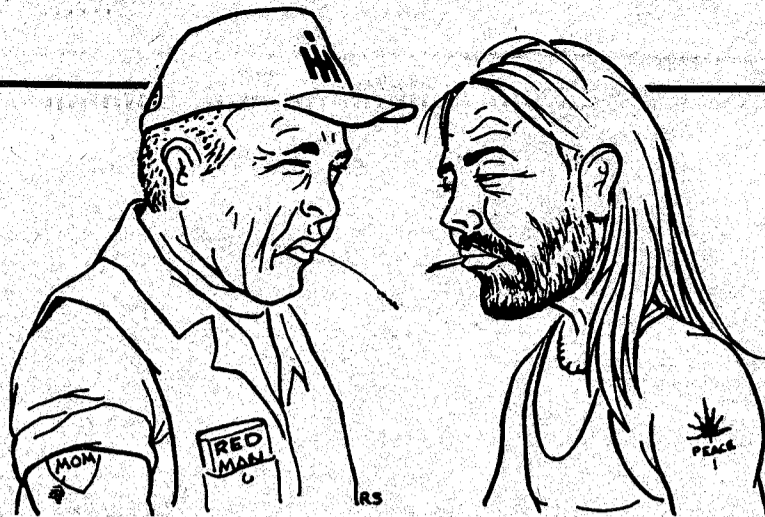


The Stinking Desert

GAZETTE

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Vol. 3 No. 9

Moab, Utah

Apr. 1989



EDWARD ABBEY

1927-1989

NOVELS

- Good News*
- The Monkey Wrench Gang*
- Black Sun*
- Fire on the Mountain*
- The Brave Cowboy*
- Jonathan Troy*
- The Fool's Progress*

ESSAYS

- One Life at a Time, Please*
- Slumgullion Stew: An Abbey Reader*
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NATURAL HISTORY & TRAVEL

- Desert Images (with David Muench)*
- The Hidden Canyon (with John Blaustein)*
- Cactus Country (with Ernst Haas)*
- Slickrock (with Philip Hyde)*
- Appalachian Wilderness (with Eliot Porter)*

Dudek



Meanders

Everyone was shocked to learn last month of the death of Edward Abbey. He died in Tucson, Arizona, of internal hemorrhaging from a chronic abdominal illness, at the age of 62.

Edward had a lot of friends, as well as an equal number of detractors, here in Moab where he lived off and on over the years. His uncompromising environmentalism, together with his caustic wit, evoked anything but indifference from his readers. He was the writer you loved, or the writer you loved to hate.

Many criticized his "radical" approach to preserving the desert environment here because they have an economic stake in a usage that provoked "radical" damage to the environment. One thing sure - the people who criticized Edward Abbey saw the canyons as an asset to be developed, or, in their most sensitive mode, as an entertainment. They were never privileged to see the canyons as equal to themselves in a profound and vital way, and worth saving for their own sake.

But, to be fair, these are thinking people who are deeply committed to their high ideals, and will, no doubt, mourn the passing of their own spiritual mentors, like James Watt.

In the final analysis, anyone who keeps in touch with the ongoing global environmental drama will agree with Henry Kisor, Book Editor for the Chicago Sun-Times, who called Edward, in his obituary, "one of the good guys."

I first became acquainted with Edward's work in the visitor's center of Arches National Park. I was working my way back home to Denver after a vacation that'd taken me to the canyons of the Escalante.

The country I'd hiked had just flat blown my doors off. I felt like I'd discovered a lost canyon paradise where a few Anasazi might still be holding out. In the sweltering heat of dry wash bottoms, in the cool corners of the river canyon, in the grey-violet electrical storms whose lashing rains sent me scurrying for cover, and in the tranquil camps after dinner, my small nature merged with the immensity and awesome silence that surrounded me. Though I hadn't the words to describe it yet, the desert had stolen my heart. It was the perfect time for my hand to fall upon the book, on the rack in the reception room at Arches.

DESERT SOLITAIRE. I read less than a page, a paragraph, maybe just a few sentences, and I knew instantly I had to have it. There it was, the validation, the celebration, and the glor-

ification of that union between man and canyon that I'd come to appreciate in my own simple, dumbstruck fashion. I became a fan.

I dwell upon this first meeting not because I think it was so extraordinary but because I would wager that most of you know exactly what I'm talking about. If you were experienced, the idiom instantly clicked. You felt his words originating inside your head, not from the surface of the printed page. His was a voice with a language as universal as the very canyons he wrote about. He'd found the words equal to the task. We loved him for it.

Edward was a friend of the Gazette. He was there when Issue #2 was being assembled on my living room floor. He helped us out when he could. He wanted us to change the name, to the Desert Gazette. He was right. It would have been the business-like thing to do.

But if none of us had ever met him personally, we wouldn't have loved or admired him any less. He gave all of himself through his writing, and that's how we really knew him, as the voice of the silent canyons. And that's how it always will be.

* * * * *

It's with a genuine note of sadness that I have to announce the demise of our off-the-wall little paper, the Stinking Desert Gazette.

Crazy, isn't it, that it could have existed for so long. Especially when you consider that most mainstream people are unable to write or utter the word 'stinking', and referred to us, when they found it necessary to, as the 'desert gazette'.

But hey, we had a good run with it. For the better part of three years. And published some damn good stuff in the process.

Nik and I put out the first issue on a budget of \$60.00. Bill Howard's last-minute ad, a half-page for the Coalition For Responsible Management Of Our Public Lands, was the final deciding factor in our decision to go ahead and try it, and he joined the Poplar Place, Clear Day, and The Hideout as the first advertisers in the Gazette. (Oh, and Donna Jordan's classified ad for the Canyonlands Art Council art show.)

It just kind of grew from there. What started out as a humor sheet for local boatmen soon expanded into a sometimes successful effort to fill a void in this town, namely, the lack of an alternate media voice to watchdog the shenanigans of the entrenched political machine.

Now, that void no longer exists. Jim Stiles, who contributed so much to the Gazette last year (we even made money), has started a new magazine called the ZEPHYR. He's committed to providing such news coverage. I firmly believe the issues in this town are simply too important to be mishandled by a bunch of irreverent humorists like myself and the gang of ten. The ZEPHYR can do it justice, and we urge everyone to read and support what Jim is doing.

The problem remains - how to pay the bills. Frankly, we are no match for organization. We are dreamers and fantasy artists, not businessmen. Due to declining ad participation, the cost of printing this issue will be fully half of the revenue it will generate. The numbers just won't add up. In addition, unpaid ads have put us in a financial bind.

The Stinking Desert Gazette Box 13 Moab, UT 84532

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I thought, well, maybe under someone else's leadership the Gazette might prosper. But everyone points out that the thing has the aroma (?) of my personality. It just wouldn't be the Gazette. Yeah, it could be a lot better, I'd say. It wasn't until issue #3 that I realized I was the editor, and I'm still not very good at it. I just loves to write, that's all.

Hold it. I need make no apologies. A lot of hard work went into this effort. We'll chalk up a lot of it as a labor of love. And we can be proud of the ground-breaking accomplishments we achieved in numerous areas. Everyone who participated, and the list is a long one, is and always will be a part of our enduring spiritual family.

Before we disappear, we need to pay off our subscribers in some kind of pro-rated manner. Our idea is to do one more issue, a large one, with reprints of the "best of all time" stuff we've printed, and a chance for everyone to get in their last licks. That issue will hopefully enable us to settle our accounts.

If you have any feelings about the Gazette, pro or con, send 'em in for inclusion in the Editors section. We'd like to hear from you. It was your fantastic support and encouragement of our unorthodox and zany approach that kept it all going for so long. We love you all.

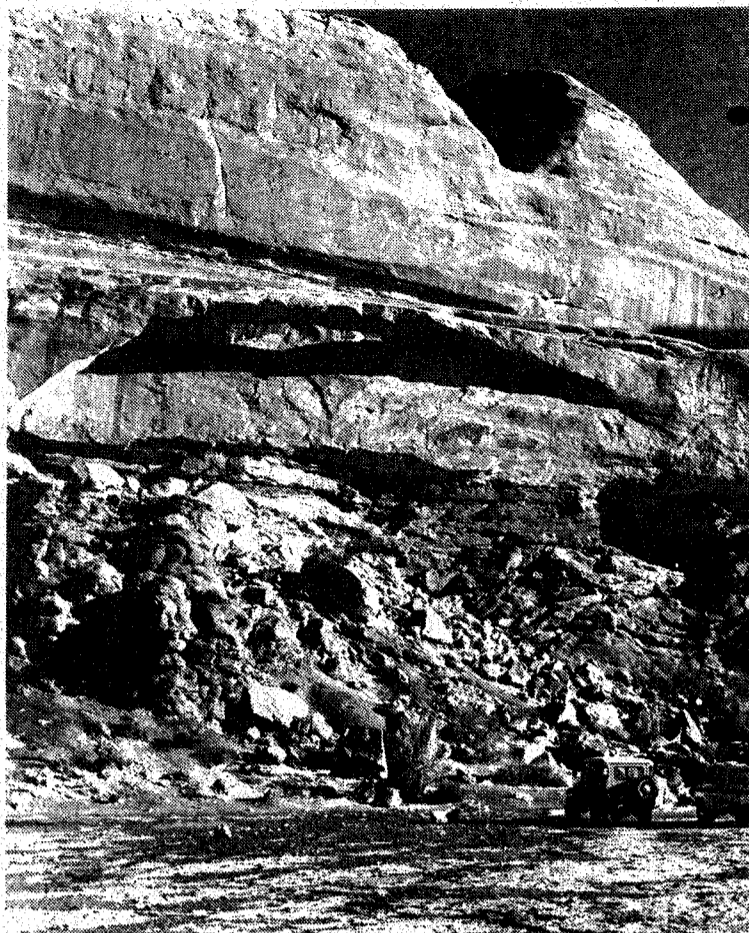
I promise you a good issue. We're not going out with a whimper.

* * * * *

(Our resident artist, Rick Showalter, came up with this new drawing of me for MEANDERS. I think it's pretty spiffy. It makes me look a lot handsomer than the other one. And it's very realistic too, I might add.

