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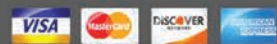
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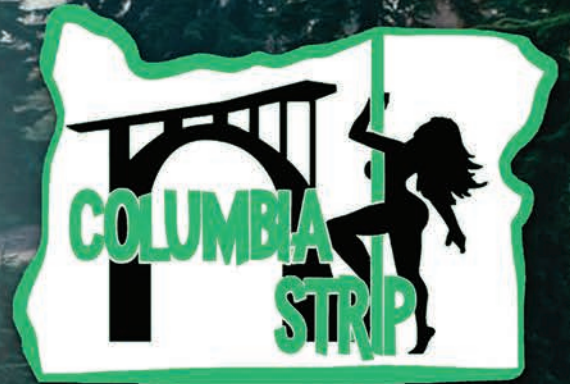
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THE MONTHLY

COLUMN

BY WOMBSTRETCHA THE MAGNIFICENT



THANKSGIVING MOVIES YOU'VE NEVER SEEN

It seems as though every holiday, which is more than a mere government-approved day off, has movies about it. Halloween has a barrel of films, Christmas has about seventeen million and Independence Day has...*Independence Day*. Say, has anyone ever thought about why they play *The Nightmare Before Christmas* on both holidays? That bastard, Jack Skellington, is really working for The Man! What about Thanksgiving, though? Thanksgiving is a buffer holiday (along with Halloween) which keeps Christmas from starting in August, but it doesn't really have any movies and the few it does have (*Thankskilling* and *Thankskilling 3* are the only ones which come to mind) aren't superb. But, there ARE Thanksgiving movies. They exist, but the problem is that nobody has ever seen most of them—leaving them obscure footnotes in cinematic history. So, here's a list of some of them, for your enjoyment.

Tom Turkey's Big Day

One for the kiddos, this animated feature stars Tom Turkey—an affable turkey, if ever there was one—who prepares, with great zeal, for his big dinner date at the Johnson Family's house, after overhearing and misinterpreting part of a conversation between Mr. Johnson and Old Farmer Meatstab. His hilarious, head-long plunge toward his own decapitation will entertain all ages.

The Giblest Factory

A look at a company of infantrymen during the Vietnam War, as Thanksgiving comes around during the bloody battle defending Hill 829 from the vicious, and not-particularly-thankful, North Vietnamese Army.

The Duplo Movie

Predicated on the success of the various Lego movies, the use of Lego's mentally retarded cousin, Duplo, is an inevitability. And, its over-

sized characters designed for little hands will reveal something about the true meaning of Thanksgiving.

Shanksgiving

A brutal prison drama, involving rival gangs who are all plotting to control the flow of illegal heroin via a series of well-planned murders and crafty anal rapes.

Oy Vey! Let's Give Thanks!

In this comedy, Adam Sandler stars as a man who, after the untimely passing of his father (also Adam Sandler), realizes that, for the first time in his life, *he* must be the one to circumcise the Thanksgiving turkey (Adam Sandler), in a light-hearted look at one Jewish family's traditions. Fun fact: Sandler gained 40 pounds to play the turkey.

The Gravy Boat Enigma

After being willed nothing but an old gravy boat after his secretive grandfather dies, Jimmy Felchwick is contacted by mysterious figures, all hell-bent on retrieving it. As he's drawn into a web of deception and intrigue, he discovers that the gravy boat is the key to a hidden fortune...*if* he can solve its riddle.

Big Money Listeners

Rap duo Insane Clown Posse star as a professional psychologist named Hefty Sack and his patient, Confucius B. Bitchass—a man with overblown neuroses, who is dealing with trauma incurred on a past Thanksgiving. Fat chicks, clown makeup, turkeys and party hats all feature prominently in this instant classic.

Throatilator

A Thanksgiving villain named the Throatilator is said to stalk the residents of Cornchute, Iowa

every couple of years. His savage throat-pitch forkings spread terror throughout the town, as the inhabitants realize a killer has returned and must be stopped.

A Christmas Pirate Thanksgiving

Beloved children's character Christmas Pirate engages in piracy on Thanksgiving, bringing the spirit of Thanksgiving—as well as a cargo of stolen rum and whores—to New Providence Island in 1715.

Fat Albert Gets Thankful

Fat Albert and his Junkyard Gang must seek out the true spirit of Thanksgiving, in order to solve a brutal murder and help out their neighbor—in a live-action version, where Fat Albert is played by Eddie Murphy in a fat suit, with no mention of Bill Cosby at all.

Who's Stuffing Whom?

A romantic comedy, where two couples—gay and lesbian, respectively—must swap partners in order to attend Thanksgiving for two families, without coming out to their parents. In a surprising twist, both sets of parents already knew their kids were gay, but they still play hilarious pranks or coordinate awkward situations, in order to expose the true character of their offspring.

Two Bone Malone

Set in the Old West, this gritty cowboy film features lawman James "Two Bone" Malone, as he tries to catch his arch nemesis, Mordecai "One Horse" Malorse, before Thanksgiving, so he can spend the time with his family, back at the alpaca farm.

A Thanksgiving Gangbang

No, not that kind of gangbang! This action

comedy takes place when the Frankston family comes together for Thanksgiving, but their two sons have each joined rival gangs. Bloods and Crips must sit down and exchange side dishes, gang signs and possibly gunfire, while their bewildered family tries to comprehend the season's true "colors."

Thankful:

A Real Housewives Thanksgiving

In the wealthy suburb of Cumberland, Trish (Reese Witherspoon) and Bethany (Sarah Michelle Gellar), two housewives who hate one another, but are united by marriage into the same family, must spend Thanksgiving together. Enjoy the drinking and pill-popping spectacle, as both women must hide their animosity from their twin-brother husbands (both played by Vince Vaughn), while they hunker down and eat nothing but salad—each asserting that their respective tattoos of Tinkerbell and Tweety Bird are superior to the other's.

Dinosaurus

Starring Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson as Johnny Bigbody, a science weightlifter at an archaeological dig. When one of his colleagues unwittingly discovers, clones and grows to full size the largest and most dangerous dinosaur of them all—Dinosaurus—he must then jump into action, trying to save all of Thanksgiving from being eaten in this thrill-a-minute ride.

Thanksgiving 2299

In the modestly distant future, cranberries do not exist on Earth, so in order to bring back the now-legendary gelatinous sauce preserve for Thanksgiving, a pair of hot women get into their skintight spacesuits, purchase a wisecracking android, grab a bucket of space lube and set to retrieve a lost seed bank ship, sent into deep space many years ago.

Pornucopia

Yes, that kind of gangbang! This one's for adults ages 18 and up, and involves the creative endeavors of several unusually attractive people, who come together due to a frankly ridiculous plot, in order to have group sex on a fully-set Thanksgiving table, and, yes, someone does get drilled in the pooper with a festive gourd.

So, while there are definitely some other Thanksgiving films out there, these are the ones I feel can serve as a new tradition

among many different types of people, as something to put on T.V. during Turkey Day, that are not football or Christmas-themed crap. If you look these up, expect to not find the best reviews, but by all means watch them. Tune in a few months down the line, as I run a similar type of article when Martin Luther King Jr. Day comes around.

May you be well-fed and reasonably content.

-WSTM

Wombstretcha The Magnificent is a writer, Cream Of Wheat expert, Englebert Humperdinck impersonator, ham deglazer, celebrity anus-print collector and retired rapper from Portland, OR. He can be found at Wombstretcha.com, on Twitter as @Wombstretcha503 and on Facebook or MeWe (the not-awful Facebook) as "Wombstretcha The Magnificent."

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My Manifesto

by Norman Kemp

What long nights will I find from here? Sometimes, I wonder if my body will hold. It's awfully heavy nowadays, bones weighted by muscles mangled and creaky, like old, wild roots grown too deep, now being ripped up by psychotic lumberjacks. What a rush, though—internal evisceration, that is...

No less, there's still tons of work to do on the block and time goes fast in this lane—regular sidewalk romps in our makeshift living room, full of milk crates, candles and used blankets. Early yet, still tons of things to do and time goes fast in this lane—regular sidewalk romps in our makeshift living room full of milk crates, candles and used blankets. A misfit pack of strays found home, or as close as any one of us could hope. Take yer

drugs 'round the corner! Don't put that in yer nose, there's strangers here! Turn up that goddamn music so I can't sleep! No fret, no one is sleeping here. Lungs apart and filled by smoke whenever it comes, just enough to take each breath without choking. This is the way it is at 3am on the block, overtones of transitory resolve, with no regard to the random passersby drawn to our curbside haven. Our candle lit of warm compassion is but a hearth, a signal of sanctuary in the weird streets. Stumble in and have a seat, drink a beer and keep yer head low—let's fight those demons together, man! We can smoke and laugh about it later. Paint your thinkings onto cardboard and hang it on our cabinet. Rip down the branches of ornamental cherry trees and drum on the concrete if that's what you're about. This space is Ours and Yours, as long as you prove that you're solid enough to maintain some semblance of sensible composure. It gets quiet again, for necessary focus and pre-dawn art projects, some time after a collective inspiration hits. Indistinct shouting in the eerie corridors of Old Town doesn't phase us; we're too familiar with such shadow-hour machinations to take notice anymore. If bad noise draws too close, we're prepared to smash it out with baseball bats and heavy sticks, though it rarely comes around to that and for good reason.

Somebody eats shit on a bicycle in the

street beside us and screeches an expletive or two, drawing our attention outward for a brief moment. He groans, but won't say if he's okay and rides off on a wobbly tire, into the familiar night. As he leaves sight, he becomes the city and we figure that he'll probably be fine. I'm up for good, but more powder comes my way, just to be sure. Give up yer nostrils! Be clear within your own head—it's becoming vital now. You'll need to be hyper-aware of every movement apart from your own, even that down several blocks—yes, even the falling of any leaf which we didn't invite. This is how you exercise vigilance—even in your downtime—and, how crucial it is. When the Undead come around, keep a close watch, as they have sticky fingers and tend to feel around behind our backs. Take sleep out of your mind—those yawns are only habit and should not be considered. Cigarettes in excess will do the trick, if it's your only option, but you should send a friend to Greyhound, if you can. Take care to say "thank you" for free drugs and make sure to smile so that you don't seem strange. Light the hearth if it's gone out and stay near its flickering flame until sun-up. Is someone watching the Cat or is he still asleep and oblivious? Let your lover take his leash and send them on a big adventure around the block. The world is so big to him—and, to me, too—so, sniff at trees and crawl under parked cars, because you can. Meow at people you don't like instead of talking—this will make things easier in the long run. Cover your shit in the gravel, so your friends don't have to smell it and demand tummy rubs whenever you feel anxious. Be more like your cat, because his shit is figured out. It's all quite simple, with the right tools—even a cat can do it! His moony eyes trace every visible inch of this block with unflinching scrutiny, the mark of a true Watchman. He and a gentle canine curled up and dozed away from each other. I ate a healthy dose of psilocybin, to level out with them. Day-break was upon us then, so I threw on my hat and ran off for more cigarettes.

