday and headed into town. I was pretty clean, then. I had a roof over my head. I headed for the Harmony Inn (Belvedere) to get a six-pack. We ate the whole time, ya know? Then I headed for these woods here, where we're recording this session. The campgrounds for all the drunks and alcoholics and drug addicts. (Chuckles).

**RS:** Pretty hoppin' place years ago?

**T:** Yeeaaaah. Hoppin. That was back in the 80's. Late 80's. And the 70's, too. So, now, I am homeless. I don't know what the fuck to do. So I headed for the woods, hung out here for about a three weeks. The first night here I had no cover. I found a small piece of plywood to put my head on and boy my pants got dirty in the dirt. (Chuckles). Oh boy. And then I come up walkin' through the woods and Wayne's sittin' here. The desperado of Lancaster.

**R:** Big barroom brawler from way back.

**T:** BIG barroom brawler from way back, just got out of jail. Again. At least I had somebody to talk to, ya know?

**R:** He's prob'ly been in a hundred barroom fights.

**T:** At least. And he was tellin' me some things, "Why don't ya go up to Gettysburg?" See, he goes around the missions. "Go out to the Old Harrisburg Pike, there and there's an old car out there, and ya can get in that car out there. There's like a junkyard across from the Villa Nova. Crawl in one of them -

**R:** To get out of the rain.

**T:** To get out of the rain, yeah or stay there. 'Cause that's what he always did, jump in old cars and shit. What a life. So, then he went and got a six-pack and he came back and we headed in to Mary Street, by Hildy's and we went to see XXXXXX's brother. They were home but we didn't know it. They were sleepin'. We went in the back yard and me and Wayne sat back there and drank a couple of beers. Then he went around to the front and the door was open so we walked in. We sat there for awhile, then he took off. I came back to the woods again. In them seven days I was a mess, man, I didn't know what the fuck to do with myself. I didn't want to go into town because I was filthy. So I hit Hildy's and Brendee's. The



Green Briar Café told me to leave, I didn't smell right.

R: (Chuckles).

T: (Chuckles). We had a couple complaints about you, Tony, you didn't smell right.

R: People were askin' me, "What's up with Tony?" I said, "I don't know, I haven't seen him."

T: Actually, I didn't know what the fuck to do with myself. It came to a point – up until this week, it was Monday. I gotta do somethin, I was layin' in these woods for three weeks. I was just goin' back and forth to the bars and the alcohol kept me alive. I'd shiver all night long. My legs would be shakin' and at one point in time my one hand got numb. I had no feeling in it. Oh, yeah and when I was out here I went to the General Hospital ER waiting room just to get warm and they chased me out of there. Ain't that a bitch. I was thinkin' of all kinds of things in my head: I was thinkin' about suicide, I couldn't take it anymore, I was thinkin' about runnin' out in front of a fuckin' truck up here on Harrisburg Pike and just do it in or hang myself on one of these fuckin' trees out here. I was thinkin' if I laid out here and died out here, Christ it'd be months before anybody ever found me. I'd be a fuckin' skeleton by then.

R: (Laughter.)

T: Jes' Christ. All these fuckin' thoughts were in my head. But I'd never commit suicide, I'd rather lay down and die, ya know? Ya get these thoughts runnin' through your head when you're destitute. Ya wanna survive but – then it came to the point where I had to do something about it. I had to go into town, I don't give a fuck how filthy I was. So I knew where to go to change clothes and stuff; The Studios. So, I got a shower, a change a clothes and my attitude started to change a little bit and I still had a little bit of money left. A little more money for beer. And cigarettes. Fuck the food. I'll eat food later when I get myself together. Then on Monday of this week I found a place to stay and I paid him on Wednesday and I was sick, I must of slept for two days. Solid. And I was sick as a motherfucker, too, boy. Whew. Now I'm in just as fine a shape as I've ever been in spite of this fuckin' three week ordeal.

R: Like it never happened.

T: Like it never happened and I'm here talkin' about it. That's a good story, isn't it?