The other sketch reminded one of a seedy, skid row pan dealer. This one is a lot more respectable, though the expression is kind of hard to figure out. I look torn between sadness and happiness, like a guy who just saw a fully restored Shelby Cobra slip out of gear, roll away from a curb, and crash into the speakers stand at a KKK rally.

Seriously, it's a fine drawing, and an example of one of the many artistic styles Rick can draw upon from his arsenal of illustrative techniques. When you need a top notch illustration, he's the man to call.)



by F.A. Barnes

LARGE MOAB-AREA ARCH COLLAPSES

(20 March 1989) I have the unhappy duty to report the collapse of beautiful Courthouse Arch, an event that probably took place some time last winter. When my wife and I visited the graceful span's site on 18 March 1989, we found only a gigantic pile of sandstone rubble at the base of the red cliff that had spawned the arch.

Courthouse Arch was not widely known, even though it was within one-half mile of a moderately well-traveled backcountry off-road vehicle trail, and only thirteen miles to the northwest of Moab, Utah. The arch's position, close to the cliff from which it formed, made it inconspicuous even from fairly close range, yet when the lighting was right, in mid-day, its long shadow could easily be seen by keensighted observers from a mile away.

The span's distance from any vehicle trail also contributed to the lack of general knowledge about Courthouse Arch. It could be approached by off-road vehicles over certain deteriorating mineral search trails, then a rough and precarious route along sandstone ledges, but few canyon country residents or visitors knew this. Fewer still made the necessary long hike across the broken terrain to reach the arch on foot.

Courthouse Arch was unofficially named in 1987 after the place in which it was located, Courthouse Pasture. This is the broad, sloping, pasture-like area to the north of the well-known Monitor & Merrimac Buttes. These immense red sandstone buttes stand poised to "do battle," in imitation of the Civil War "iron-clads" after which they were named, on the sky-

line to the north of the highway to Dead Horse Point and Island-in-the-Sky, where this road climbs out of Sevenmile Canyon.

The north end of Courthouse Pasture is set with several towering buttes, mesas and peninsulas of the same red sandstone as that in the Monitor & Merrimac. Courthouse Arch graced the western flank of an isolated butte in the midst of this breathtaking panorama, and was visible to the east from the off-road vehicle trail that travels between Mill Canyon and the Monitor & Merrimac. It was best viewed from the vicinity of the junction of this trail and the spur trail that goes toward the conspicuous Determination Towers, a set of spires in the western part of Courthouse Pasture.

There is no public record of Courthouse Arch ever being measured, but it was large by any standard of measurement. It was shaped much like famous Landscape Arch, in Arches National Park, but its abutments were obviously less secure. The arch spanned 50 feet or more, depending on how that term is defined. It was relatively slender, and soared perhaps 80 feet above the base of the butte in which it formed.

As with most natural spans of significant size, Courthouse Arch was formed by a combination of natural processes. The process that began the arch-forming is known as "stress-relief exfoliation." This is the process by which the residual internal compressional stresses in massive sandstones are relieved by cracking along a plane parallel to the rock surface. Seeping-water erosion then enlarges such fairly common joint-planes selectively, and in a few cases creates an arc of rock that stands out from the sloping cliff. Courthouse Arch was typical of this type of span, which is fairly common in canyon country.

From a distance, the abutments of such spans seem "glued" to the cliff from which they formed, and the sizes of their openings are apparent only from closely below — or from the shadows they cast in mid-day.

As with many of the natural spans in Utah's canyon country, Courthouse Arch probably formed mostly during the long period of wetter climate that dominated this region during the mini-glacial period that lasted from about 4,000 to 900 years ago. If so, the arch's age was somewhat less than in this, or about 3,000 years as a distinct span of rock with a sizable opening behind it.

The span's demise was most likely due to the freezing and expansion of water in the same joint-line that originally started its formation, in the area of one of its abutments. This cold-season process is frequently associated with massive rock collapses in canyon country, and is one of the several ways with which water shaped, and is still shaping, the sandstone heartland of the Colorado Plateau.

Courthouse Arch first appeared in public print in 1987, as a photograph on page 369 of my book, CANYON COUNTRY ARCHES & BRIDGES. The same print was used to make the reproduction that accompanies this article. Perhaps a few dedicated arch-collectors will want to visit the site of this latest canyon country span to collapse. If so, its location on the U.S.G.S. 1:62,500-scale Moab quadrangle is at the bottom-center of the N/W 1/4 of the S/E 1/4 of Section 29, Township 24 South, Range 20 East. The span was not noted on this or other U.S.G.S. maps.

I shall miss being able to point out lovely Courthouse Arch to visitors whom I am leading through Courthouse Pasture, as I have so often in the past.

R.I.P.

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CANYONLANDS
TOURS

by Lance Christie

LEGISLATURE YANKS HAZ-WASTE WELCOME MAT

HAZARDOUS WASTE

In 1987 and 1988 the Utah Legislature passed bills which laid out the welcome mat for the hazardous waste industry. One bill forbade the state bureaucracy to adopt additional regulations beyond the obsolete federal ones, even though federal hazwaste law had transferred responsibility for developing regulations to the states in 1978. The state regulators couldn't refuse a hazwaste permit for any reason except certain technical insufficiencies in the application. Another bill obliged state regulators to issue a hazwaste facility permit within a short, specified time from receipt of a complete application. The Legislature set alternative fee schedules so that, the more the applicant paid, the faster the state had to issue the permit. The Legislature also set the lowest tippage fees for landfilling hazardous waste of any Western state, and charged no fees at all for importing waste to incinerate. Since tippage fees are used in the Western states to support state regulation, the welcome mat advertised a state where a hazwaste facility couldn't be denied a permit, and the regulators had no money to get there and few regulations to bother it with if they did.

The hazardous waste industry certainly understood it was welcome in Utah. As reported in HCN 1-2-89, 15 incinerators were proposed for Utah in 1987-88, although the total amount of waste generated by Utah industry could fill only 54% of one of them.

Five bills just passed by the 1989 Utah Legislature decisively removed this welcome mat. These bills indicate the Utah Legislature has realized that industry wastes present potential liability, from which the public must be protected by vigorous state regulation.

The five 1989 bills act to prevent industries from palming off liability for pollution of air, land, and water onto the public. Three bills are aimed at preventing problems from the hazardous waste industry (landfills and incinerators), while two others deal with funding environmental clean-up projects.

The Republican, Mormon leadership of the Utah Legislature sponsored the hazardous waste bills. Most bills were introduced without accurate publicity beforehand, and all passed through the Legislature rapidly, without fanfare; they were obviously "wired." Neither environmental nor industrial interest could figure out where a bill was most of the time, much less testify in hearings about it.

There appear to be four factors which combined to produce this remarkable legislative initiative on hazardous waste. First, Republican legislative leaders Rep. Joe Moody and Sen. Cary Peterson had been through a baptism of fire over the Rollins incinerator proposed for Millard County. In a huge public meeting, their angry constituents proved that Rollins incinerator site was in violation of the draft Utah hazwaste siting criteria, yet the state could not refuse Rollins a permit before the criteria were adopted. Moody and Peterson promoted a hazwaste permit moratorium bill in the 1988 Special Session of the Utah Legislature. It passed in September, stopping Rollins.

Second, the Ekokhem case in Salt Lake and the violations found at U.S.P.C.I.'s Grassy Mountain hazardous waste landfill in Tooele County resulted in civil and criminal indictments of two-thirds of the commercial hazwaste facilities having state permits in 1988. This demonstrated that the hazwaste industry was not a bastion of social responsibility which could be left to regulate itself.

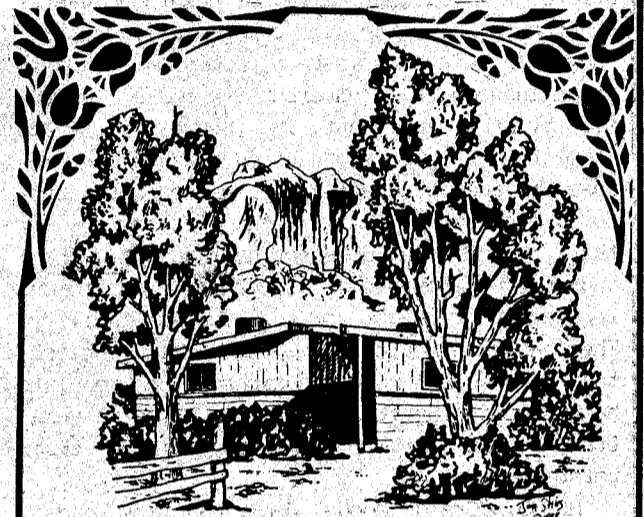
Third, statewide public testimony at the hazardous waste facility siting criteria hearings amounted to an anvil chorus reciting regulatory deficiencies and demanding the Legislature take action. The members of the Utah Committee on Solid and Hazardous Waste communicated these concerns to the Legislature and Governor and recommended legislative action.

Fourth, projects to clean up hazardous materials (such as the gasoline plume under Moab) had exposed problems in getting messes cleaned up promptly at polluters' expense,

under existing law.

The five bills concerning hazardous waste which were passed are:

SBI24: Senate President Arnold Christensen's "equity bill" on hazardous waste tippage fees was ballyhooed prior to the session as providing that Utah would charge the same fee for disposition of another state's hazardous waste as that state charged. The "equity bill" responded to fee schedules such as that of California which provide inducements to waste generators to export their wastes. The publicity appears to have been a political manipulation to bring industry to the table. When Senator Christensen introduced SBI24, it was a simple revision of the Utah tippage fee schedule: \$20



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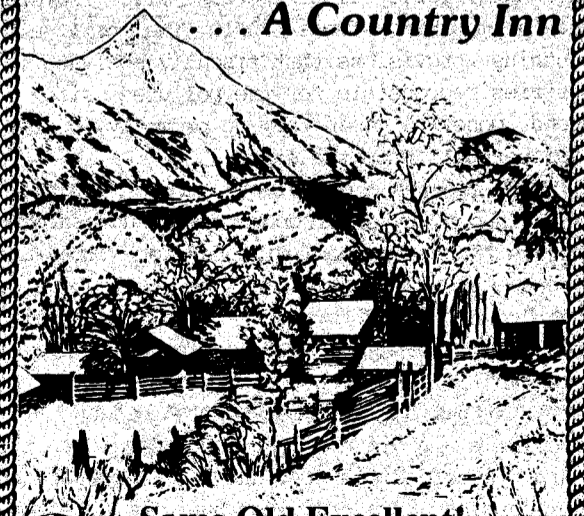
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per ton for out-of-state wastes, \$8 for in-state, producing parity with Idaho and Nevada's schedules. Industry representatives crowded the committee room when the bill was introduced, beaming approval. The bill suffered no opposition and passed with blinding speed.