Half-dead construction workers yawn at 5:30 and cats go after birds. An apple gives me decent sustenance now and I



realize that I might be fashionably late to whatever arrangements I've made today, in exchange for hot coffee. I rode on the high and magnificent waves of new morning sun showers and lifted my arms in the street, giving rise to every beautiful vibration that echoed from my core. Let it pour out through your fingertips, like electric lava—so hot that it feels like ice to first touch. These are the sensations that remind you you're still alive and give fulfillment to your every breath. Don't forget this—carry it with you on your travels and seek it out at every corner. Smoke coffee and drink cigarettes while you still understand what the fuck that means. Be late to everything because it gives you the odd appearance of someone who knows. If you allow punctuality to be your burden, you've lost sight of what it means to be present. Have no doubt that what you're doing is intimately meaningful to yourself, your loved ones and all of the random smilers that get a kick out of Our display. Cry every time that you need a break, because this is your time, so you'd better use it before we all stop turning. Find an old refused cabinet on the curb to make into a part of your home and love it with all your might. Protect yo friends! Find any goddamn thing that you can use as a drum and play it as arhythmically as your heart decrees and own it—people will start to notice this and recognize that you are, at least, capable of producing a jive upon which most decent-hearted folk can feel out a common ground, if nothing else. Voice yourself boldly and without forgiveness to anyone who cares to listen. Call your mom unless you can't or shouldn't and let her know that you've consumed at least two-thousand calories today. Waste a police officer's time, if you haven't already, at least once a day—call in and report something wildly absurd, such as that you've just witnessed Officer Sanders and Oliphant brutalizing an elderly woman in Elephant Park for shits and giggles. Raise dramatized terror in your tone and have a friend mimic the sounds of screaming in the background, to give the dispatch operator a proper jolt. Do this as many times per day as is feasible, and from encrypted phone servers or local payphones. Give away your lucky cigarette, because luck proba-

bly doesn't exist in any tangible form and may not be worth relying on anyway. Accept your losses and honor their memory fondly and frequently—this step is crucial for moving forward. Turmoil will find you at almost every turn, so keep your tongue sharp and be prepared to use it in the way of a hidden dagger. Imagine the infinite crescendos that humanity could reach if only everyone shared Our sentiments of righteous autonomy, casual sodomy and unyielding comradery. With no warning at all, the general pub-

Ah, what peculiar cycles of dissonance that frequent me! It seems to happen this way as clockwork—periods of explosive thought come in high octane sweeps, where my hand becomes motorized and generates prose on pace with whatever I'm wrapped up in...and then, it dies. This part feels much like plummeting over the initial drop of a roller coaster, but descending instead into a cold purgatory of subconscious shutdown, where those pesky synapses backfire on themselves and send seering shocks to your spine



lic would dismiss themselves from their slave jobs for good, gathering en masse to set flames on Babylonian Territory and erect newfound coteries upon the rubble of once-venenerated government properties. Police officers and such other federal accessories would throw their silly costumes over the bridges and atone for their atrocities by loading up on fantastic quantities of mind-bending doses of this and that, dancing nude in the rain with funny hats and tambourines, chanting and whooping incoherently at stars and big fires, sleeping for twenty hours a day—eating, fucking and making art for the rest. We were born primed to govern our own—each of us a born king, to no one but ourselves—to live as though we'd never worn neckties, that we'd never been nameless tools to the putrid cogwheel of oppression. No longer will mankind allow such transgressions to plague our right to survive. Alas, my friend. It's about high time to kill the fucking cop that lives in your head.

that demand you to write, but nothing sensical enough to suffice will come to mind.

To avoid such afflictions, you may wish to ventilate your brain, so that the steam won't build up and swell your skull. A healing doctor might prescribe you with a handful of cyanescens and send you to get lost in a desert somewhere. You'll need plenty of rest, hydration and fine literature to last you through the journey, but it should set your head straight enough to feign some new inspiration, if only for a moment. If you need a more short-term approach, you're always welcome to stick with ol' faithful—heavy substance abuse, total ignorance of the time and no sleep for at least three or four nights. If you're the type that can handle this sort of thing, you'll find that it proves unquestionably effective and awards corporeal results, but often time at a cost too high and treacherous for some to grapple. Though what a mighty

venture it will be! Gauge your threshold very carefully before embarking on this fabled quest—folks with weak fortitude tend to spin out somewhere near the 37th hour, but don't realize it until they've already entered the stratosphere and gotten lost in an antithetical gravity. The idea of pushing your limits is romantic and all, but I know too well to fuck with it. Anyone who is set on living this way should come close to catastrophic recess of the Ego at least once, if not just to feel the pure sadistic vertigo of collapse, then certainly for the sake of instilling a sense of stark existential terror deep within themselves. Reaching this point will etch an everlasting mark at your grandest peak of substance-induced inebriation, to establish an easily discernible boundary within your own cognition that sounds the emergency alarms whenever you come too close. Find a reliable "panic tether"—some familiar mantric totem that frequents your waking thoughts—and attach it to yourself firmly so that you may reel yourself back in when things get too heavy. These sort of subconscious defense systems are more than just good practice—they're essential for anyone who still possesses an inclination to avoid total brain failure. If this doesn't apply to you, then good luck, man! Enjoy eternal catharsis, you beautiful martyr! We'll make you into a cautionary tale and hang graffitied Missing Person posters of your face under the streetlamps of desolate bridges, with a random telephone number, if for no other reason than to throw those nosy goons off the trail, whenever they inevitably call in to say that you've been spotted arguing with pigeons on Burnside. This will be no fun for anyone, I assure you. But if you do end up losing yourself to those dumb pigeons, tell me what they say—I've been wondering for some time now.

Words, oh words—have you failed me yet? No illusion of grandeur weighs me as this, such that falls onto my shoulders with each turn of a page. Those lines yet written mock me still, like the dying stories of dreams whispered to none but the wind. Somewhere beneath the trembling apprehension of this pen, I unknowingly nurture a strange magnetism to which my ink follows those same lost whispers. The beauty in such a concept lies beneath the waves, upon a shifting sand of which the murmuring epitaphs of dreamt realities have long since been scribed with sacred impermanence—that my fingertips trace the liquid currents of ephemeral guidances wild as fire, not much different than borrowing inspiration from a cloud in flight. If this pen maneuvers itself to the rhythm of some subliminal influence yet unveiled, then who is actually authoring these profligate tales? Hardly could I claim these words as mine, if even the very breath of men is stolen from the land.

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Well, it looks like those six weeks to flatten the curve were dog weeks or something. There is not much to report in terms of the eroticism of our city right now, other than the fact that you better be supporting any dancer who is gutsy enough to perform a striptease in a mask. Industry staff are balancing mask laws, early closing hours and limited spacing, all while trying to provide release and escape during a time when we need it most. So, as always, please, please, *please* continue to support the clubs during this election yea...excuse me, "pandemic." With that said, here is some actual journalism...

Oregonians Can Now Vote As (Not Just For) Their Favorite Politician

This just in—Ted Wheeler just voted for Donald Trump, Sarah Iannarone and a ban on same-sex marriage (at least for a few minutes last month). How, you ask? Thanks to some detectives at 4Chan (an anonymous, online image board), it has been discovered that our Secretary Of State's website, responsible for assisting Oregon voters, is as about as secure as a teenage boy in a porn store.

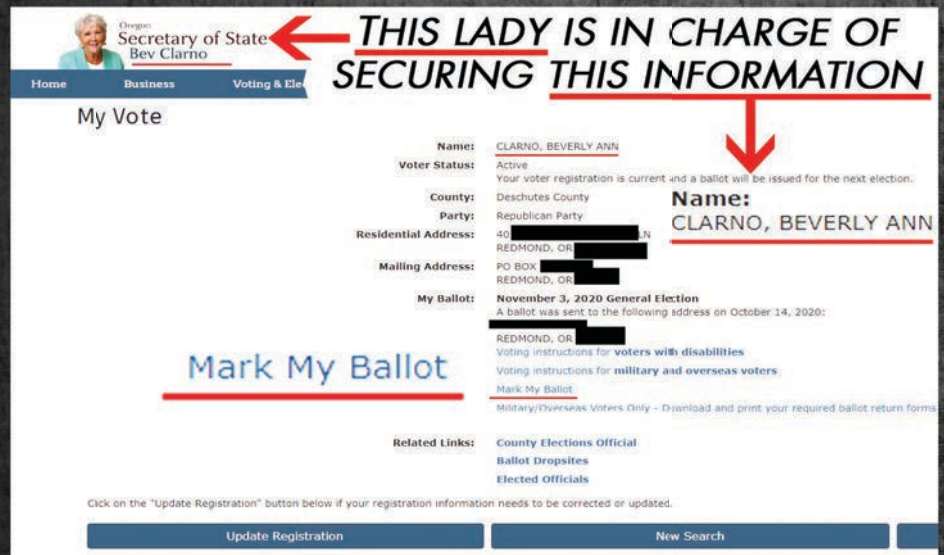
To access your (or, *in theory*, anyone's) ballot and personal address, all you need is a first name, last name and date of birth, before visiting the Oregon Secretary Of State website address, <https://SOS.Oregon.Gov/Pages/Index.aspx> and clicking "My Vote: Track Your Ballot." At this point, you may click "Mark My Ballot" to mark a ballot, update party registration information and see "your" voting history, physical address and mailing address. There is no password, no mother's maiden name...not even a "verify what party you are registered for" box on this website. Name and birthday is all anyone needs to fill out a vote on your behalf. Basically, if you're on Facebook and someone has wished you a "happy birthday," they might be giving you the gift of having your ballot filled out by someone else.

Does anyone with a basic understanding of voter fraud think that being able to access anyone's ballot (and, potentially change it) is in any way acceptable? What happens if someone decides to just, oh, re-register you as a member of the opposing party???

Should Oregon Secretary Of State, Bev Clarno, even have a job at this point?!