## URBAN RENEWAL

**RS:** What do you remember about this area back in the 80's.

**Tony:** This used to be a – six guys – we had an apartment back here.

**R:** Made out of?

**T:** A tarp we found. A big fuckin' thing. We had it strung around the trees. Went around and got furniture and stuff that was layin' out in the streets. And then all the guys, how they got their food was – remember Jay's Supermarket, by the high school?

**R:** Yeah.

**T:** At about eleven o'clock, two of 'em used to leave. They'd sit out behind Jay's at the railroad tracks, on the hill there and wait for 'em to throw day-old food away. I went down there with 'em one time. The food was still all wrapped up and then they'd get it out of the dumpster. A big shoppin' bag full and then bring it back and cook it. I wouldn't eat it, though. I wasn't used to that shit. Yeah, they spent a whole summer out here. Some of the guys spent winter out here. I don' know, one time I came back here checkin' on these guys, I didn't stay.

**R:** They used to hang out at the abandoned Haddad building on the southwest corner of Prince and Lemon.

**T:** Yeah and across the street where the new park is. That used to be a spot there, too. ya couldn't build any fires there, but –

**R:** The Haddad building supposedly burned down from guys in there buildin' fires to keep warm.

**T:** They were. That's how that happened. I remember when that burned down, I was livin' at my brother, Larry's up there. And there's another place down on south Prince Street. There's some old warehouses down there? I know that guy who lived underneath that thing. He had a candle lit down there to see and the candle burnt that place down, too.

**R:** (Chuckles.) Is that right?

**T:** Yeah, they didn't know what to do with them buildings anyway, so, I guess they were glad they burnt down. Over here there was an old box car guys made an apartment out of. I helped 'em fix it up. I didn't sleep there, I just used to come over to hang out with 'em. One day we came back from sellin' some copper and we heard this noise. Here they were

smashin' it to the ground. They didn't want anybody sleepin' in it.

**R:** Where did ya get all that copper at?

**T:** (Chuckles). We can't say that.

**R:** (Chuckles).

**T:** Shut her down a minute.

## THE LEADER OF THE PACK

**Tony:** Armstrong used to yell over their outside intercom speakers, "WE KNOW YOU GUYS ARE BACK THERE IN THEM WOODS AND WE WANT YOU TO GET OUT THERE RIGHT NOW! WE ALREADY CALLED THE COPS AND YOU'RE SURROUNDED. You could hear a mile away, ya know?"

**RS:** They could see you but you couldn't see them.

**T:** Yeah, then every body would jump from that side of the tracks to over here. This ain't Armstrong's property here. That's Armstrong's property over there.

**R:** Who owns this?

**T:** The railroad. (Conrail).

[We leave the camp to tour other camps on this side and the other side of the tracks. We come across another camp on this side, remnants of a campfire, beer cans and a rusty old chair.]

**R:** What do we got?

**T:** I broke up with my wife and I was livin' with my brother and I just wanted to get the fuck away. That's that time I was runnin' around with my tent. When I had all my campin' equipment. And I brought all my stuff down here. Campin' equipment, back pack and everything. We went to the Harmony Inn to get some beer. When we came back, there were three or four kids at the camp. They were ramblin' through everything, right? So they left their two fuckin' bicycles here.

**R:** Why did they do that?

**T:** I chased them motherfuckers with a stick. They were in my bag, my backpack. They took some of my jewelry out of there. I chased 'em all the way through these woods back down through across the railroad tracks-- I had a big stick with me - down through the other side and I lost 'em then. Then I came back and I said, "Them little motherfuckers ramblin' through our shit!" And all of us, we were drinkin' all mornin' and we were all half potsed. And we're sittin' down there and we hear this fuckin' noise up here. By the tracks. So I go up there, I pissed about them kids stealin' my shit, right? I was really fuckin' mad that day. I go walkin' out these woods up at the railroad tracks where the opening is up here. There must of been 35 or 40 fuckin' kids up there with one leader. I said,