HB243, introduced by Joe Moody of Delta, adds to the permitting process requirements which had been recommended repeatedly by citizens in hazwaste hearings. The state hazwaste bureaucrats are now authorized to investigate the compliance record of an applicant and to deny a permit to an applicant with a bad history. They must also require the applicant to submit a market needs analysis and to demonstrate a sufficient market of hazardous wastes for the facility to be commercially viable. They can refuse to issue a permit on the basis of an inadequate or unpersuasive market analysis by the applicant. The Secretary of the Committee of Solid and Hazardous Waste can refuse to accept a permit application for a proposed hazwaste facility if the Secretary finds that the Bureau does not have adequate staff and budget resources to provide sufficient regulatory oversight for the proposed facility. The hazwaste bureaucrats have said publicly that they do not have the capacity to regulate hazwaste incinerators at remote sites in rural Utah. We in rural Utah appreciate their perspicacity.

HB339: Craig Moody, House Majority Leader, introduced HB339 late in the session. The bill provides that the Legislature shall have final approval authority for any new hazardous waste facility after the applicant has paid his \$150,000 in fees and gone through the existing permit application and approval process. This bill may discourage new hazwaste facilities from seeking permits in Utah. No company is likely to invest close to a million dollars to put together a permit application and pay fees just to earn the privilege of appearing before the Utah Legislature, which can deny issuance of a permit if there is significant public opposition.

HB37 sets up a state "Hazardous Waste Management Fund" ("state superfund") with \$3.1 million. This law permits the state to tackle National Priority List Superfund sites and draw federal matching funds 90/10. The bill also contains provisions that fiscally motivate industries responsible for the polluted site to spend money to clean them up promptly, or face a higher bill from the state.

SB189 creates a compulsory state insurance pool funded by owner/operators of underground storage tanks. The pool will pay for immediate cleanup of any pollution due to leakage of underground tanks, without first addressing "responsible party" questions. The objective of this fund is to prevent occurrences such as the sorry situation in Moab where cleanup of a gasoline plume did not get underway for two years after discovery, due to bureaucratic buck-passing and a fruitless hunt for a responsible party from whom to extort the cleanup costs.

The hazardous waste facility siting criteria adopted December 16 by the Utah Committee on Solid and Hazardous Waste are the most stringent in the United States by a factor of five. These bureaucratic regulations, plus the laws

RIM CYCLERY

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passed by the 1989 Utah Legislature, have propelled Utah into a position of leadership in protecting the public and environment from hazardous waste pollution. Industry is obliged to take responsibility for cleaning up its own

messes instead of leaving them to burden the public. Being personally and socially responsible is a popular virtue in Utah, and the Legislature has made a clear statement that it is responsible industry that Utah welcomes.

WE'RE MOVING!

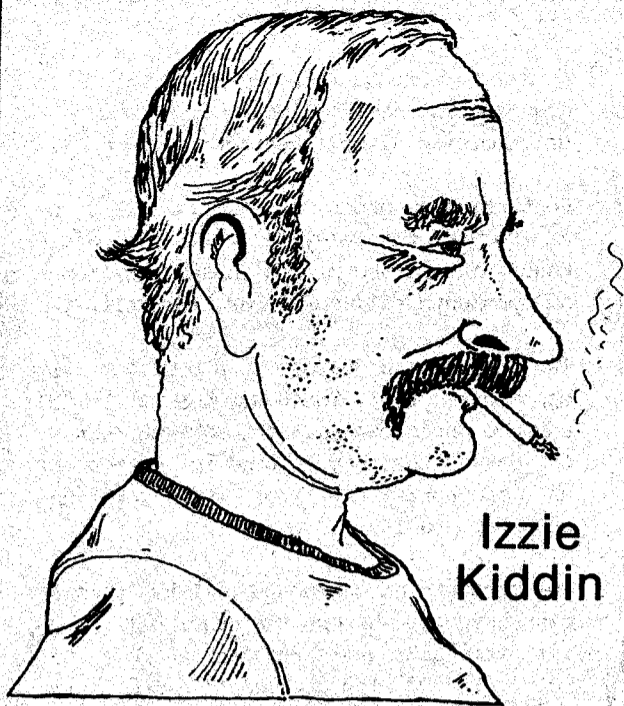
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Izzie Kiddin

GRAND GULCH/ THE REAL STORY

I enjoyed Omega Besellers' romantic rambles about rummaging through ruins and rubbish piles in Grand Gulch, but feel I must inform you that was not the whole story. You see, I was with her on the backpack trip and as she has failed to even mention my existence in her article, I have no recourse but to tell you... what REALLY happened.

I had a feeling things weren't going to go right when we checked in at The Ranger Station and didn't see the ranger with the handle-bar moustache. The ranger with the handle-bar moustache has been there forever and ever and knows the backcountry better than anyone. He can pick out a pottery poaching politician a mile away. But, he wasn't on duty the day we went for our permit.

In his place was some peach-fuzzed, bright-eyed youth (I'll bet five bucks he is from California!) telling us that if we would like an alternate route into The Gulch that would cut the backpack miles in half, then we should enter via Shieks Canyon. "Easy" he says. "NO PROBLEM!" And like gullible fools, we took his advice.

After an hour and a half of walking with full packs and water, Shieks Canyon turns from a shallow wash into a chaotic boulder field. The going becomes slow and exhausting as Omega and I pick our way around and over the huge slabs of rock blocking the canyon. After another hour of this tiring marathon, we arrive at a 125 foot drop-off that plummets vertically to the canyon floor. Omega and I stare into the void.

"EASY? NO PROBLEM???" I was furious! I knew we should have waited for that ranger with the handle-bar moustache! Omega says she remembers the other ranger mentioning something about a talus slope we would have to go down, so we drop our heavy packs and go searching for this mystical passageway.

Fifteen minutes pass and I hear Omega calling me from the other side of the drop-off. "Over here! I think I found the slope!" I hurry to her side and gaze down another boulder field that angles so steeply to the canyon floor, you might as well call it vertical.

"This??? This is a TALUS SLOPE???" Why I'll just up his surfboard when we get back! This

isn't a talus slope! This ... is IMPOSSIBLE! Where's that ranger with the handle-bar moustache? I wish to register a complaint!"

After Omega calmed me down, we decided that since we had already ventured this far, we might as well commit ourselves to this perilous descent. I start first while Omega waits at the top until I reach bottom. Too many loose rocks to roll around here. And once they start rolling, they don't stop until they hit bottom. This is no place for a concussion. The medicine men have long since gone.

The going is slow and scary. Many times, I had to take off my pack, lower it, drop down, put it back on and continue. It took at least another hour to negotiate this treacherous rubble pile. By the time we had both safely reached bottom, we were too exhausted to discuss what we would do to 'Ranger Rick' upon our return.

No sooner do we don our packs and start stumbling towards the confluence with The Gulch, we hear the high shrieking of a woman off in the distance. "BEAR!!! BEAR!!! I SAW A BEAR!!!"

Now, just what the hell is going on here: A bear? In the bloody desert??? We are in Grand Gulch and the elevation is 5,600 feet. Bears are supposed to be way up in The Abajos sniffing Segos. Maybe this woman is deranged. Maybe she also took Ranger Rick's advice and came down Shieks Canyon and is now hallucinating in a fit of heat stroke and exhaustion.

I fear no beast in the wilds, except maybe my Aunt Theola and a bear familiar with people. You can never predict what they'll do. How will they react to your presence?? You didn't bring that honey for the tea, DID YOU???

I tell Omega this wailing damsel must be experiencing her first backpack trip, probably caught a fleeting glimpse of a coyote and is freaking out. Maybe she's from California, like Ranger Rick. That would explain a lot. But, upon meeting the woman and her husband around the next bend, we find them to be sane and seasoned backpackers from Colorado. She still is a bit on the pale side.

"Yes, A BEAR! We rounded the bend and there it was! Right on the trail! Gnawing on the leg of a dead horse! It's not a pretty sight!"

Omega and I are still in the process of recovering from our dangerous descent and now there is all this raving about bears and dead horses! I just had to sit down. Why do these impossible scenarios always involve me? What have I ever done to deserve all of this excitement? Where's the ranger with the handle-bar moustache when you need him?

The couple told us someone had rode the horse in, lost track of the trail and lost the horse over a ledge as well. The horse was unceremoniously abandoned. One could only guess how the bear got wind of the free meal ticket way down here. But, it was there. A goddamn bear!

Although we weren't headed in that direction for a couple of days, we knew we would eventually have to retrace our steps and pass the bear and his dinner guest on our way out. I pulled out our topo map and asked the woman if she could possibly pinpoint the location of the bear and his dinner guest on our map? She told us not to worry, we'd smell the horse long before we saw it.....Great!

The two days spent exploring lower Grand Gulch were marred by our everpresent thoughts about passing the bear and that bloating beast. If 'Little Gary' was here, my mountain backpacking friend, he would be pooping in his pants! At the mere mention of the word 'bear' he goes into a frenzy! Discussing this pending matter with Omega, I told her we could avoid all of this excitement by going back out Shieks Canyon. She told me she would rather face a whole zoo than go back up that boulder field! So, we decided the best thing to do was to make a bit of noise on our way out, letting the bear know we were coming, just in case he was too preoccupied with his banquet.