Well, let's see. According to a basic Google search, Oregon Secretary Of State, Bev (which I will assume is short for "Beverly") Clarno, was born on March 29, 1936 (this is probably a bigger concern, in terms of our Secretary Of State being as technically savvy as anyone else who experienced the 1950s as a teenager). According to an anonymous third party, who entered this information into the Secretary Of State website (because, I would never do such a thing), Bev is a member of the Republican Party, who lives in Deschutes County and received her ballot on October 14, which was sent to her P.O. Box in Redmond. Thank you, Anonymous, for providing me with the following screen shots, which show exactly how easy it is to access Bev's ballot:

you may be seeing "voter fraud" as a partisan issue—either a "right-wing conspiracy" that Orange Man tweets about, or something that Russia supposedly engages in to screw over the Democrats. But, guess what? Partisan bickering has *nothing* to do with what is going on here—voter fraud, of any kind, benefits whatever party (or ballot measure) is likely to lose. Winners don't need to cheat. Regardless of whether or not said winners are on your team, is beside the point. And, it is worthwhile to note that Kate (Katherine) Brown and Bev (Beverly) Clarno are from opposing political parties. Clearly, either one can have their ballots tampered with—so, this should concern everyone of every political party (with the exception of Libertarians, because our candidates are all trash...but, that's another article). Basically, *regardless of how you are voting*, if that vote is not counted (or, if it is altered by 4Chan hackers), it will



Oh, and by the way...the punishment for engaging in voter fraud using this website, according to the website itself, is being "subject to a fine" (Oregon Revised Statutes: 254.470). A fine—not a night in jail, not federal prison, but a fee that can probably be paid using the ReliaCard that one received alongside Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (a website that, unsurprisingly, requires a social security number—as well as multiple other forms of verification—to access).

Now, depending on your political affiliation,

only benefit losers, i.e. whatever candidate or ballot measure required fake votes to win.

The political turmoil in Oregon (Portland, mostly) is nonstop and I understand that "both" (quotes emphasized) sides have valid, nuanced and complex issues. But, before we address "systemic, institutionalized, internalized, intersectional privilege, from a post-racial lens and using a democratic socialist framework, blah blah college class terminology, yadda yadda bumper sticker," we have to make sure that you *can't just fucking change someone's vote with a Google search*.

Am I being loud enough for the people in the back? I don't care if you're part of Rose Town AntiBad or Proud Guys—internet polls (of which Oregon's sloppy Secretary Of State website falls into) have been taken over by trolls for years. The winning pick for Mt. Dew's new flavor, for instance, as chosen by the internet during a "Dub The Dew" contest, was "Hitler Did Nothing Wrong" (followed closely by "Diabeetus"). Justin Bieber asked the internet to determine where he would perform next, and this ended up being North Korea. There are dozens upon dozens of instances in which the internet voted and things turned out, well, with Pitbull performing in a WalMart located near Kodiak, Alaska.

This is not an "Oregon" problem. We're simply the ones who will pay the cost for contracting the nice lady who brings cookies to the city council meetings to be in charge of securing a website from voter fraud.

Some hopium for the masses, though...this problem may have been fixed by the time you're reading this. I am not going to mess with my vote (to see if the website submits said vote or simply tracks said vote), nor will I risk a fine (which should be a felony, to be honest) in order to test this vulnerability out. But, at time of press (October, 2020), no single Oregon-based news outlet has reported on this story (including *Portland Mercury*, *Willamette Week*, *Oregonian*, *Portland Tribune* or *Statesman Journal*). In fact, the *Journal* just threw up an article claiming that there is "no evidence" that absentee ballots (or other such concerns) are subject to voter fraud. Perhaps this is a "mostly peaceful" website and the "real threat" is Russia? "Nothing to see here," right? The screen shots, URLs and information shown here (which were obtained by asking a fat kid in a Pepe shirt to do some digging around online) are clearly doctored and voter fraud is "just an idea," is that it? Do with this information what you want. Topple a statue, shatter the windows of a Korean-owned mini-mart and spray paint a police horse. Whatever floats your boat. Anyways, have fun, Oregon (i.e. Portland). It's been a blast. Enjoy your bike lanes and needle drops, because democracy is a failed experiment and you may as well soak up whatever is left, while you still can.

Speaking of solutions to late-stage dystopia, here is a list of happy hours around town:



eroticcity spotlight

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DAILY HAPPY HOURS:

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11AM-5PM**

**COLUMBIA STRIP
4PM-7PM**

**DV8
12PM-3PM**

**GUILTY PLEASURES
1:30PM-5PM**

**LUST LOUNGE
2PM-7PM**

**STARS CABARET (SALEM)
4PM-6PM**



THE WORST WEED-RELATED WONDERS OF 2020

GREEN ROOM DIARIES BY STONED COLD SATIVA AWESOME

It's been a dumpster fire of a year, not just for the 6% of the 1% who contracted The Rona and died. But, for, well, everyone. Pot farms burned down, as fires torched Oregon. Pot shops closed down, as fires torched Portland. Pot roast became pot pie, as 4th of July celebrations were outlawed. But, the biggest casualties for cannabis consumers were as follows...

Marijuana Stocks

While much more accessible to the average retail investor than ever before, the stock market isn't exactly a get-rich-quick scheme—especially when it comes to cannabis. The big thing a few years ago was “weed stock,” which meant buying anything with the word “cannabis” in the name. Of note, Canadian cannabis companies were all the rage, because, with the exception of our first two amendments, Canada tends to legalize things faster than the U.S. This is probably due to regulation (or, maybe just because Canada's leader is a weed-smoking teenager), but regardless of why, Canadian pot stocks were huge. In fact, if you got into Aurora Cannabis four years ago at \$22 per share, you would have held on

until it reached \$115 a year or two later, right? And, you would have sold at the top, correct? Good, because that \$115 per share is now worth...wait for it...\$4.20 per share. I'm not kidding (go look...I submitted this article in mid-October, 2020). So much for a long-term investment.



Why is this any different than any other pump-and-dump stock trade? Well, I'm pushing 41 years old. This means that I was smoking weed right around the time that *Doggystyle* hit the record stores and I was paying, oh, fifty bucks

for an eighth of some top shelf “kill bud” and/or “chronic.” For reference, a pack of smokes was \$1.89 (plus whatever the homeless guy's beer cost). Today, a pack of smokes is roughly five times that, but weed? Well, I wake up to text messages from dispensaries, promising \$75 ounces that make the best stuff I smoked in middle school look like literal dirt. Sure, I was probably being taxed for buying pot as a teenager, but there is no way that anyone in 1994 would have ever been high enough to sell ounces at less than a few hundred bucks. This is the first reason that cannabis stocks are a dumb bet—it's a literal weed and it's not going to be in short supply anytime soon, especially now that it's legal to grow in schools and daycares.

A second issue, one that most retail financial investors never take into account, is a weird conspiracy theory called “supply and demand.” With low supply and high demand, comes profit. But, with a literal weed and a priced-in market (as in, few people started smoking pot after it became legal—they just started admitting to it), the supply is through the roof (in some cases, literally) and the demand is, well...remember how most kids

started smoking pot? Because it was cool, edgy and against the rules? Well, now your mom picks it up on the way back from Starbucks. No one is “taking up pot” this year. Clearly, the kids aren’t dying from brownies and trap music isn’t geared toward the same crowd that likes reggae. As fucked up as it is to admit, fentanyl would be a much better investment, in terms of supply-and-demand economics related to controlled substances [at the time of publication, the author of does not own any fentanyl holdings, in physical or paper form, and this is not to be taken as financial advice].

CBD

I get it. This stuff can cure everything from neck pain to cancer, and I use it for...well, I have no idea what it’s fixing (but, I’m sure it’s helping). Still, C.B.D. is to cannabis what social justice is to pop culture—it’s not meant to replace the source material, let alone become the standard. But, sadly, it has taken the same course, infesting every head shop and pot dispensary between here and wherever weed is still illegal (Utah, maybe). I didn’t come to Herbal Holistic Natural Canna-Remedy Hut to be given a lecture about what’s good for society and how I can use the newest product to better reset my emotional balance—I came here for two blunts, which I plan on smoking to numb my brain from the irritation caused by people arguing about social justice on social media—I’m smoking weed to be anti-social. “This is a good massage oil for stress.” Shut the fuck up and give me something that will cause me to fall asleep while jacking off.

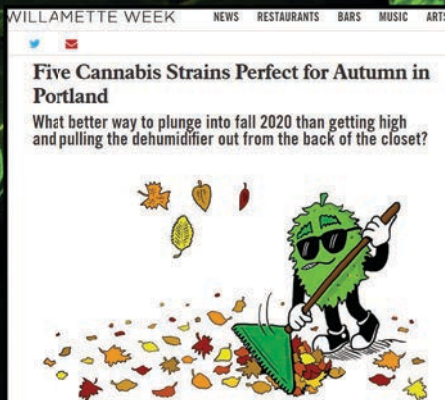
CBD is basically vape, without any nicotine. You just have to trust that it’s good for you and give the girl at the register money, so she can buy more green hair dye. And, I swear to God, if I ever buy another box of “edibles” that contains less T.H.C. than a Jonas

Brothers concert, I’m going to just start drinking at the movies again. After all, there is no way I can sit through *Captain Marvel* sober.

Delivery Apps And High-End Cannabis Shops

Okay, let me take a few steps back and clarify something: I’m actually fine with *real* social justice. You know, the kind that works. I, personally, feel that any “activism” going on right now in Portland is performative and has less to do with [insert cause here] than it does “Orange Man bad.” Without getting too political, I don’t recall

nous land (arguably very *valid* points), they’re forgetting that these things happened centuries ago. Again, not saying that they’re not valid—but, the average brother who got popped with a blunt in, oh, 1998, is probably rotting in a cell, located directly across the street from a “recreational cannabis” dispensary that now offers door-to-door services via an iPhone app. This person was locked up no less than two Sublime albums ago. Racial inequality, in terms of false imprisonment or inflated sentencing, applies to nonviolent drug offenses in exponentially greater numbers than, say, police shootings. Are police shootings



the time that Rosa Parks yelled about some dude spreading his legs too far apart on the bus, nor can I seem to locate the speech in which M.L.K. Jr. spoke of his dream in which “black children, white children and children of all colors would all have miniature hierarchies and asterisk-laden conspiracy theories, used to assign privilege points and determine who was the most equal.” I’m more of the “free the black guys sitting in jail for a joint” type of radical—I know, a total milk-toast centrist, who thrives on a diet of bran flakes and Tim Pool videos.