"What's up man?" "These kids want their bicycles back." I said, "They were down there ramblin' in my stuff, man and I seen you earlier today." So I'm up there tryin' to negotiate my stuff back for -- we'll give 'em the bicycles back. So we kept on and on -- I said, "By the way, there's two guys down below there with handguns. If there's any fuckin' trouble, they're comin' up with 'em." Nobody did though, I was just tryin' to frighten 'em. That was really weird that day about 35 fuckin' kids and this one guy, the leader. So, I finally gave in. I knew the cops were comin' -- with all them kids. What the fuck are they all doin' up here, right? So I said, "We gotta do somethin'." "Alright, I'll be right back." Me and another guy brought the bicycles up and they all took off. "Don't ever come back here again, guys."

**R:** Ya should of bashed the tires in.

**T:** (Chuckles). Yeah, I should of, but--

**R:** "*Here's your fuckin' bike.*"

**T:** Yeah. That's a little story there, too.

## THEY MAKE VIOLINS OUT OF THESE TREES

[Along the tour we come across some trees. We suspect they might be the Paulownia or 'Empress Tree', though we didn't know the name at the time.]

**Tony:** The next time you go to the library look up trees and find these. It's real hard wood, I think, they make them violins out of.

**RS:** And they're worth a lot of money.

**T:** Yeah. Here's another one. Look how big this motherfucker is. Look at the size of that one. See it comes all the way up and branches out. That son of a bitch there is worth a fortune.

**R:** They're all over the place.

**T:** Yeah. There's another one. Look how big that son of a bitch is.

**R:** JS was tellin' me ya can make thousands of dollars from these things.

**T:** There's one back in there, too. I knew that back in the 80's and I'd of never thought of that 'til just now. When we walked in here.

**R:** Why the hell don't somebody cut these the fuck down?

**T:** I don' know, they pro'bly don' know the value of 'em.

**R:** And look they're all over there, too.

**T:** I think these are the ones. We'd have to double-check. Maybe we'll come back here sometime with a hand saw. We gotta make sure they're the right tree, but I'm pretty sure they are.

**R:** What we'll do is cut one down and get a sample and take it to a violin maker.

**T:** Yeah.

## LANCASTER'S DESPERADO

**[We go across the open area where the tracks used to be.]**

**R:** These were tracks at one time and they took 'em all out now, right?

**T:** Yeah, I didn't even notice that. Up there's Dillerville Road, too. There's another wooded area back through there guys camp out. It runs all the way out to Donnelley Printing and all them places back there. It's a whole wooded area back in through there, I've already been back in there.