As it turned out, I think we made such a horrible racket going up that canyon, rattling pots and pans and shouting at the top of our lungs, we probably scared every freaking animal out of the place! We saw no bear. Just the stinking, dead, three-legged horse that looked like it was going to explode at any minute.

Checking back at The Ranger Station, I was please to see the ranger with the handle-bar moustache on duty! We told him our story. He knew about the dead horse, was rather surprised about the bear, and utterly stupified that his assistant told us Shieks Canyon would be an easy entry.

"I'll have to have a talk with him. He's sent people down that way before! He will be reprimanded, I assure you."

"Better yet," I offered, "why not send him in via Shieks Canyon for a bit of dead horse removal detail?" The thought of Ranger Rick lugging that bloating beast out of Grand Gulch with a bear behind seemed a fitting and humorous reprisal! EASY!!! NO PROBLEM!!!

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STEAMBOAT WILLIE

Hey kids! Boy, is it great to be back home in canyon country! Making those sandals in Juarez over the winter wasn't all it was cracked up to be! But here I am, greeted by an early Spring, watching that old river rise, and getting ready for another RAFTING SEASON!!!

So hey, let's go over to the shed and open her up. Holy shit! Did you see the size of those rats scamper out of there? They must have acquired a taste for neoprene over the meager winter months. Those dirty rats!

And just who the hell let those llamas in here? Get them out! OUT!!! Look what they done to the kapoks!!! They're ruined! Hard as a rock! And what's that awful smell? It's coming from that orange cooler. Someone must have used it for a groover! Hoo!!! It's Gilles BBQed chicken from last August's Wilderness Awareness Trip!!! Jesus! The rats didn't even go near it!

Best order a case of duct tape right quick or we will be in deep trouble, as well as deep water! We pride ourselves in being the first rafts on the river every Springtime! We may not make it all the way to the take-out, but we're always the first ones out there! Gonna take a lotta fixing and patching to get ready. I got my first-aid card in Nogales last winter, but couldn't do anything about the bus. They don't have safety stickers down there.

Boy! I'd certainly like to sit down and tell you another river story, but that will have to wait until next month! There's a lot of work to

be done here!!! What's this? Wow! A case of daily brochures from 1967! That's when we used to run trips for twelve bucks! I should distribute these all around town this month. That would really drive Tex and Bobby up the wall! HA!

Anyway, I just thought I'd tell you how grand it is to be back in Grand County. I hear there are a lot of other papers that have surfaced since I've been gone, but The SDG is the original, baby. Accept no substitute. We don't pamper our audience. We know you're intelligent and can tell the truth from fiction. Hell, if we wanted to wallow in satirical fiction, we would interview the mayor or somethin...

See you next month!

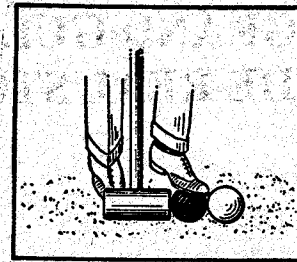
played from the position where it wound up after contacting the stake.)

A ball is through a wicket if a mallet handle can contact both sides of the wicket on the driving side without contacting the ball.

Contacting an opponents ball is called roquet. At roquet, the player's ball is dead, or "in hand", and may be placed in any position around an opponents ball for croquet or split-shot.

Two strokes are awarded upon contact with an opponent's ball. These strokes may be taken to advance one's own ball through the next wicket. Or, one of them may be used to either croquet an opponents ball, or to split-shot an opponents ball.

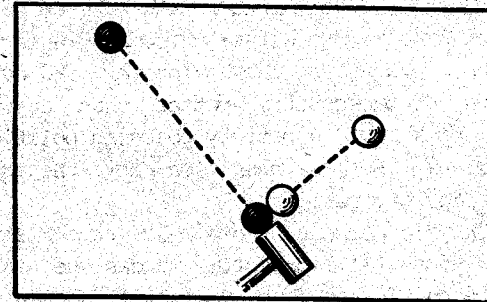
One croquets an opponents ball by placing his own anywhere around the other ball in contact with it, putting his foot on his own ball to hold it in place, and delivering a stroke to



"CROQUET" SHOT

send the other ball to either a safe distance or to an area where it can be used again after another wicket is successfully passed.

One split-shots an opponents ball by placing his ball at a desirable tangent in contact with his opponent's, and striking his own (without a foot to hold it in place) so that his



CROQUET; SPLIT-SHOT

opponent's ball is driven to a desired area, and his own ricochets to a more advantageous position on the court.

In partners play, a partner's ball may be utilized for roquet the same as an opponent's ball.

Alternate rules: Upon roquet, a croquet or split-shot is mandatory.

That's about it. Since Moab Rules call for inventiveness in wicket placement and choice of playing surface (mountains, creeks, deserts, orchards, river beaches, etc.), court specifications seem superfluous and unnecessary.

See you at the Tin Man Triathlon.....

That's about it. Court specifications seem superfluous, in light of the fact that Moab Rules XX Croquet calls for ingenuity and inventiveness in wicket placement and choice of terrain (mountains, deserts, river beaches, creek bottoms, orchards, pastures, etc.).

See you at the Tin Man Triathlon....

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THE OFFICIAL RULES GOVERNING THE GAME OF CROQUET

Croquet. I loved it as a kid. We played all the time because there was a croquet set in the corner of everyone's garage in the 50's. The adults never played, except when we could con them into a game during a summer lawn party. We routinely destroyed them. It was great.

Everyone knows how the game is played, how the wickets are placed, etcetera. However, in competition on some of the notorious cross-country courts around the county, I've seen various rule discrepancies from one to the other. And so, to standardize our rule books, here are the official rules governing those areas where disagreement has occurred.

Each player has one shot at the start, and one shot for every wicket properly passed. Another shot is awarded when one's ball contacts the lower stake. (Play is not suspended upon contact with the lower stake, but continues on the same turn. The ball is not realigned a mallet's length in front of the stake, but is

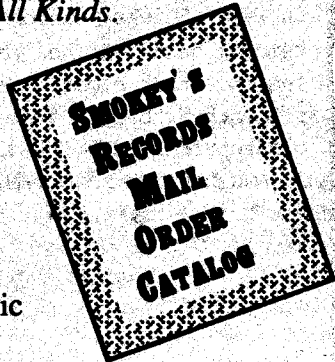
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TICABOO

by John Wahl

I've been lumbering along awkwardly for several miles now, juggled by stream cobble. Bone-dry little boulders shift under my weight, hollow-knocking between twisted sandstone walls. Where is that side-canyon, the one I'm counting on for water? Plenty on my back for a return trip but forget that; I want to stay awhile, not doing this for the exercise you know. Pessimism has gained a solid foothold, 'cause things don't look promising, no they don't. And so I am reminded yet again of my hatred for backpacking. Or more accurately, my on-again off-again love/hate relationship with donkey-work. Day hiking is my consuming passion, the chance to wander in a relatively aimless frame of mind through obscure, ignored, enchanting places. No timetable, no worries, no tiresome chores to perform. Backpacking just seems so horrendously take-charge and ambitious—Grape-Nut gobbling yuppies droning on and on about miles covered, peaks bagged, macho miseries endured with style. Well I've been guilty at times of aspiring to that sort of thing, and should henceforth be horsewhipped at the first sign of galloping self-satisfaction. Load me down with all this clever junk and I immediately become an obsessed robot: "Get from point A

to point B as quickly as possible, and not one single foot further than necessary. Shoulder your burden, complete your mission and above all forget about fun!" I know it doesn't have to be that way, shouldn't be that way, but my efforts to lighten up, be spontaneous, goof-off enroute have thus far been exercises in futility. I resort to backpacking out of a sense of pride or duty; occasionally one must gather ones gear and persevere if one wishes to fancy oneself an outdoor kind of guy or gal. Or maybe some deep-seated masochistic itch needs a good periodic scratching.

Admitting all this seems a traitorous act, a shameful weakness. I remember James Watt, your hero and mine, complaining of boredom in the Grand Canyon. Well, hey, give the guy credit for honesty. May those who have never been bored on an extended outing toss the first tomatoes. The distinction, of course, is in the degree and duration of your boredom. Not often and not for long should be the norm. Not worth mentioning unless you're attempting to bait an outraged environmentalist. But underlying the pack-o-phobia there's a solid core of anticipation; remote areas are worth getting to, have unique rewards to offer. And I hold out hopes of one day being able to shoulder my backpack in as carefree a spirit as I grab my walking stick. Just gotta keep plugging away, pay some dues, develop a comfortable habit. If people can grow accustomed to, even enjoy, Scotch, cigarettes and Los Angeles, then surely I can learn to love this backpacking stuff. As habits go, I would say it's a bargain.

Yoo-hoo, side canyon, where the @?!#* art thou oh side canyon? Aha! The upper tiers of sandstone seem to suggest an oncoming gap, yes

I'm almost there. Just shrug the old tonnage off into a shady spot and we'll check this situation out, me myself and I. Good flowing water right at the mouth—hallelujah! Upstream some short distance there's a little overhang on the south side, brushy-looking and nondescript. I almost decide to skip the investigation, but no other spot holds out much promise, and lush jungley growth discourages further progress. Bummer. But it turns out to be a quite satisfactory campsite; cool dirt floor, relatively level, set behind a screening of vegetation and with an overview of the immediate vicinity. Yabba dabba doo! And so for the next few days I've got a cozy basecamp to hike out from. No evidence of recent use, but it has the feel of history, an unannounced yet pervasive authority; the Anasazi knew this spot, took shelter and rested here. That's what I say.