Why in the absolute hell are there still black people sitting in jail for pot, while at the same time, pot shops are doing Black Friday sales? Let’s take a step back and realize that, while activists yell about slavery and indige-

a valid cause for protest? Again, and for the hopefully last time, yes. But, if the argument is that people shouldn’t have their lives taken from them, simply because they committed a victimless crime that would have led to a lighter sentence if they were of lighter skin tone, I think that Bob’s Bud Bus & Breakfast should be first in line to cough up some legal fees for victims of racial bias.

And yet, after they protest a black-owned business for being in the way of their nightly LARP, most of the people “concerned” with racial injustice and slavery will call up Green Goddess Ganja Girls and have some Bernie Sanders Kush delivered to their loft.

Anyways, have a happy Thanksgiving, everyone.

TALES FROM THE DJ BOOTH

BY DJ HAZMATT
WITH HELP FROM BLAZER SPARROW



Last month, I was having a text argument with *Exotic* writer Blazer Sparrow, about whether or not Portland is “on fire” or “peacefully on fire.” The discussion was political, with me being a more right-leaning asshole, who doesn’t care what inclusive message is attached to the bricks being thrown at the windows of black-owned small businesses, while Blazer, being just left of Stalin, was calling my useful and in-no-way excessive closet of metallic tools a “paranoia-driven stockpile.” Look, dude—I don’t even *have* a lawn, let alone the urge to keep anyone off of it.

Anyways, after venturing into the political ramifications of voting for Joe Beavis or Donald Buttthead, Blazer and I came to agreement that every candidate out there, regardless of how cool they once were, is pretty much just another shitty act—sucking up attention, money and fame, in petty power grabs that use division among edgy, adult teens to make it feel like they can change the system. Which, in my opinion, is basically the same as punk rock. With a few suggestions from Blazer (one overruled, as I am not comparing Trump to The Clash), I compiled this list of which candidates for U.S. President (former and current) match with which punk bands (former and current). For purposes of length and clarity, Smash Mouth, Vermin Supreme and Green Party candidates were omitted from consideration.

Joe Biden - Minor Threat

The “sober” alternative to the irrational, drunken and braggart-like option plaguing the stages at various underground venues, Minor Threat was a band that represented a new way of thinking in the punk scene—straightedge sobriety being portrayed as a healthy form of rebellion that doesn’t result

in a dumpster fire stories or liver transplants. Much like Ian MacKay’s self-aware, “fourth step” genre of punk, Biden presents himself as the solution to an out-of-control and hyper-masculine scene, full of pussy-grabbing frat boys and reactionary outbursts. The problem, of course, is that Minor Threat and Biden are equally boring, flash-in-the-pan versions of what their fan base is used to—just without the drunken energy that makes other bands fun to watch live. Sure, it’s nice to prop up the guy who doesn’t get wasted or refer to his wife as “Sugar Tits” under his breath in church, but what good is a designated driver who can’t even remember where he put his keys, let alone entertain a crowd anymore? Yeah, he won’t make jokes about women...but, why is he sniffing their kids? This one is just weird, and when not viewed through nostalgia glasses, he’s clearly a bad choice. Dry drunks are still drunks—at least the spray-tanned douchebag alternative knows how to talk to dictators and vulture capitalists...this guy can barely buy Halliburton stock on CashApp without asking his grandson how to charge the pocket computer.

Kamala Harris - Fugazi

See above. Basically, this is what all Minor Threat supporters will eventually get stuck with, most likely after spending a significant amount of beer money on merchandise that appeals more to hipster chicks than it does punk rock fans, simply to show support for what’s popular—same goes for Fugazi.

Donald Trump - Sex Pistols

It’s hard to define “punk” and “sellout” simultaneously, but Trump is just that—on one hand, he’s hated by the mainstream establishment, soccer moms, pretentious college students, people who don’t understand



socialism and female comedians alike—in other words, he pisses off all the right people. However, he’s still a product of money and arguably more “mainstream” than anyone else on this list. Trump is the Johnny Rotten of politics—an aging ginger, whose appeal is overshadowed by his inability to open his mouth on television without saying something dumb that will instantly result in financial loss. Sure, it’s edgy and scene-approved to openly hate the Pistols (and Trump) during one’s “still punk” phase, but once an audience grows up and realizes that anyone with a barcode or merchandise is technically a sellout, it’s actually tough to deny that both Johnny and Donnie resemble the “fuck you” spirit more than anyone on this list. No, that doesn’t make “Anarchy In The U.K.” or “Pretty Vacant” any less ironic, but I’m sure that Lydon would release the rights to the Trump campaign if asked. Plus, if re-elected, we might get our Public Image phase from Donald, which would be interesting to see.

Mike Pence - MxPx

“Dude, I had no idea about the whole ‘used to be religious’ thing.” “Actually, they still are. They just bury it behind stylish riffs and traditionalist values that appeal to Zoomers for some weird reason.”

This is how most “fans” of MxPx (i.e. “Magnified Plaid,” which sounds like going to a convenient store on acid and is a much cooler name) are eventually re-introduced to that one band from Warped Tour that seemed like undercover cops for some reason. And, with this conversation, one of two things usually happens—either a realization that people who are into Jesus aren’t necessarily as cringe as one would assume, or, that what you suspected all along turned out to be true—thus confirming your prejudice about this act (and why it was hella awkward to bring up the topic of abortion while standing in line for merchandise). I don’t know if Pence can be trusted, but he seems like a decent (as in, presentable and ready for a job interview) dude—which means he’s probably hiding something. Same goes for MxPx. If one of the people in that band isn’t outed for having a Chan’s worth of cartoon kiddie porn on their laptop sooner or later, I’ll lose a bet. I don’t trust “Christian punk” any more than I trust “male feminist,” in terms of umbrella terms used by wolves to get in with the sheep. Strangely enough, both MxPx and Pence are what protesters will end up with, if they are successful at boycotting other, less dangerous headlining acts.



It’s refreshing to hear a genuine, researched and well-informed, anti-establishment stance, repeated throughout the years and never without an edge. It’s fantastic to know that the true spirit of punk is still alive and it gives folks hope, knowing that someone who is actually successful (in terms of spreading their anti-capitalist message)

was able to achieve mainstream numbers, without having the mainstream support. And, then, like clockwork, the people backing said act sells out and replaces their front runner with a failed actor who was technically active in the scene for a brief period in the 1990s, simply because money talks louder than Jello. Worse, somewhere in the basement of a failing anarchist coffee shop, the person who once represented this brand is charging activists a hefty fee to listen to them gripe and whine about the billionaires in power. Autographs will be available at the merch table after the show, by the way. Be sure to buy a “Capitalism Is Evil” bumper sticker.

Andrew Yang - The Offspring

Why do people hate this guy? Educated, catchy and just a fun-loving, level-headed institution that people dismiss (even though the staying power is the longest on this list), Yang is basically The Offspring. Never being given a fair swing at things, looking back on him makes you wonder why you always thought he sucked and just how much more polished, catchy and technically sound he is, when compared to other options. I.Q. of 200 and change, accessible to both old school punkers and Tik Tok mall sluts alike, we all miss Yang. By the way, that stimulus would have kept on coming if we put this one in charge, similar to how The Offspring would still be around, if we prioritized them over Green Day.

Jo Jorgensen - Green Day

Why, oh why, did this person get so popular overnight? Is it because they’re “technically” part of a party that dates back to underground, Bay Area roots? Or, is it because they seem cool enough to make a few points about free speech (even if it’s just an excuse to make off-color jokes or college-aged edgy stances on guns, weed and other cool shit). No, they’re not related to Ministry, other than perhaps via Lollapalooza...but, I mean, they could be, right? Wait, what’s this? They’re echoing mainstream political talking points and retweeting establishment-backed, white-run “racial activist” hashtag campaigns?! Oh, come on. Really? Aaaaand now we’re dying our hair black at this age??? I’m done.

Tulsi Gabbard - NOFX

“But, we need a minority!” the crowd shouts at a racially mixed option that isn’t afraid to

bring up awkward topics, disowns identity politics and keeps things short and to the point. Given the right exposure to her greatest hits, everyone will find something to like about Tulsi, even though she’s probably said a couple things (or has a few stances) that don’t vibe with the scene as a whole. And, that’s why I like Tulsi—she’s real. But, much like NOFX, she’s been thrice-canceled for, well, being honest about shit and not taking things too seriously, while at the same time, challenging the establishment norms and being oddly attractive to college jocks, who wouldn’t otherwise support someone of her genre (let alone demographic). Plus, Tulsi has more hits that have never achieved mainstream media attention than any other band (or candidate) mentioned thus far. Even people who hate punk can appreciate Tulsi. Democrats and Republicans have both suggested that Tulsi is a good choice, which is why she, like NOFX, was shelved and hidden during her best years. We can’t just have an intelligent, female, minority candidate spouting stuff about how none of those things matter, now can we?

Kanye West - Kanye West

“Kanye isn’t punk,” you say? I’m sorry. I can’t hear you over Kanye being *the only celebrity with balls* to take over the airwaves in, oh, twenty years. “George Bush doesn’t care about black people,” Kanye says to an audience of bumper-sticker slactivists during a Katrina telethon. “I’m happy for you and I’m a let you finish, but...” Kanye says to an entitled white woman, who was given an award she didn’t deserve. “The Democratic party is the new plantation and slavery is mental,” Kanye says to a **static** “CUT TO COMMERCIAL BREAK, GODDAMNIT,” **CNN logo**. Kanye West is basically Axl Rose, if Axl Rose was still Axl Rose and had gone to school. And, yes, Yeezy is running for Preezy. But, do you know how much the establishment hates him? They let *another* Kanye West on the ballot!!! That is correct—while G.O.A.T. Kanye is technically an option on several ballots, there is someone else with the same name out there, sucking up Kanye’s votes. Plus, some states are even removing OUR Kanye—the true Yeezus—from their ballots! The establishment truly does not want this man to win. And, with that, I will toss my vote to the obvious choice. Make America Yeezy Again. I’m sorry if this loses some fans, but at some point, you will see me in a M.A.Y.A. hat and I will make no apologies for it. It’s time to rebuild America and make Taylor Swift’s record industry cronies pay for it.