**R:** Well, that's a continuation of the railroad tracks then.

**T:** Yeah. You can walk the tracks from here –

**R:** Ya go over the bridge to the brickyards –

**T:** No, no this is another system.

**R:** Did ya ever hop on a train?

**T:** Naah.

**R:** I did that once.

**T:** Did ya?

**R:** In Ephrata.

**T:** Uh, Wayne does that.

**[Someone from the other side yells to Tony.]**

**R:** Somebody callin' ya.

**T:** It's fuckin' Wayne!

**R:** Is it.

**T:** Yeah. Hey Wayne! Look at him.

**R:** Yeah, I seen him earlier today.

**T:** Did ya?

**R:** I think, down on Harrisburg Pike.

**T:** Hey, buddy. What a' ya up to?

**[Wayne, with backpack and sixpack (Ice beer). A notorious barroom brawler from 60's to 80's.]**

**Wayne:** I wasn't sure if that was you or not, man.

**T:** Yeah.

**W:** How's it goin', ma'?

**T:** I got it together --

**W:** Did ya?

**T:** -- ya can tell that.

**W:** Yeah, yeah, ya look a lot better, buddy.

**T:** I was lookin' a little rough. This is Rich Stewart.

**W:** Hi, how ya doin', ma'?

**R:** How ya doin'?

**W:** How ya doin'?

**R:** Alright, good.

**T:** He's the guy I was tellin' ya about the book. Where you headed?

**W:** I'm out of here, buddy.

**T:** Are ya? What's wrong Wayne? somethin' botherin' ya?

**W:** No, man I just can't get it together here, ma'.

**T:** Can't ya?

**W:** No, ma', I just can't.

**T:** Where ya headed?

**W:** I don' know, ma'. I don' know. Where you headed?

**T:** Hey, I'll give ya a couple bucks for a beer.

**W:** No, I'm alright, ma'. The bar's open up there, ma'.

**T:** Oh, OK. Can I get one? I'm thirsty as hell, though, man. I'll give ya a couple of dollars for it.

**W:** No, it ain't that, ma', it's just, ya know? I ain't got that much, ma'.

**T:** Oh, OK. Ya wanna save that?

**W:** Yeah. It's only right over there, ma'.

**T:** Yeah, I know. I'm just fuckin' thirsty.

**W:** I wanna take this shit down, ma'. Take care of yourself, buddy.

**T:** OK, guy.



## THREE-STAR REVIEW

### 'Barroom Transcripts' Offers Inside View Of A Local Man's Life

By Maria Rotondo  
Associate Entertainment Editor

[The following appeared in Millersville University's Student Newspaper, The Snapper, Thursday - October 21, 1999. This is the complete article.]

Lancaster resident Rich Stewart has seen and heard a lot of interesting stories in bars over the years. So many in fact, that he decided to publish a book about them.

Jumping into the first few pages of "Barroom Transcripts" is like diving into a pool of freezing water-you can't stand it at first but don't get out. You know that, eventually, you'll adjust.

The book begins, "Hi, this is Tony Straub...Let me tell you a little story. When I was 12 years old...The Catholics and the Protestants hated each other in Tremont, Pennsylvania."

"Barroom Transcripts" is a collection of accounts from Straub, a Vietnam vet, about his life, his family, his time in jail and hospitals, and pretty much everything else he felt like commenting on. Stewart met Straub eight years ago, and since then, has let him camp out in his backyard a few times when he didn't have anywhere else to go.

Each section tells a different tale, each tale is a journey into a place I'm not sure I'd ever want to venture. At the same time, I couldn't stop reading. Every bite-size chapter has an engaging title: "Religion and the Cigarette Patch" or "Some Crap About Tree Stumps." I had to read them, if only just to see what he could possibly say about tree stumps!

Straub is quite a character. The funny thing is, he isn't a character. His stories are spun with a quickness, a shakiness, a paranoia. The reader can hear the sound of the words coming out of his mouth, in a certain short attention span kind of way. He engages you in a story only to stop midpoint and start on another.

In between Straub's short, choppy dialogue are actual newspaper accounts of happenings (mainly crimes) in Lancaster. Oddly enough,

Straub always seems to be the innocent bystander to these events. On the pages after the articles, he gives his views of what happened. So, first you have your typical, serious report from a newspaper like the *Intelligencer Journal*: "A man was shot in the leg during a brawl between two groups that started in a Lancaster city tavern late Thursday night." Then, on the pages following, you can read Straub's take on the incident: "While I was callin' there I heard five shots. I said you better get your butts...Get them guys down here. Gunfires goin'."

Straub introduces several other "characters" along the way. At some points, editor Stewart speaks, basically only in response to what Straub has said. Then there's Mike, a 38-year-old man dying of cancer, which he got, Straub claims, from eating out of garbage cans. There's also "The English Girl," who peppers the dialogue with decidedly British words like "mum." And let's not forget "The Youngest Terrorist in the World," a boy who, among an assortment of hateful deeds, spiked Straub's drinks with lighter fluid. To top it off, anonymous women float in and out of his stories, probably close to the way they floated in and out of his life.

Stewart started the book in February and finished it in four months. He is now working on another-Bar Scripts Vol. 2-which will be self-published under his own \*Situation Press.

There is no beginning, middle or end to this book. There is no plot, no climax, no happy ending. Sometimes, Straub speaks of himself in the third person, sometimes not. Anything goes.

Stewart warns readers in the introduction that discretion may be advised. This is not a book for the timid. But it makes for some provocative, sometimes shocking, reading.