Refreshed and excited in the morning, I quickly find a ledge to hop up on that gets a person past the thick green tangle, and start wandering around among intersecting slots, easy walking on sand and slickrock. My tentative plan (always subject to revision at the slightest whim) is to eventually follow a particular drainage to its head and scramble over into a large canyon to the south, thus making a loop hike (love them loops). After some lazy exploration here and there I focus in on that route, but am soon brought up short by a boxed-in pour-off. Oh well. Plenty more places to nose around in anyway, no big deal. But after backtracking to head off in other directions I remember an opening up high, just a slender notch behind a prominent sandstone turret. Ought to check that out, you never know. Moving away to the west I find access to that level of slickrock which leads to the tower, and walk on friction in steeper spots until I reach the corner where breezes greet you through a door-

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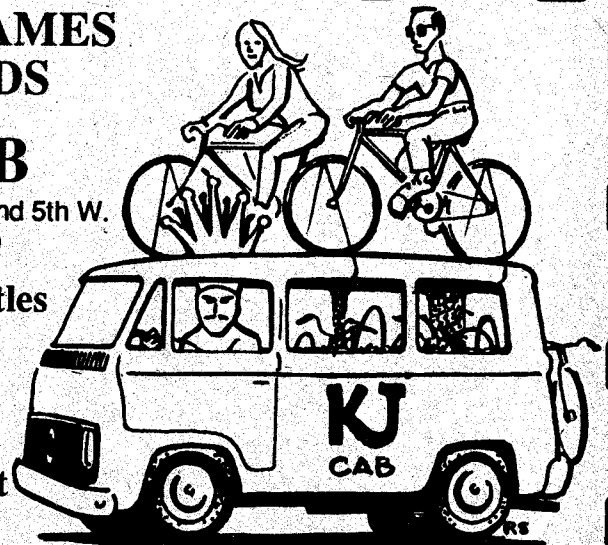
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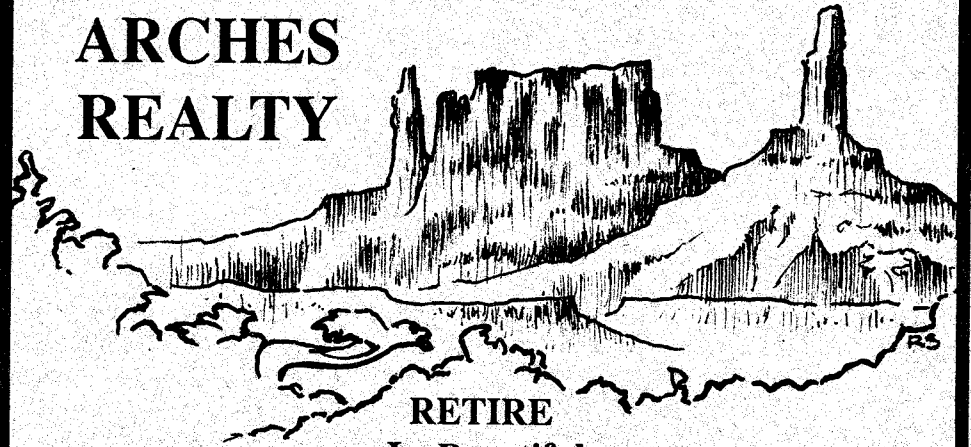
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way. A secret entrance into an impregnable fortress, a hide-out—suddenly my thoughts are child-like and fantastic, imaginary adventures lurking in every direction. Reality isn't nearly so dramatic; this notch brings me out onto a gently sloping boulder-strewn bench, neatly bypassing the sheer pour-off which had stumped me earlier. Looks like I might get into that next canyon after all. But the going gets narrow again, smooth sand ending abruptly at a pool of water, another wall of seamless rock. In absolutely silent places like this I often let myself pretend that I'm the first person ever to have set foot here, first pair of human eyes brought to a secret beauty. Naked stone and storm-washed sand offer us this kindness; anyone can have their personal moment of discovery. Spectacle has little or nothing to do with it. The most insignificant span of sandstone overshadows the whole of Arches Natl. Park, one faint petroglyph dwarfs Newspaper Rock, the most fragile thread of trickling water holds more beauty than Havasu Falls. When this intimacy can no longer be found ... well I don't want to recognize such a bleak future, can't acknowledge that sort of living death. Not for me, no thank you, take your blueprints somewhere else.

Seamless rock did I say? No, not perfectly smooth, not totally unmarked. And obviously I'm not the first person to have passed this way. Stepping back from a full-face examination of the east wall, I find that the altered perspective has caused subtle handholds to magically appear, angling up evenly and precisely to a secure point above the pour-off's polished lip.

A most tenuous chiseled staircase, weathered smooth and darkened by oxidation or mineral-laden water. Old, very old. I carefully feel out the leverage, take one step up, reach to the next grip, get shaky and drop back down, repeat the procedure, go a little higher, turn back again. Ridiculous to let this simple climb defeat me; your average schoolboy would be up it in a flash. This appears to be the highest point, the divide separating two canyon systems. Obviously a route of travel, might be ruins, pictographs, wonderful things to be discovered on the other side. Now get your butt in gear! Plant one boot, reach up, lift the other foot, wedge in the tow, reach again. But it's no use. My fear is not so much of the climb up—I could probably tackle that, even me. But if there are further difficulties ahead and I'm forced to turn back, no way could I get down with any security. Jump or fall, those would be the options. And not unreasonable options, actually. It's not a perilous height to drop from, water and quicksand would soften the impact, come on now John-Boy, show me some guts. But I've somehow forgotten to bring along the guts, and so caution once again gives curiosity a sound thrashing. Happens too often, don't like to give it up when just a nickels worth of nerve might purchase so much. You always wonder about things like that, second-guess yourself. I spend the rest of this day loafing here and there, pausing to contemplate every intricate detail. But disappointment follows me back to camp, curls up in a corner and makes itself at home.

Other days, other walks. Follow the main canyon down, well-watered and wide now, to its grave in The Lake. A deer whose fresh tracks I've been crisscrossing comes bolting past in a panic, escaping the trap. Stubborn animals refuse to adapt, still haven't evolved themselves a decent set of gills or a serviceable flotation bladder. Obviously a species ill-equipped to step into our glorious future—no use wasting shuttle space on such a pedestrian creature. Grungy driftwood litters the sucking mud, so I climb onto a wide shelf and snack on peanuts. A boat must be anchored just out of sight, because I can hear echoing talk, the clanking sounds of someone pattering with gear or an engine. I wish they would leave. But then it's me who is out of place here, isn't it?

In the company of ravens I snoop into this hollow and that, but never venture around to the other side of my ancient staircase. Mine. It seems fitting to leave something undone, don't exhaust your possibilities all at once. Rainy days will be coming, lots of rainy days, and it would be prudent to save up for them. On my last night at camp I lie awake watching a storm approach from behind, floodlight flashes intensifying on the opposite wall until finally thunder comes, and a gentle rain. Propped up in my bag, back against the wall, I'm dry and safe and drowsy. Tomorrow I'll pack out between the Little Rockies again, point my pickup towards town and leave. Be watching TV before you know it. And will always have something to return to, one more corner leading towards mystery, fresh breezes on a child's open face.



ROBERT DUDEK'S CONTINUING EFFORT TO FIND HAPPINESS IN THE COSMOS

by Steve Wilsker

Act I

(The entire play takes place in God's Kitchen. God is seated at the dining table, working attentively at building a wooden model of an old sailing ship. God is wearing the persona of a vigorously endowed and very handsome Negro woman. God's Chief Angel Metatron approaches slowly, from stage right, a clipboard in hand.)

G: (Not looking up from Her work) Wait.
(Metatron stops, lets the arm with the clipboard drop to his side.)

G: (Still not looking up, but continuing to work) The fact that you're here again so soon means that there's a problem. The look on your face means that it is serious enough to upset you. The clipboard means that the problem is Dudek.

M: Why do I bother to come here? You know everything anyway!

G: I know when there's trouble, but I want you to tell me the details. You know I don't like to interfere.

M: (Lifts clipboard) Technically, we have no official complaint to make about breaking Rules or even Policy. He does his work and lots of it. Gabriel says the flow is smooth. It's what he does on his own time that has me upset. If this were his own country, he'd probably be guilty of some crime.

G: Not necessarily—you know how fuzzy their thinking can be. Tell me. (Smiles)

M: Alright. He became interested in the way the Universe was Created. So he took his Staff Access Permit to the Archives and pulled the relevant documentation all the way back to the Void. Legitimate enough. But he made copies!

G: Nothing in the Rules about that.

M: But you know how I feel about it! There is such a thing as "need-to-know", and I've always discouraged this sort of prying. Unrestricted knowledge is potentially dangerous, creates doubts...

G: (Stops Her work and interrupts) Please. You know perfectly well there is no danger, and we are not Fascists. This is not an armed camp. Doubt is as normal as curiosity and we usually encourage normal behavior. Without Doubt, Faith would have no value at all, yet we value Faith highly around here. Even if one of our people had absolute and total knowledge it could do no harm. Knowledge is not Power, it only provides opportunities. (Smiles) We've had this come up before and you know My views. Why do you make Me repeat Myself? Why so insecure? I won't fire you in order to hire him, you know.

M: (Heatedly) It isn't that at all! We are structured to operate in a certain way. Our Administrative Order works and I intend to keep it that way! Everyone has their own work, Thrones, Powers, Dominions, and so on. No-one encroaches and no-one complains and things get done in their proper order and on time. What if...

G: (Interrupts) If? IF? Who have you been talking with?

M: (Abashed and suddenly meek) Isaac Newton.

G: I suspected as much. The man has a size 20 ego in a size 10 spirit. You know every well what we had to overlook to allow him here, and he still stays off in his little corner maintaining his delusion that he's the only one who ever made it.

M: I'm sorry. Its just that he's so brilliant in his way.

G: (Waves Her hand, dismissing the incident) Go on about Dudek. And please remember that he was an editor and that they like to tinker.

M: I said that Dudek made copies. (Lifts the clipboard and shakes it) I didn't mean just one copy of everything for himself. He made multiple copies of every process relating to the Creation, and is obviously planning to hand them out.

G: To whom?

M: I don't know! He's playing this very close to the vest. I won't know until he actually does it.

G: Just like an editor. Do you believe he's doing this out of a sense of mischief?

M: (Looks thoughtful) I'm not sure. I've never seen any real malice in him, but it might be some form of game.