Kali

FROM
COLUMBIA STRIP

EXOTIC
PINUP NOVEMBER
2020



THANKSGIVING, PANDEMIC STYLE

BY ESMERALDA RUPP-SPANGLE

This year has already stretched your sanity to the breaking point, yet, further and further down it tumbles, challenging the very idea of the concept, “Well, at least it can’t get any worse.” It’s looking more and more like the traditional gatherings of the Thanksgiving season aren’t gonna happen. In some ways, this is good news. No senile ramblings from Uncle Joe, no kowtowing to your stepmother’s insistence on bringing up the fact that you still haven’t gotten married and no need to pretend that the pitifully dry turkey and mucosal, greyish gravy are a delectable treat. On the flipside though, there’s something strangely comforting about the yearly family row, and you can’t help but wonder what the hell you’re going to do with yourself now. Fortunately for you, I’ve assembled this carefully vetted list of seasonably appropriate alternatives to occupy what would likely be an otherwise depressing evening involving a T.V. dinner, reruns of *Criminal Minds* and a bottle of bad whiskey.

The Carrion Cannon

While the concept of “Punkin’ Chunkin’” is nothing new, the idea of the Carrion Cannon brings a whole new, even more destructive twist. All you’ll need is some form of roughly hewn catapult or trebuchet, a few frozen turkeys and an untended field or open space in which

to hurl your birds. Given the urban environment most of us inhabit, this bit can be tricky, so mounting your cannon, sling or other bird launching device to the bed of a pickup for a quick getaway might be wise. This is just in case you choose a more deserving target for your

tradition? Zoomsgiving offers many benefits over a traditional gathering. Assuming your more elderly relatives can find the wherewithal to set up a video conferencing app and you can all afford to courier mediocre-but-signature side dishes (Aunt Maisy’s Clam And Ketchup



avian artillery (say, a random abandoned building, an obnoxious neighbor’s apartment window or your ex’s house, for example).

Zoomsgiving

If you absolutely must hear your dad’s casual racism, filtered through the lens of your stepmother’s paranoia about social distancing, why not start a new

Surprise is not to be forgotten), you can absolutely engage in the traditional awkward family feast. Conducted virtually, however, you are now offered the opportunity to slam your laptop closed, when any unwanted questions arise and simply claim a “bad connection.” How many times have you sat around a family dinner and wished for a *Star Trek*-style transporter beam, to allow a hasty exit when Joe gets tanked and starts

reminiscing about sexual conquests you hope to fucking god are made up? Well, now you can vanish at a moment's notice, with a perfectly valid excuse. Thanks, Zoomsgiving.

Make It Art

There is a greater than 60% chance that, by some unknown mechanism not yet understood by physics, you are somehow going to end up with a turkey in your possession. You'll just be mindlessly wandering into the kitchen, opening the fridge door with the intention of getting a beer, when BAM! Before you, will be a massive, plastic-encased carcass, eating up at least half a shelf of space, with no clear origin for its arrival. Without an army of people to feed, though, its presence will feel pointless and unnecessary. May I recommend using its mysterious arrival as an opportunity to create some truly avant garde art? Recreate famous death scenes using cranberry sauce as blood, mashed potatoes as brains and the turkey as the corpse. Or, perhaps, create some kind of hideous nightmare lawn ornament using the bird, some oversized googly eyes and a fake mustache. Get creative, make it disturbing and have an unforgettable holiday.

The Ol' Hack 'N' Dodge

Maybe you actually do want that evening alone. The T.V. dinner, whiskey and *Criminal Minds* reruns sound right up your alley. Infuriatingly, however, your family isn't planning on forgoing the holiday gathering and have simply come to accept the possibility of death, in favor of pie and arguments about politics. Grandma Jonie really only has another year or two, after all. This, of course, foils your grand plans to get wasted, sit around and chill the fuck out by your lonesome. One good option in this case is to call all of your relatives who are even marginally on the fence about getting together and expressing to them—through violent paroxysms of coughing and gasping for air—how much you're looking forward to seeing them all, even though you've got a bit of a fever. Tell them how this crazy paranoia about masks (as a new wave of your dramatic coughing starts) and social distancing is bologna, and you'll personally be there at the door to welcome each and every one of them (pitiful gasp for air here). I guarantee a blissfully solitary evening.

Home Alone Holiday

One (perhaps deeply depressing) op-

tion would, of course, be to pull all your childhood stuffed animals, regrettably fondled Princess Leia cardboard stand-ups and nefariously obtained mannequin torsos, dress them up in wigs and bathrobes, wire them up like marionettes around your table, all Wilson *Castaway*-style and pretend you actually don't live in a time of global catastrophe and plague. You'll have to get pretty tanked to make this one work and you'll still probably end up blubbering over a bottle of cheap champagne (a.k.a. Headache Juice) by evening's end. At least for a few fleeting moments, you might be able to fool yourself into... no, this is really just a sign that you've descended into a pathology of desperate loneliness. Frankly this one might say more about the author than the reader.

However, it is that you choose to connect (or, not) this Thanksgiving season, just remember that family is still family, and you never really liked them that much, anyhow.

Esmeralda Rupp-Spangle is a trained social anthropologist, crime-fighting wizard and expert in bad coping mechanisms. She can be found on Facebook as Esmeralda Marina, Instagram @EsmeraldaSilentCitadel or building a trebuchet for turkeys in her backyard.





TEN SONGS THAT CLEARLY DID NOT DEFINE 1999 BECAUSE THEY WEREN'T "ALL STAR" BY SMASH MOUTH

by Blazer Sparrow

If there was a year that defined my generation (Millennials), it was 1999—a year of unchecked, bloated optimism. 1999's music, especially, provided a sunny, carefree hypersexual dream that felt like it could last forever, before the entire façade collapsed with Bush stealing the election, 9/11, endless war in the middle east and the looming, growing housing bubble about to burst. It truly was all downhill from here. The Y2K apocalypse was real. Only, it wasn't a bang, but a slow, pathetic whimper that we're still waiting to die from, 20 years later. And, these ten songs simply DO NOT encapsulate that last hurrah of innocent joy before the fall, like Smash Mouth's "All Star" did.

"Say My Name" – Destiny's Child

Sure, it defined Destiny's Child as pop royalty and it defined the trajectory of Beyoncé by cementing her position on top of music for the next two decades. I mean, what other song really shined, with that innocent-yet-sexy optimism of the late '90s? What song crystallized the conceit of women taking power back in relationships, that lasts to this day in pop music? But, was this song used two years later in wildly successful computer-animated movie about an ogre and a donkey? Hell no, it wasn't! And, you can't define 1999 if you don't also have that on your résumé.

"Smooth" – Santana (Feat. Rob Thomas)

Okay, this song may have singlehandedly revitalized an outdated guitar star's career AND gave Rob Thomas one last taste of the spotlight before they both dwindled away into obscurity. When you think hot summer day

sweating your life away, drinking and smoking with friends you played hookie with in some shitty concrete jungle, sure, this song is playing in the background. But, nothing—I say NOTHING—says 1999 like skanking guitars and completely shoehorned in turntable scratches. Move aside, Boomer and Gen X has-beens.



"Wait And Bleed" – Slipknot

I suppose this song closed the awful loop that Korn started in 1994, and yet, somehow exploded the next millennium with a surge of screaming vocals and heavy distorted guitars that were somehow okay to play on the radio all of a sudden. This song seemed to go hand-in-hand with the end of any and all claims of metal being a fringe genre. While this song DID define the Hot Topic generation, it didn't

define the end of Generation X quite like Steve Harwell's portly swagger did.

"My Name Is" – Eminem

Mr. Mathers probably was trying to concoct the song that would be everyone's '99 and the video for this song proves his ambition. This is definitely one of those tough contenders. A hard pitch—trying to tie up the decade and launch us into the next with about a million and one '90s references. Nice try, Marshall. But, your sweaty, tryhard antics don't hold a candle to a song that uses thirteen words and a whole goddamn verse to describe the "loser" hand gesture.

"I Want It That Way" – Backstreet Boys

I suppose the music video alone just screams "1999," with imagery so iconic and so era-specific to this year that it immediately became a meme—parodied just a few months later, by the next pathetic runner-up on this list, for fuck's sake! A song that is synonymous with the boy band genre, which in turn is synonymous with the very idea of 1999, this comes close. But, I'm sorry. Nobody is throwing loaves of bread at these guys 20 years later. No cigar.

"All The Small Things" – Blink 182

If you're my age, when you think 1999, you think about skateboarding, PlayStation, American Pie and this fucking song. Just like Slipknot killed metal, this song killed punk (if you were an obnoxious purist know-it-all about the genre). This song is the crowing achievement of punk's embarrassed-yet-ambitious

drive towards pop sensibility and the song that kicked the door open for the third wave emo craze of the 2000s. But, were these guys the surprise musical cameo at the end of a 2001 lackluster remake of *It's A Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World?* I think not. Go back to San Diego, frauds!

"Genie In A Bottle" – Christina Aguilera

Unlike Brittany, Miss Aguilera was of age and could be a bit more honest about her sexuality. Honestly, if this album came out just a year before, she could've had Britney's crown, but maybe that's an argument for some other column. Of course, there is no 1999 without middle school girls doing choreographed dances, singing along to this oversexed diddy. And, although she's now at a legal age to drink, men still can't rub women the right way after Christina asked them all politely to do so—this song just doesn't summon the spirit of 1999 like the little band from San Jose that could.

"Forgot About Dre" – Dr. Dre (Feat. Eminem)

The end of the millennium was the end of a lot of things and Dre saw the writing on the wall, for sure. Despite Mr. Young's confusion about what year it was when naming the album, he did a good job creating a definitive article to close the door on gangsta rap. He almost closed the door on hip hop itself. But, this song—strings, trap beat and all—simply illuminated the path forward for hip hop. However, it didn't illuminate the path forward for failed rappers in their early thirties, like Smash Mouth did. After all, there's so much to do and so much to see. Now THAT'S 1999 talking.

"Livin' La Vida Loca" – Ricky Martin

There might not be a 1999 without this closeted Puerto Rican's smash hit for all America. Yes, ALL America—writ-large—North AND South. We often forget how important this song was, in bridging the gap between English language and Spanish language pop. Also, when you think of summer jams, it's hard not to include this one on your playlist. The fact that an aging U.K. punk pathétique band did a kazoo-laden cover of this diddy almost makes it an obvious candidate for the song that was 1999. But, the years start coming and they don't stop coming and you realize that there was only one all star of 1999.