And the most shocking part of it all is that it isn't fiction.

As Stewart said, "This is reality for some people."

**[\*I renamed it Craphouse Press in January 2000. -Rich]**

## SIDEKICK MAGAZINE REVIEW

– Some famous author, who will remain anonymous (he sells his books mainly to doughy women on lazy beaches, I would gather), once said, “The difference between fiction and reality is that fiction has to make sense.” As exemplified in *Barroom Transcripts*, truer words were never spoken. Compiled by Rich Stewart, the book is a collection of short stories and drunken ramblings recorded in 1999 at “various ‘impairment centers’ in or around Lancaster, PA.” Due in part to the shocking brevity with which the stories are written, the lines between reality and imagination are often blurred and fuzzy. I mean ... Tony didn’t *really* beat his asshole brother’s head in with a cowboy boot spur ... right? He couldn’t POSSIBLY have shot his own aquarium! Hehe. This man’s life, accurately recorded or not, is so unbelievable, so distinct from the normal runs of sleepy warmed over reality, that one almost HAS to read it. Indeed, the narrator’s abrupt honesty and graphic portrayal is what truly makes this book. “Takin’ Care of Business” (I’m gonna fuck you up!) and “Tony’s Revenge” (“I wanted to scare him a little bit”) have never been more, well, disturbing ... *Barroom Transcripts* therefore captures a mood running swiftly below the mainstream, an attitude of pain, struggle, and rough living. For more information contact Rich Stewart at [craphousepress@aol.com]. --*Lauren Choplin*

Online version at [<http://fly.to/sidekickmag>]



'Each section tells a different tale, each tale is a journey into a place I'm not sure I'd ever want to venture. At the same time I couldn't stop reading.'

--The Snapper

'This man's life, accurately recorded or not, is so unbelievable, so distinct from the normal runs of sleepy warmed over reality, that one HAS to read it.'

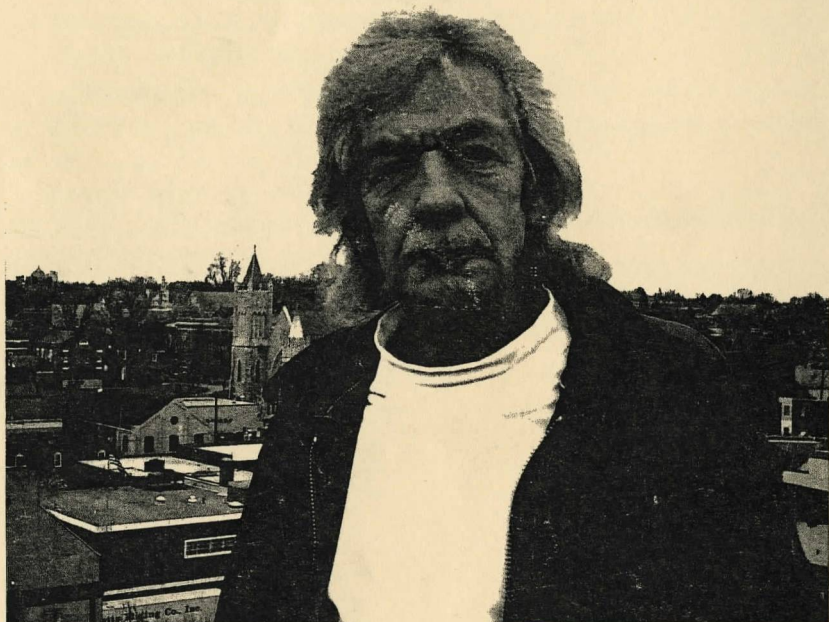
-Sidekick Magazine

"This is a human car-wreck. You wanna drive by without lookin', but ya look anyway."

--TH

'My overwhelming reaction to the text can be described in one word--disturbing. At the same time, it is the story of a tortured life, a person struggling to be at peace in a world where there isn't any.'

--JZ



'A guy like me; I don't give a fuck!'

--Tony Straub