G: Don't bother to show Me the list you have there. Just keep Me posted on the next step. (Turns back to the model ship)

(Metatron turns and exits, stage right)
CURTAIN

Act II

(Still in the kitchen, we see that work on the model ship has visibly progressed. God is now in the persona of a 14-year old boy with red hair and working on the ship model. Metatron enters, stage right, burdened with a foot-thick stack of papers held before him in both hands, his clipboard balanced on top of the stack.)

G: (Not looking up) Don't put that down, I know what it is.

M: Please. It's heavy.

G: You insist on bringing burdensome proofs in here when all I need is your word. Now stand there.

M: Dudek. He has a talent for co-opting talent into his project. Wait 'til you hear.

G: He was an editor.

M: Yes.

G: Go on.

M: He took copies of the Creation documents to the best geometers we have here, Bolyai, Lobachevsky and Riemann. He gave them the narrative papers and the resultant star charts and had them work out the mathematics of the entire series. They loved it. It went faster than I would have thought possible.

G: They've been making progress since they got here.

M: Then he took the formulas to that Indian fellow, the genius with the numbers who died so young? Dudek asked him to transcribe the formulas to base 8 from the standard base 10 the geometers used.

G: Base 8 is where 31 is equal to 25?

M: Yes. Then he took the new base 8 formulas to his musician pals. Base 8 was a perfect fit for the 8-tone musical notation. Felix Mendelsohn converted the mathematics to musical notation. Bach the Elder laid out the structure, with a little help from Mozart, Brahms, Rimsky-Korsakov and Richard Strauss did the orchestrations.

G: Very traditional, very precise.

M: He was an editor.

G: Point taken.

M: An amazing piece of work, really impressive. And you might be amused to hear that the converted formulas for pulsars appear as a leitmotif throughout in the form of "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star."

G: It's always been a favorite.

M: Score in hand, Dudek rounded up George Gershwin, Charlie Parker, Power Biggs and Claude Bolling. They excerpted from the score and put together a jazz suite in 9 parts. It's very stirring. Dudek had Sergei Rachmaninov, our absolute master of carefully restrained emotion, review the new suite, which he did twice, and he didn't change a note! But he did mutter a lot, and he transcribed it to a solo piano piece, which he, Rachmaninov, gave to Sidney Lanier, who transcribed it for solo flute and is now writing a long poem about it. I don't know what to think about all this. Here's the music.

G: I've already heard it.

(Metatron's shoulders visibly slump; he turns and shambles off stage right. God resumes work on the model.)

CURTAIN

Act III

(God is now in the persona of a cheerful-looking, plump elderly woman, dressed as a Dutch farm wife, apron and cap. She is still at the table, studying the finished ship model, turning it in Her hands. Metatron storms in.)

M: The nerve of the man! The sheer arrogance of it! You won't believe it!! You just won't believe it!

G: I'll believe what I wish to. Please don't call the shots for Me. You know I don't like it.

M: (Freezes in place, then gulps.) Sorry, Chief.

G: You're very upset and I want you to tell Me why, but I want you to watch your use of idioms. Whenever you're emoting you become imprecise and intrusive. Please don't try to limit My prerogatives even by accident. Now, tell Me. It's Dudek?

M: You're always right.

G: Let's not have the lecture on Infallibility. You know how I feel about that. And no jealousy, please. You wouldn't want My job and you know it.

M: True. Forgive me, but Dudek has gone too far! He did the whole thing as a set-piece, I just know it. This is more than arrogance, it is absolutely blasphemous!

G: I'll decide that, thank you. I thought you liked the music after Gabriel footnoted it for you.

M: I do. I listen to it all the time. And I'm beginning to understand the ideas that went into it and that makes me admire it even more. All that time and energy spent putting it together! Dudek even had a presentation copy made for the Archives, staff lines of ebony on ivory plates with notes and notations in palladium, all done in the old Celtic style, like the Book of Kells. Beautiful!

G: And?

M: It's the title! I'm convinced he did the whole thing just to set up the title, which is...

G: Don't say it. What's the title?

G: (Furiously) The Universe, A Robert Dudek Production.

G: Don't you enjoy a joke anymore? You use to.

M: But...

G: (Holds up Her hand, interrupting) Call it Editorial License, and, after all ...

(G & M in unison: He was an editor.

G: (Resuming) ...and it was done with style, in a spirit of fun. He knows where and who he is and why I had him put on Staff.

M: (Slightly astonished) But I thought ...

G: (Gently) I have my reasons for doing things. Dudek did just what I wanted. Not only did we get the new musical scores now in the Archives and on everyone's mind, and which I happen to like very much Myself, but we got more interactions among our people. Have you ever heard a ragtime fugue? Bach is now working on an opera with Joplin, libretto by Louise Bogan and Herman Melville, just to mention one example.

G: This all a bit too much for me.

G: Wrong. It's not enough for any of us We need more interactions and more yet. More interactions means that knowledge spreads out and we get more possibilities, more viewpoints, more joy. You can use more joy, old friend. We all could. Trust Me.

M: (Wistfully) I really do like the music.

G: That's nice.

M: So we do nothing about Dudek? Even with that outrageous title?

G: Nothing at all. He was just being what he is...
(Metatron nods with understanding)

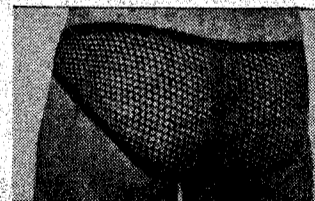
G & M in unison: An editor.

M: I feel relieved. Thank You. Before I get back to work, I've been meaning to ask You, what ship is that You built?

G: Horatio Nelson's old flagship, the Victory.
Metatron giggles and God joins in the laughter.)

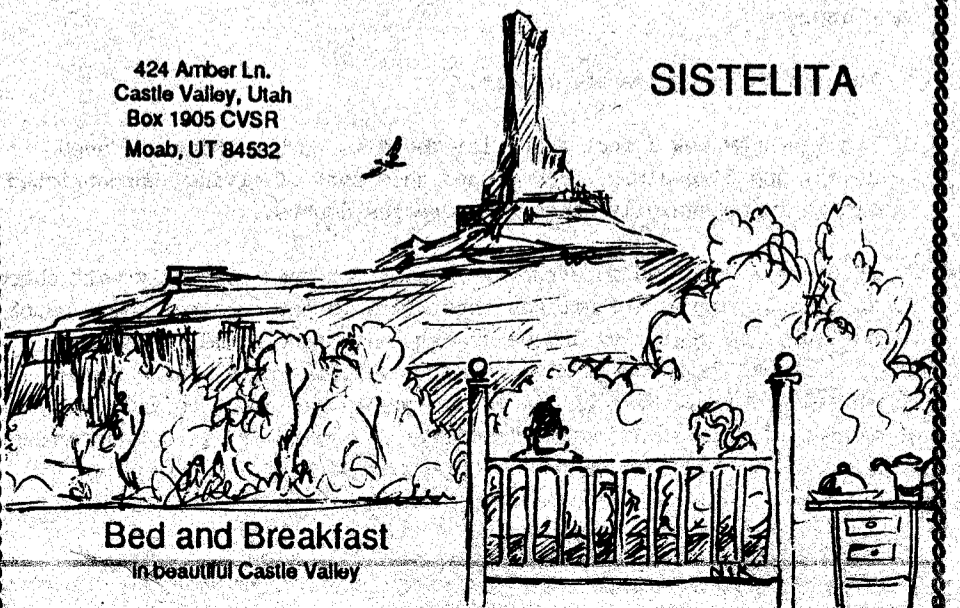
CURTAIN

THE END



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SISTELITA



Izzie Kiddin

A NIGHT
AT THE STINKING DESERT GAZETTE
HEADQUARTERS.

Some of you out there are probably wondering just how this paper is put out every month. Well....So was I! I must admit to you that in all the years I have been submitting articles to this paper, I had never dropped by headquarters on the night before it goes to press. Dudek was raving to me on the phone just the other day. "Yeah! Everyone tells me to GO DUDEK GO! Don't fail us now! Get that paper out! But when it comes time to have a little help around here doing just that, no-one shows up!"

So, taking my life in my hands, I inched the old Rambler to headquarters the other night. I don't see too good at night anymore, hence my hesitancy to drive by moonlight. Too many chaotic midnight runs to New Orleans back in the Sixties ruined my eyesight as well as my liver. Anyway, I did manage to arrive safe and sound at headquarters. I did smash two of his prize peacocks negotiating the steep descent of his driveway, but I was here! To help!

Dudek greeted me at the door with a cheap beer in his hand. Nik and Rick were also there, busy with graphics and other items. Asking Dudek what I could do to help, he told me to grab a cheap brew out of the frig and stay out of the way. I strolled into the kitchen and opened the frig. I looked for the good stuff they had probably hidden behind the yogurt, but there was none to be found. So I had to settle for Brand X. (A 12-pak for under four bucks, if you know where to look.)

Wandering over to Nik's corner, I found him intently staring a hole into a piece of blank paper. He explained that he wanted to come up with one more topical cartoon before the deadline, but just couldn't think of anything.

We started trading ideas and thoughts, and we did come up with a few horrid airline disaster jokes, but decided they were definitely unprintable. Nik told me to go grab another beer and give him some space. I guess all the space on that blank piece of paper wasn't enough....

Rick was at the other end of the workshop whipping out the sketches and drawings for the ads. Everything looked first class! A man of obvious talent, soon to be as much a legend as Nik is in this town. I welcomed him to Moab, complimented him on his work and asked him how much he was getting paid for this great work. He mooched a pack of smokes from me, as well as five dollars, and told me to get a beer and stay out of his light.

Mudpuppy came by to help and they told him to get a beer and stay out of the way too. He got bored and left early, mumbling something about a 1912 hand-made banjo that a visiting mountain-biker friend had accidentally run over. We told him not to fret, and said good-night.