"The Decline" – NOFX

You could argue that no song in this year (or, decade for that matter) summed up how we as a generation got to this point and where we are going. You could say that the only accurate way to evoke the spirit of 1999 would be an 18-minute sprawling epic poem, spanning from lofty complaints about those in power to gut-wrenching jabs at personal failures of the powerless. You could argue that literally no other song in 1999 was as 1999 as "The Decline." You could argue that it's a keen observation and admonishment of the decline leading up to now (and a depressingly accurate prediction of the decline to come). But, you'd be fucking wrong, because Steve Harwell did all of this and more with one line in the last verse of the song that clearly defined 1999. I mean, we could all use a little change. Oh, Steve, if only you knew how right you were.

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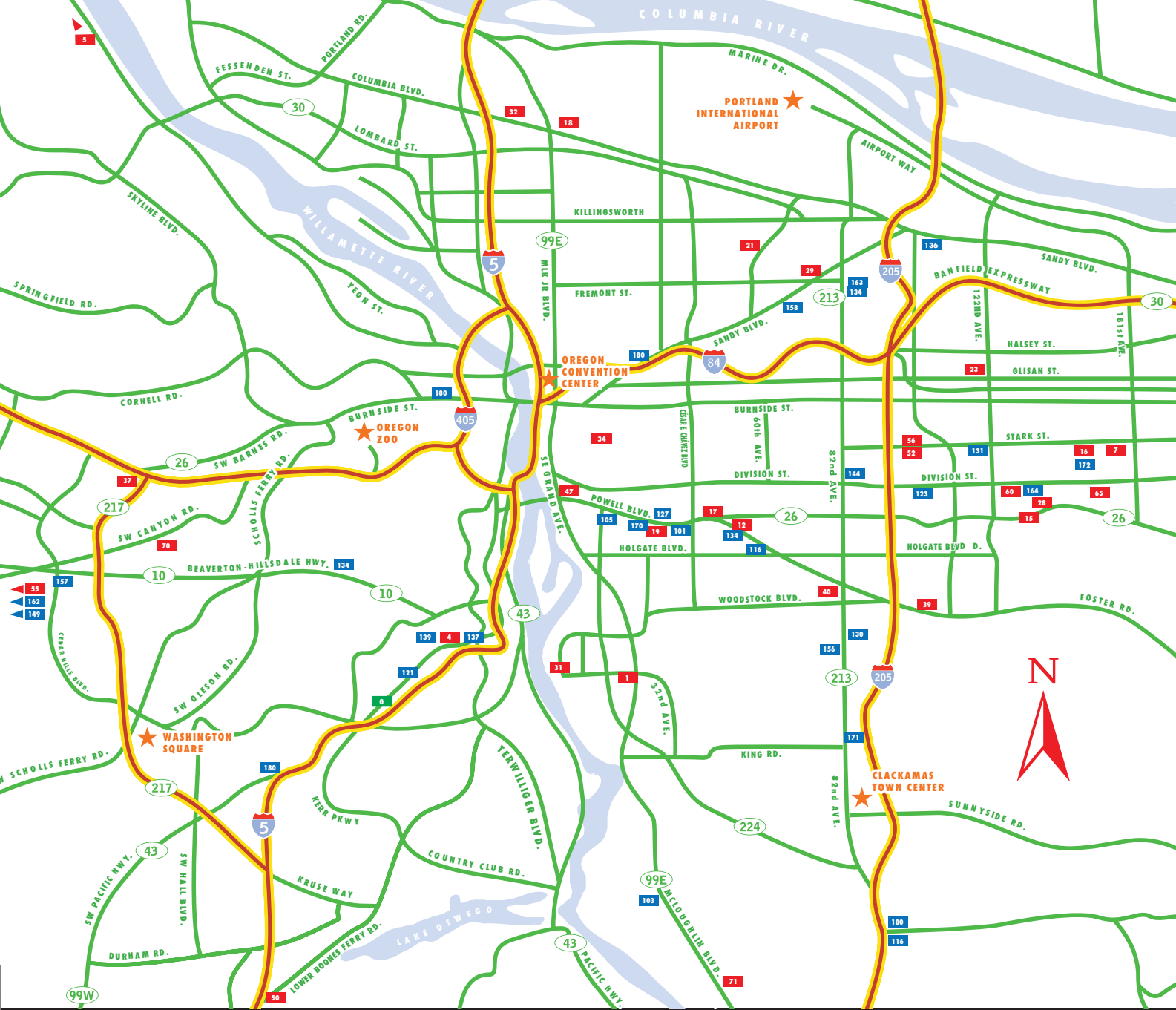
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McDonald's French Fries

Lo, how they sparkle with sodium! Shining like Persephone's tears!!! Truly, a snack directly from the top of Mt. Olympus! And, so plentiful!!! Zeus hath blessed you with a new kind of size—a god's size...nay! SUPER-sized!!! Oh, I envy you...

A Six-Pack Of Mid-Priced Beer

This cornucopia floweth like a river! What better way to quench the thirst of one so mighty, than to sup upon the spout of a reasonably priced "tall boy" can! I see by the distinct flavor of this infectious brew, that it comes not from one of the five rivers of the underworld, but directly from the springs of Golden, Colorado!!! Ah, indeed, when the mountains turn blue, thou art as cool as Fonzie! Fear not my semi-relevant references, I am an omnipotent narrator!!!

Some Pretty Mediocre Cocaine

You know what? I think this is sugar, actually. I'll just hold onto it. You don't need that.

Breakfast Burrito From La Taqueria Del Sancho

No! You have simply got to be pulling my leg!!! This is absolutely exquisite! Though your excrement may yet run like Hermes, this is the most tantalizing tidbit among your cornucopia...I feel humbled to be in its presence with you. Ah! The scrambled eggs!!! The melted cheese! The hash-ed browns! Sooth! What's this? By Ares' spear! This...this is Chorizo! Chorizo for the chosen!!! Oh, I bow before you this day. Never hath I seen someone so blessed. What's that? You want me to...take half??? Never! I could not!!! I dare not! You...insist?! I don't know what to say. I am grateful. I...I will sing of your generosity daily. I promise this, until my dying day. Thank you.

Grapes

Oh, yeah! Here's some grapes. They're okay, I guess. Seedless? Ah, shit. Nope. Not seedless.

Keys To A Fully Restored 1976 Pontiac Firebird

And, lo! Phoenix hath been born again!!! Your kind gesture of half a breakfast burrito from La Taqueria Del Sancho is rewarded tenfold! This baby hath serious horsepower!!! All leather interior—new engine that has just over 3,000 miles on it. Take her for a test drive! Spin some donuts on Hades' front lawn! Have fun, Tiger. You deserve it!!!

OPINION: SHUT THE HECK UP DURING THE FOOT- BALL GAME BY DAD



Here's the thing—you all need to shut the heck up, so I can hear the big game. I work hard every dang day of my life. All I ask for is some peace and quiet in this household when the big game is on. I'm not even asking you to go outside, gosh darn it! I don't want to tell you to go to your rooms!!! Just, please, hold the side talk for the commercials. If you need to say anything at all during the big game, say, "Hey, Dad, can I get you a beer or perhaps some chips?" That will do just fine! I don't ask for much!!! I'm just trying to relax on my four-day weekend! Which, by the way, I had to agree to come in early Monday morning just to get. I'll do the dishes in the morning, if you will all just shut the heck up for crying out loud! Thank you. Sheesh.

AREA MOM JUST GOING TO BURY RAGE DEEP DOWN UNTIL IT COMES OUT IN WEIRD WAYS



Lake Oswego, OR

Feeling frustrated, yet again, by her family's seemingly deliberate indifference towards her, local mother, Jane Simmons, told reporters she was going to hide her feelings until everything eventually manifests itself in an odd, unsettling way.

"I'll start humming the "Ghostbusters" theme loudly during breakfast, or, perhaps, give the plastic plants a bath at 3am," stated Simmons. "Anything I can do to hide what's going on inside, so I don't hurt my loved ones' feelings will work just fine. I'm looking forward to getting really creative this holiday season. That's when my anger nearly eats me alive!"

"What a dumb bitch," says Caleb Simmons, son, aged 13. "She's so starved for attention, she acts all crazy, like we don't know what's going on. Just open up to your shrink, Mom!"

At press time, Mrs. Simmons was seen carving hand soaps into crude, grotesque cherubs.



MEETING THE FAMILY FOR THE FIRST TIME (AND, AT THANKSGIVING)

by Hannah One Cup

Meeting the family of your boo, significant other, companion, fun bag buddy you care more for than you'd like to admit to, consort or spouse can be tough. You know, if you went and eloped with your COVID bedmate of the last several months without your family having ever known Jack existed, let alone that you were allowing someone else into your house whilst a pandemic was happening.

What's more, having your significant other (SO) meet these loving lunatics which you sprouted from, during the holidays, can make things...a touch hectic.

Who does this, you ask? Who would force the person they are regularly getting pleased from to go into the lion's den, with practically no armor, other than the one story you gave about that time Uncle Henry made his pet raccoon ride the farm dog? As it turns out, a lot more people than there are couples-after-the-fact. So, let's get going on some fun ways to make this first meeting get off on the right foot (unlike Uncle Henry, who sorely lost his foot after the raccoon bit his ankle, and long story short, no longer has a right foot). We all still want our SO to be comfortable with us after this, and yeah, we still want the squeezey-squeezey, rub-a-dub happening afterwards, as well. So, let's get this right!

It should be noted that alcohol is a necessity in making any of the below situations work in your favor—or, to at least give the appearance to yourself that "it's all working out great!" So, make sure you or your SO are bringing a flask of whatever you have that isn't schnapps. Schnapps is a dirty, dirty girl that tattles on you quickly.

What To Wear

You have to feel this one out. Families come in all shapes, sizes and religions (which is another topic we will be talking about shortly). If you want your SO getting into your family's good graces, it might be better that they not be wearing their crucifix necklace when your family are a bunch of "god's chosen people." I mean...that might be a sore spot for them, still (unless you are trying for the opposite and in a rebellious phase, in which case, let that crucifix shine). Go

get weird with it. Have them wear extra crosses, buy a nice set of crucifix earrings, a few crucifix rings and for the whipped cream frosting on top, talking your SO into a crucifix tattoo on the side of their face is always welcome (the forehead is a different thing). Just remember that tattoos are generally permanent, so perhaps just a nice, Sharpie version of this will do. "Hashtag BLESSED," anyone?

came from Costco. In fact, have your SO compliment all the food laying out on the table, and let them know your mother loves it when you say things like, "this looks just like the potato salad I get from Costco!" or "I can't get over how much this pumpkin pie's crust tastes just like the crust at Costco...way to go, Linda!" Linda will be impressed by her dedication to Costco and will also enjoy having her

for sheep, who don't have the confidence to believe that, in the end, we're all going to die and the lights are just gonna get turned off. Don't you, Catherine? She's so cool."

On the opposite side of things, your parents were both free-loving hippies from the "good ol' days" of acid, 'shrooms, heroin and a little bit of coke in the middle of the day on a Wednesday. Work? What work??? Definitely no time for church. Then, after this phase, both parents became scientists working on String Theory (or, attempting work on String Theory—that thing can only be worked on so much, before you want to just believe in God and get it over with). Delightful.

So, saying things like, "I'm a Scientologist, now that I've met Dwayne. It all just makes sense now. I mean, I really don't know much about Scientology right now, I just let Dwayne do the thinking for me. He's better at that stuff. He even put my money into this vault at the church, where he says I'll make Operating Thetan Level 8 in no time!"

Both of these scenarios are a definite one-way boot out the door with Uncle Hank's one steel-toed boot. And, you're not likely to be invited back again, unless the terms and conditions of your relationship with your SO come to a messy end. Remember, the tattoo you told Brenda would be "real hot" on her left cheek? Yeah...payback is a bitch. And, Brenda's coming in hot.

At the end of the day, the real best solution to all of this is to just NOT HAVE THIS SITUATION HAPPEN AT ALL. Allow your paramour to meet these strange, religious nutbags PRE-holiday season, or at least a few days before the main event. Don't be the sadistic asshole who just wants to watch it all burn. Following that, though, these tips above should at least assist in keeping everyone above water, literally. It may just keep you from a watery grave.

Hannah One Cup is really looking forward to her upcoming tattoo appointment. She can be found in the black abyss of the online world by her name or by bat signal.



How To Talk

You'd think this wouldn't need to be mentioned. Quite honestly, none of these topics—let alone this article—should have to be written, but you've put it upon yourself to be Dick Of The Year™ and force your SO into a situation (or, have somehow "found yourself in this situation" that will either have you both growing and learning from an awkward life scenario and/or simply being defeated), finding yourself speechless after hearing Uncle Hank's horribly racist names for various mixed nuts. So, here we are.

Make sure that your SO keeps things light. When I say "keep things light," make sure lights are shining down on them as they speak, whenever they speak. This gives an angel-like appearance to what could possibly be a very dreary person (if they took your advice and tattooed a cross on their face, they are probably a very doleful person, indeed).

Have your SO compliment your mother's "homemade" pie, even though it clearly

foods fawned over, believing that your SO truly has been fooled by her lack of cooking skills.

Religion

This is a fun one, you guys! So much for a clean break if you screw the pooch on this one, because you're definitely going to hell after this—or, at least that's what your SO will be telling you until your last dying breath. A last, dying breath, which will be suspiciously caused by a tattoo gun to the eyeball and various other body parts that are generally kept behind closed zippers and/or buttons, creating the shape of a cross. No, sir, not even Jesus would touch you, if you messed this up. So, let's just work on getting it right the first time.

Mom is Catholic. Very Catholic. So, let mom be Catholic. No use trying to teach an old dog new tricks, or attempt extending your mom's point of view, especially at Thanksgiving, where your SO is meeting all of these people for the first time. So, let's not say things like, "Catherine is a Satanist and thinks organized religion is



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DEAD LEAVES IN THE SUN: PART 5 BY CM BROWN

(Continued from the October 2020 issue of Exotic)

When I got back to my motel, I popped a beer and poured it into a glass—slipping off my shoes and splashing some water on my face. Henley’s voice was groggy when he picked up and I thanked the curve of the earth for that little bit of karmic grace.

“Crawford? You better damn well have something for me.”

“I got a bra, a theory and no name.”

“How do you have her bra and no name?”

“This ain’t exactly the kind of town that answers questions. I’ve bagged up the bra and I’m sending it overnight to forensics. I’d appreciate a timely response. In the meantime, I’m doing some research up here.”

Henley sighed his Henley sigh.

“I know you don’t like me, Crawford—you don’t like anyone. But, you are my man right now. And, as much as I don’t like to admit it, you’ve been my man for a while. I don’t know what I’m trying to say, other than ‘figure this shit out and take care of yourself, please.’”

I felt nothing to that and let the silence on the line speak for me. Then, I said, “Okay, Boss.”

I hung up and went for a walk.

The church had seen better times. Green something adorned the white walls, in a toxic drip of generations of neglect, soaked into the stone itself about to fall over, yet continuing along whatever timeline it is that God keeps. I entered and genuflected, waiting to burst into flame. I sat in the nearest pew and stared at the rotted padding of the prayer stools, reclined here in their off hours. I looked at that man on the cross—he still had nothing to say. Rain started up and fed the

grime of the walls outside. I closed my eyes and breathed. I nodded off and woke to a scraping sound at my feet and saw the lottery ticket flickering, just underneath my right heel. I picked it up to look at the address of the Starlight again, for no particular reason. Instead, I read, “Stop 6, Station 6.”

I thought that was too clear to be true and so I crumpled it up, putting it away for later. I gave Jesus my spectacles testicles watch wallet on my way out and pulled my hood up to the rain, as the empty church closed behind me. Candles would have been nice. Then I pulled out my flask, took a long, holy pull and started walking back to my room and bed.

When I woke up, the new information was still there—and, I’m the kind of person who doesn’t like change. I looked up train stations in town and found none. I went for a walk again.

It was the nothing time of day, where

nothing just kind of was and settled in the far sound of cars drifting by and birds singing halfheartedly. Someone had a ball game on a radio and a small power saw drilled through a small task. A neighbor took out the trash. Old, loose things drifted in a forgettable breeze. Someone plucked a guitar and their fingers squeaked the strings, as they found the notes. People still unsure about themselves from the night before—intro sounds to the leaf blower that would surely show up any second now. The diner was hosting the first breakfasters of the day and coffee sounded good. I ducked on in. As I sipped the Folgers cut with cream, I pulled out a laminated pamphlet on the history of the town tucked between menus and feigned interest. The waitress topped me off and asked if I was visiting.

"I am, just passing through. This seems like a pretty quiet place."

"Ain't much to get your skirt blown up about, that's for sure. But, we like it that way. How'd you find your way to us, anyhow?"

"You could say I'm here on business. Writing a book actually."

"Ya don't say? What's it about?"

"The Human Condition."

She nodded and I started losing her.

"That's a joke. I'm actually doing research on old train lines around the country. Alaska's my last frontier, as it goes."

She came back to me like a country song.

"Well, you've probably already seen the only tracks we got, down along the river off Chugach Avenue. It's a bit of a mystery why they're there—no one can recall them ever being used

for nothing. Kind of a neat place to look around" she said, eyeing if anyone was listening.

"But, it ain't exactly not trespassing."

I thanked and tipped her. Down by the river, the mossy branches tried

themselves. The garbage and sewage smell grew stronger, as I went around a bend and saw an old sign with the number six falling apart on the face. I picked at it with my fingernail and looked around for what I had missed. Crows hobbled about a skinny tree. A bluejay tried to cheap shot them from



to take my face off, as I slipped on questionable mud and looked for the tracks. The closest I could find were crumbling cement barriers with rusted rebar, reaching for rebar heaven. Graffiti snaked, as graffiti does in such places, sometimes on the trees

above and they all took flight, to caw it out somewhere else. No tracks. I wandered around, keeping an eye on the sign, in case it decided to go the way of the lottery ticket and change up on me. As I was peering at it over my shoulder and thinking of ques-

tions I could have asked that waitress, I ran into something hard and metal with my hip. A handrail, hiding under overgrown vines, was bolted into a cement slab. I pulled at the vines, until a good sized pile lay on the ground and looked at the hole I had revealed leading down underground. I sighed. I pulled out the flask and sat down. I drank and stared down at this bad idea.

There were stairs, of course. Shining my pen Maglite, I counted approximately 26 steps, at an angle that meant I could take three at a time with someone chasing me back up—maybe two, since I had just smoked a cigarette and the soles of my shoes were worn smooth. Last damn thing I needed right now was a twisted ankle. Something leaked off in the darkness with a monotonous drip. My flashlight played over caged light bulbs in the gloom, whose extinguishment made the dark even more so. I scooted forward, looking for a switch, finding it under a growth of moss and throwing it. The bulbs buzzed and crackled to life, as grime burned away from their surface. “To hell with it,” I said and

started down.

A platform of the same corroded cement met me at the bottom. Tracks stretched off in both directions, feeling like they’d been waiting for me this whole time. I stood in between them and lit another cigarette, because this damn job was going to kill me, anyway. The air was still and held the second hand exhale in front of me. I took a step sideways to get it out of my face. Then I heard it—a slow dragging of feet behind me and to my left, about ten yards away from the sound of it.

I reached down, pretending I was interested in an unread text message and slowly unclasped the holster at my side. The dragging continued, and as it drew closer, I could hear rattling breath. Whatever or whoever it was, they probably didn’t appreciate me smoking in close proximity. I took a drag and slowly turned around, hand on my weapon.

At first glance, I wouldn’t have called it human, but as she came up to me, I saw it was an impossibly old woman,

draped in layers of rags, patched over who knows how many times in colors that shouldn’t exist. I didn’t have any change on me and figured she didn’t need a smoke, so I just waited for her to approach.

When she reached me, it was obvious she was out of her mind. “Mmmmmmm,” she groaned. “No, no, no way. No way.”