Dudek was sweating over the word processor. His black cat, Magic, came up and scratched my leg. Kicking the cat into the bedroom, I asked Dudek if the paper was printed here. He told me that the paper was printed by Sam Taylor. I was shocked! "You mean THEE Sam Taylor of THEE Times Independent prints OUR paper?" "Yep", Dudek replied. "He takes negatives of our work, uses them to etch the plates in acid, and then they're run off on the old Berkeley Barb press he bought from them years ago." I was crazed! "You mean to tell me after all these years, people have been picking up our papers just to lick them?" Dudek rudely told me that was not the kind of acid he was referring to, and told me to grab another brew and stay out of the way.

I grabbed my file of supposedly unprintable articles and mused over them. I question sometimes what an editor finds unprintable. RE-viewing a cute, and true, Risky Road story, I went back and asked Dudek what was so bad about this particular piece. He glanced at it and informed me that the punchline might be taken as a racial slur by some. He said if I could

come up with a group of people who 'didn't mind being offended' to use in the punchline, then he would print it.

I asked Nik and Rick just what kind of group wouldn't mind being offended. Nik thought for a moment and then said that "Neo-Nazi Skinheads" might work. I gave that some thought and then discarded the idea.

After being told to stay out of the way a few more times I got bored and left. That night I had a horrible dream about being pursued through Lost Spring Canyon by a bunch of blood thirsty Neo-Nazi Skinheads and woke up with a tremendous hangover, wondering where I was going to get a couple of peacocks cheap.

ON ABBEY

by Alexander Skye

I never had the opportunity to thank Abbey. Hell, I never even met the man. Yet, I have been residing here in this paradise known as Moab, Utah, and the surrounding canyon country for the past fifteen years all because of him. I was running the 3.2 beer bar on the hill in Boulder, Colorado, back in 1970 and going nuts when a friend of mine handed me a copy of DESERT SOLITAIRE and INSISTED I read it as soon as possible. Since my friend could become very violent at the slightest provocation (he was studying to be a Philosophy Professor) I heeded his advice and immersed myself in the novel. But ... what kind of novel was this? What kind of PLACE was this???

I had never been to Southeastern Utah, let alone heard of Arches National Monument. That bleak horizon south of I-70 and west of Junction, I always called "the ozones", a place to push the pedal to the metal until you reached so-called "civilization." Abbey changed all that, as well as my perceptions of a lot of things.

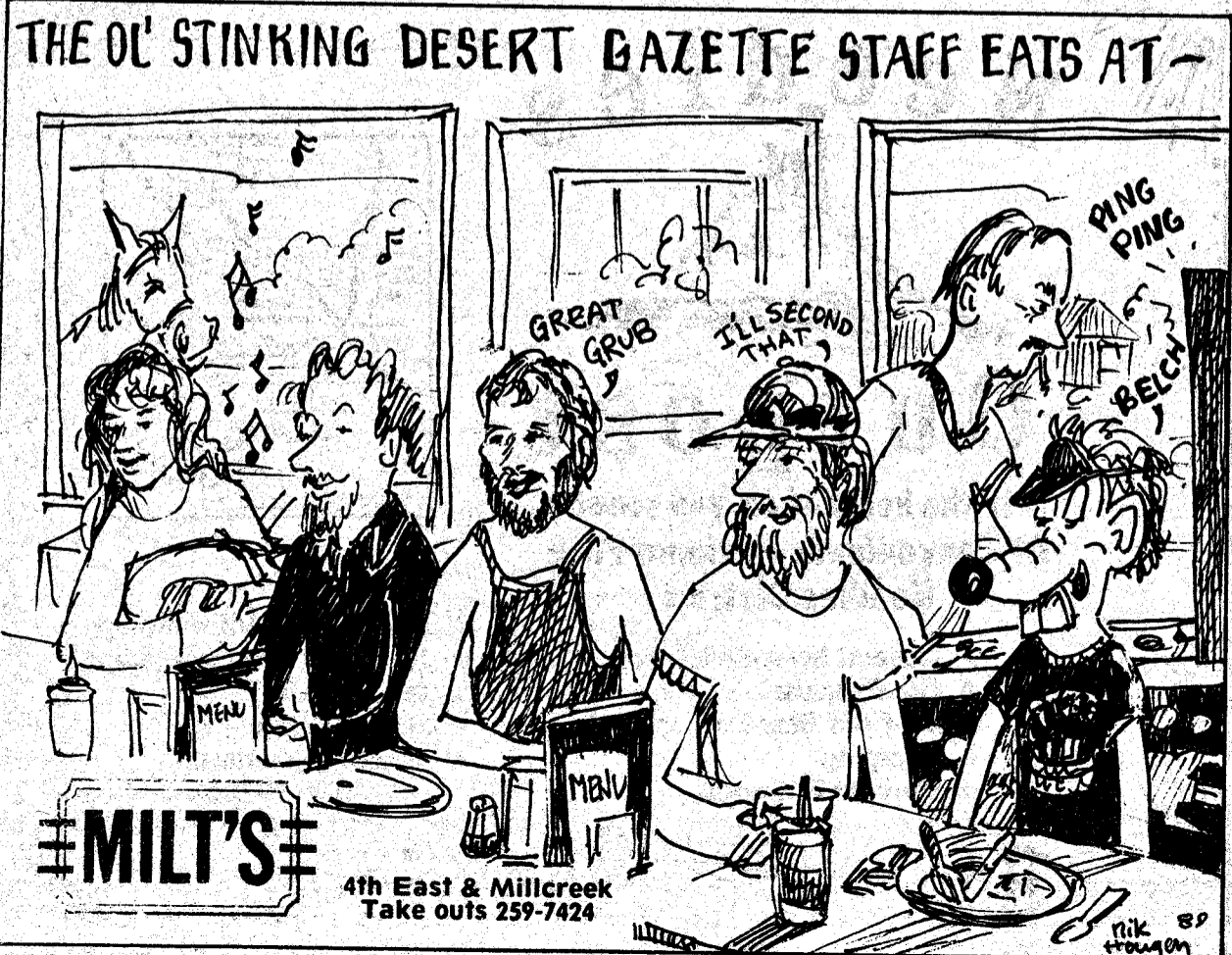
My first visit to Arches was a disaster. It's documented in one of last years' SDG issues. High winds and the late snows of March blew me back to the warmth of the fireplace at the bar back in Boulder. Hell, Abbey could have his paradise! Let him keep it all to himself! But, I knew I was hooked. Hooked by the power and the beauty that he so eloquently related in that novel. I ventured back many times after that and finally relocated here for good in 1975.

In 1982, inspired by his revolutionary novel, THE MONKEY WRENCH GANG, I wrote and received permission to record the song of the same name I had written that year. And still, I had not met the man.

And now he is gone. I just wanted to say, "Thanks, Ed." Thanks for the new life here. Thanks for the words, the visions, the truths, the lies, the hope, the concern for the future. Thanks for instilling within me the urge to sit down at a typewriter and bash out my story. Although, sometimes, I find my words so full of "Abbeyisms" it's quite embarrassing.

A lot of us that relocated here because of his books have that problem. We write like him, talk like him, talk about him, quote him consciously and unconsciously. I suppose his immortality is secure, through all the souls he has reached, slapped and awakened. The man definitely left a mark on all of us.

Now, the desert is in our hands. And we must carry on with oh so much delicacy, care and caution. Legends live forever. But, oh my desert, yours is the one death we cannot bear.



STROKES and POKES

Bobby Bbato



The giant limestone boulder had cracked and split. One hemisphere came to rest, flat side up, on a tripod of smaller rocks alongside the creek. It was an ancient rockfall, immense and destructive. Now, thousands of years later, with the mosses, ferns, flowers, and massive redwood trees intermingled with the smooth and weathered stone, one had to look carefully to perceive the origin of the perfect waterfall and pool, and pedestal rock, it had created.

The rock was his place. It was flat as a table and level, and sat high above the pool as if placed there by a whimsical giant to delight the little people. From it he could see the upper gorge. A fallen tree spanned the limestone cleft, a tree so huge that no taper was visible in its long, bridging segment. Upon it, a shaft of blue sunlight broke at a slant through the darkness of the redwood forest, light of such a charming colour he wanted to run up the mountainside and stand in it. He saw himself showering in it, the light streaming down his body like liquid energy, a dazzling shower of purifying photons. And as he thought that, and as the earth turned ponderously and relentlessly on its axis, a new beam broke through the high canopy and lit the pool below.

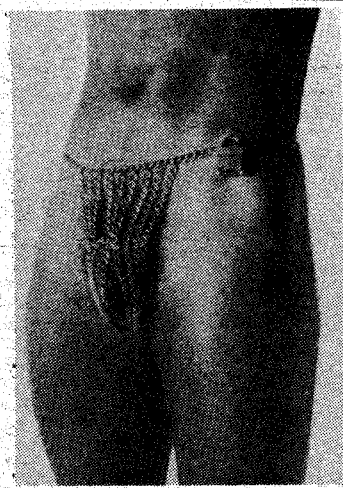
The woman had finished her swim and sat by the pool near the falls. The growing light illuminated her body. The sunshine lit her skin with a fine shade of tan, the first colour of a marshmallow held over the coals. The light grew in intensity as she finger-combed her dark, wet hair back over her ears. Her amber-brown eyes flashed through an aura of the purest blue that radiated from the turquoise on her wrist. She raised her face to the light, bathing in it, while the water sparkled and danced down the falls behind her, casting diamonds in the air.

He thought he would never again see anything so beautiful. Her eyes met his. He felt their hearts freely trading places. Time stopped, or ceased to exist for an unknown duration. Their entire lives had led them to this. Time was an unimportant consideration.

The moment dissembled. The holy sunlight peaked, and then slowly faded. She looked more earthly in the shaded light, the colors now subtle and classical, rendered in oils and rich brocades, serious, eyes downcast, more beautiful than before...

It's too simple, he thought, as they drifted apart. He turned inward to reflect. The old masters were right. There is nowhere to go. We're already here. There is nothing to get, no knowledge to gain, no perfecting of the self necessary to partake in the grandest wealth of the whole of human existence. To drink fully of the essence of the present moment....

Yes, he reckoned, as the textures and lush coloration of the primeval forest danced before his eyes with all the intricacy of a Persian tapestry woven in glowing threads. The old way, the silly identities, the sectarian strife, the war machine, all of it, was doomed to fade in the light of this new view of the Earth. The Vietnam war would soon be over, and America would finally repudiate the crass materialism, the political arrogance, and the hollow culture of the fifties. Things were changing fast. The sixties will be the new age of enlightenment. Things would never be the same again.....



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TRACKS ON THE BEAUFORT SEA

by John Wahn

Tracks on the Beaufort Sea

The only warmth to be found

here, now,

must come from jet fuel

or your pumping blood.

An ocean can freeze relentlessly,
incredibly.

Huge plates of its winter crust
grind together,
squeezing up pale turquoise rubble,
veins of crazy ice.

Beneath it all, under black water,
there might be oil;

some buried blister money thinks important.
So.

This helicopter carves the air and screams,
drawing gridlines
on an arctic we don't comprehend.

I am irrelevant here, artificial
as a sack of convenience store ice
in Death Valley.

My realities do not apply.

The Eskimo can survive. Can know and see
and continue.

But pieces of paper—legal,
sharp as a guillotine blade—
will cancel their skills,
their satisfactions.

Eventually. Efficiently.

Thirty below with thirty knots
of wind.

The cold becomes an irresistible force,
focused on the core of your life.

We're landing again. OK.

Jump out, don't waste time, don't stumble.

Get away from the chopper.

Kneel down, level the instrument.

Hurry.

My nose sizzles, fingers are numb.

The white bear has already been here;
prints lead into a jumble

of tilted slabs

toward open water, thin ice, seal meat.

Miles and miles and miles from today,

hunting for a crack in the cap of the world.

Two years later, on the Chukchi Sea,
during another ride

in another howling womb,

a gift will be offered.

Glancing out and down I'll see

the powerful running,

thick yellowish coat over fluid muscle,

of my first polar bear.

What to keep for the days

when all will be a dream?

OLD MEN IN THE MOVIES

by Steve Wilsker

Old men sleep in the daytime, sometimes.

They wake up in the evening, make tea and sometimes

Toast, listen to the news and always remember

Birthdays, anniversaries, all the good times.

Sometimes children call. Sometimes not.

Old men save pictures loose

In a shoebox, the shoes worn out,

A long time ago, worn out,

Tossed out, not even sent to a mission.

Old men stay awake nights,

Listen to trucks and the rain sometimes.

Rain never bothers old men.

The world seems kinder when it rains.

Sometimes, when old men die, the attendants

Treat their bodies with great care and respect.

SNAKES AND OTHER TALES

by Louise Teal

Lizards tails,
jumping by themselves.

Rabbit tails,
too fast to see.

Cow trails,
the best way, but dusty.

Coyote tails,
impossible to find

Ousel tails,
bobbing up and down

Old time tales
told near the fire

About snakes' tails,
ornery and round.

WHY?

by Mercy Aiken

i see them all go by
and really don't know why
their faces are so sad
and why they seem to sigh.
don't they even see
that yellow bumblebee
and the dancing wind
blowing so fast and free ...
don't they see the flowers, tall
and hear the birds, the wild call?
don't they see the river below
or are they afraid that they will fall?
can't they see the sky?
do they even try?
does it ever occur to them
that life is passing by?
no, they only watch the dust
see the ruins and the rust
and i wonder why they think they must
i wonder why they think
they
must ...

OOZELS

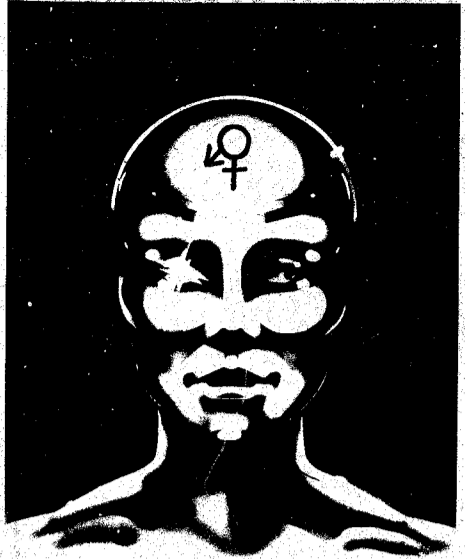
(For Ted)

By Billy Howard

What did you do
With your oozels
When you were just a kid?
Did you wipe them on the wall,
Then say you never did?
Did you wipe em on the car seat
Or pop em in your mouth,
Or did you let em hang there
To gross yer buddies out?
Did you snuff em back up
And swallow em if you could?
Or did yer mom make you blow em,
Just like she said you should?
Did you flush em down the toilet
Where all the groaties go,
Or did you put em
In yer girlfriends hair
and pretend you didn't know?

What did you do with yer oozels
When you were just a kid?

Did you wipe them on yer handkerchief
And try to keep them hid?



STARSCAM

Your
Horoscope
by

**Rama Lama
Ding Dong**

ARIES

(Mar. 21 to April 20)

Patience is not your strong point. Most people see you as arrogant, pushy, intolerant and aggressive. They are right. You are quick-tempered and scornful of advice. In fact, you just aren't very nice at all. Hitler was an Aries.

On the positive side, you are very loyal. But so is a good Basset Hound. The truth is, Aries, that Rama Lama has spent several lifetimes researching the Astral Plane trying to find something good to say about you - and it's almost impossible. Your best bet is to hang around with Libras since they are too gullible to easily see through you.

Since you have so few positive qualities, utilize your negative ones. If they give you ruled paper, write the other way.

TAURUS: The temptation to give advice this month will be irresistible. As usual, everyone will ignore you.

GEMINI: On the Full Moon of the 20th, you will see the Universal Truth. It won't make any sense.

CANCER: You really should admit that you're too lazy to ever make anything of yourself. Most welfare recipients are Crabs.

LEO: Be careful this month. Don't get any on you.

VIRGO: After the 19th, you will have the tendency to fall asleep while making love. Will your partner notice?

LIBRA: You are living proof that for every credibility gap there is a gullibility fill.

SCORPIO: Your intense nature leads you to continually fight against the entire World. Rama Lama is backing the World.

SAGITTARIUS: All Sagittarians are drunks or dope fiends. Decide which you are and stick with it.

CAPRICORN: Because you are so cold, detached and reserved, don't stand still too long this month. Somebody may embalm you.

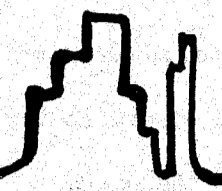
AQUARIUS: After the New Moon of the 5th falls into your Third House, you will discover new and interesting things to do with your house pets.

PISCES: Your family is having a reunion on the 29th. They won't invite you.

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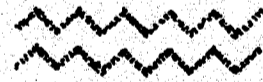
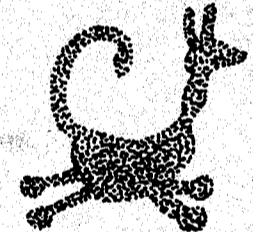


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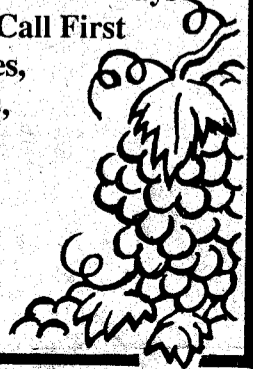
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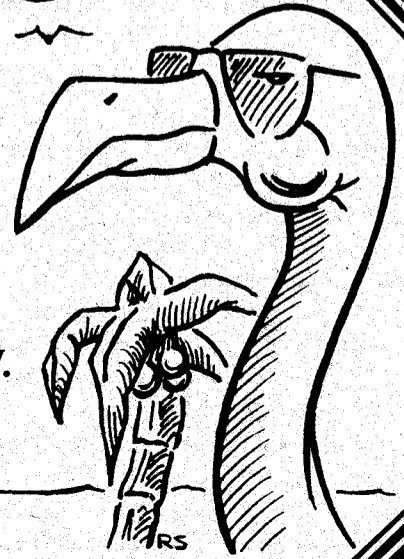
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LEDITORS

I hope that Al McLeod's decided to forgive you by now. Sure, I wouldn't want to be identified with Florida's Penal System either, but you all have done lots more tasteless ads than that. I've always figured your advertisers to be a pretty courageous bunch, to tell the truth.

Keep rocking,

George Day
Meadville, PA

Robert:

My semi-annual threat: will likely be in Moab for most the summer - that's if there's enough Cataract work (and water). Would like to buy you all a steak. Yes! I've realized that I could directly mitigate the over-grazing problem by eating the goddamned, fly-infested, shit-



smeared, dumb-ass, molybdenum-concentrating range-burgers. Feelin' better than ever! (Don't forget the sauteed mushrooms, onions & tofu..)

Bob Katz
Flagstaff

Dear stinkys

Sign me up for another year...I love it and I love you all.

Sarah
Tucson

To the residents of Grand County:

Bitch, bitch, bitch - that's all we ever do.

Cindy Kingsley

Dear Bob:

.....Thought your Florida State Prison ad was hilarious, although I'm no death penalty supporter. Clever retraction, too....

Abbey's death really stunned me, though I had never met him. It's a cliché to say this, but DESERT SOLITAIRE changed my life. Not enough, not as much as it should have, but still I'm greatly in his debt.....I know there are a lot of folks in Moab who are really hurting now. Here's hoping that the summer brings better things....

John Wahl
Duncan, OK

Hi Bob

In regards to the anti-development attitude and movement in Moab - go for it. Perhaps a trip to some developed area is needed to set straight those who want to bring in the motels, tourists, roads, and the rest that goes with it. There is nothing wrong with wanting to be able to live in an area of such beauty that you enjoy it just for the sheer pleasure of it. The destructive attitude of the multitudes - more money, more toys, more, more - is despicable. Unfortunately, these people are winning all over the country, so enjoy what you have while it's still there. Each year the vistas are becoming cloudier and shorter. Each year the traffic jams grow until gridlock reaches stasis.

Keep up the good work. I'll be back to Utah this fall after the tourists and their spoiled offspring have gone home and some of the quiet has returned.

Larry Celic & Jai Richards
Chicago

KCNY

1450 AM



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