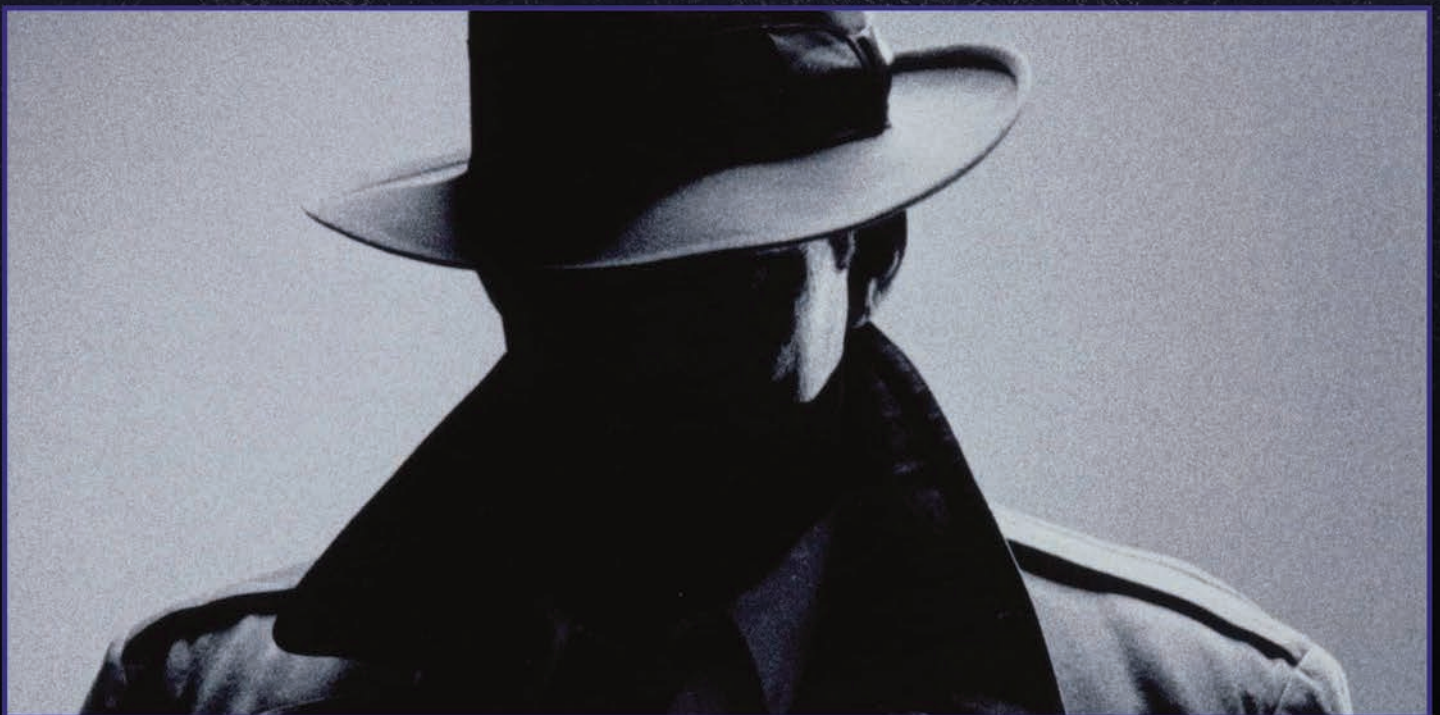
“No way,” I parroted.

“Sun and moon are one in light, only darkness is alone. Mmmmm, no, no way.”

“Kay,” I said.

Then, she snapped her head around and looked straight at me with rheumy eyes. “NO WAY,” she shouted and slapped me—hard. The cigarette went flying off to die in slow ashes and I cursed, because I hate to waste half a smoke.

As I rubbed the red sting from my cheek, I thought about how I’ve done a lot of things in my life, but hitting an



old woman would be a first. I decided against it and turned to the platform, where a train was screeching its way down the tunnel, like a monstrous worm eating the air out of the underground.

"God doesn't go underground," I thought, for some reason.

She dragged herself away into whatever shadow she had come from, shaking her head and muttering "No way, no way."

When the doors creaked open, I thought about taking those stairs three at a time in the opposite direction. Then, I thought, "Nope, I got a fucking badge." The train lurched forward and the wheels screamed in the tunnel. I sat down and reached for the flask, before seeing the other lone passenger across from me.

"Evening," I said.

He started laughing and I thought, "Great, another loony."

He kept laughing. I took a look at him. He was bone thin and tall, maybe close to seven feet standing. His three piece red-and-black pinstripe suit was pressed and pristine—he wore a fedora, with deep black shades over his eyes. He had his hands folded on his lap and they were bony and pale, like a junkie's, with long, sharp fingernails filed down. He kept laughing.

I slowly took a pull from the flask, pocketed it and slowly reached down to the holster. He laughed, louder this time. I slowly pulled the revolver and placed it in my lap, index finger over the trigger guard and thumb on the hammer. He laughed so hard, he had to bend over. Then, he straightened and with a grin I've only seen on corpses three days into decomp, cackled.

"Ticket please? Ticket please??? Hahahaha," while flourishing a rusted fork around his fingers, as if he were operating some nightmarish loom, occasionally dinging it on the metal hand pole.

"Listen pal, I've had a long couple of days and..."

The lights burned out and the train wheels screamed louder, as they struggled to brake. When the lights came back, he was gone and a robotic voice announced over the speakers, "Stop 6. End of the line."

The fork clattered underneath the seat, turning like a game of Spin The Bottle and stopped—pronged end pointed straight at me.



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History's Worst Ex-Girlfriends

by Esmeralda Rupp-Spangle

We've all been through a few rough breakups. Your exes may be guys, gals or a bit of this and a bit of that. Whatever flavor you choose, no one is immune from heartbreak—that's just the way the cookie crumbles. Sometimes it's your fault, sometimes it's theirs (I'm looking at you, Emily), but regardless of who threw a vase at whom, heartbreak is universal. That's why it behooves us all to take a moment, step back and say, "Well, at least it wasn't..."

Mata Hari

Born in 1876, killed by firing squad December 1913, this Dutch haberdasher's daughter was gifted with the already awesome name of "Margaretha," but because she was reasonably concerned people would just call her "Maggie," she changed it and became a belly dancing, accused (wink wink, nudge nudge) spy. Got shot in the head for being sexy AF, but not before betraying state secrets to the Germans in WWI.

10/10. Definitely would trade you

for immunity. Okay with being assassinated for—worth it.

Marie Curie

Born 1867, this certifiable (but, brilliant) chick was the first lady to ever get a Nobel Prize. As the Fact Core in the video game Portal 2 summed up nicely, "Marie Curie invented the theory of radioactivity, the treatment of radioactivity and dying of radioactivity."

8/10. Passionate and driven, but now I have cancer, thanks.

Juana Barraza

Born December 27, 1957, this Mexican-born, former pro-wrestling serial killer has upwards of 40 murders under her proverbial belt. Sentenced to 759 years in prison. Why not 760, you ask? One year off for good behavior. If you need more than that, she's still alive, so feel free to send some fan letters or marriage proposals her way, and I'm sure her explanations will be more imaginative than mine.

3/10. Angry, probably gets bed-bugs in that jail and all you'd have to show for it is a broken scapula.

Artemisia I Of Caria

Born 484 BCE. Queen of the city-state Halicarnassus, which is much less difficult to pronounce than it looks. Artemisia personally commanded her navy into battle, using two different flags to trick opposing ships into letting her get close, before ramming one into oblivion.

9/10. Terrifying, but unforgettable—might put an arrow in your skull, if you piss her off.

Elizabeth Báthory

Alive from August 7, 1560 to August 21, 1614, Countess Báthory was a Hungarian Duchess, accused of torturing and killing hundreds of young girls and women, possibly even bathing in their blood, to retain her youth. Maybe she's born with it, maybe it's virgin blood. Though there is some doubt as to the veracity of these claims, I'm go-

ing to assume they're true, because they're awesome.

5/10. Exsanguination for love may or may not be worth it, but you never know until you try.

Tomoe Gozen

Between 1157 and 1247, Tomoe was not to be fucked with. Part of a small group of women called "Onna-Bugeisha" ("female martial artist"), Tomoe's story of head choppin' glory was so unique, it inspired generations of samurai, who came after her to do more head choppin' themselves. I'm not sure what it is about a beautiful Japanese woman with a sword, but it's definitely a thing.

9/10. One point docked for possibly not having existed.

Lorena Bobbitt

Born October 31, 1970 (yes, really). While her act of desperate violence may have been arguably justified (given what a massive tool John Wayne Bobbit is), Lorena still deserves a place on this list, because obviously she does. Some women will tolerate abuse and some...well, some will remove parts of your body you'd really rather keep, then hurl them into a field.

4/10. Ouch.

Belle Gunness

Lived from November 11, 1859 to April 28, 1908. This Norwegian-born serial killer has a body count no one's exactly sure of, but numbers between 14 and 40, give or take. Her preferred method of hu-

man disposal centered around corresponding with lonely men and luring them (and, their sweet, sweet life insurance policies/savings) to her Indiana farm, with the promise of nuptial bliss. They'd meet their end soon after and Guinness would be that much wealthier. Frankly, I don't think anyone (however smokin' they might be—and, she was decidedly NOT) could convince me to move to Indiana. But, hey, the heart wants what it wants. Belle's fate remains unknown after a mysterious fire destroyed her farm and revealed her macabre collection of corpses.

2/10. Gold diggers be whack.

Tonya Harding

Born November 12, 1970. As a native Portlander, I'd be damn near remiss in my duties, if I didn't mention this famous, vengeful bitch. Born and raised right here in the City Of Roses, she's most notorious for conspiring with her ex-husband to kneecap her most proficient rival, Nancy Kerrigan, one day before a competition. While perhaps not as deadly as some of the other women on this list, Harding is not a woman to be tangled with. After being banned for life from the U.S. Figure Skating Association, she took up boxing and self-aggrandizement through books, documentaries and reality television.

7/10. And, she's totally gonna key my car for that rating.

Bonnie Parker

Between October 1, 1910 and May 23, 1934, Parker is believed to have murdered at least nine police offi-

cers and nine civilians with her notorious cohort, Clyde Barrow, during their wild, anarchistic, bank robbin' spree through the U.S. During the Great Depression, chain-smoking, gun-toting Parker was present for at least 100 felonies, and though the romanticized movie version wasn't strictly true, I get the feeling that crossing Parker would have been your last (and, worst) mistake. She and Barrow died in a dramatic hail of gunfire, that still captures the imaginations of would-be bad bitches everywhere.

9/10. Cute as a button, but would probably shoot you in the back for your pocket change.

Emily

Born March 27, 1982. Emily, you're the worst. Out of all of these crazy, murderous, radioactive, sword-swinging, boat-smashing, Tommy-gun-wielding, bloodlust-filled monsters, you take the prize. You took the cat and stomped on my heart in your gorgeous stiletto heels, like an ice queen of hate. I can't believe I ever loved you, you callous, wretched witch.

0/10. God, I miss you. Call me?

Esmeralda Rupp-Spangle is a brokenhearted mess, who just wants to be loved. She can be found on Facebook as Esmeralda Marina, Instagram @EsmeraldaSilentCitadel or burning photos of Emily over her fire pit and crying hopelessly at 2am.

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