

Voodoo

OCTOBER 1976

HU-
MOR

VALUES

MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER



This issue of VooDoo is dedicated to the fine art of humor. In these troubled times, it is sad to think of the countless thousands who don't know the difference between an elephant and a mailbox, or, say, between an intellectual pygmy tribe and a women's track team. This, then, is dedicated also to those at MIT who don't have the slightest idea what a sense of humor is. We hope to make a small dent in their heads with this issue.

FEAR & LOATHING, COMMONS

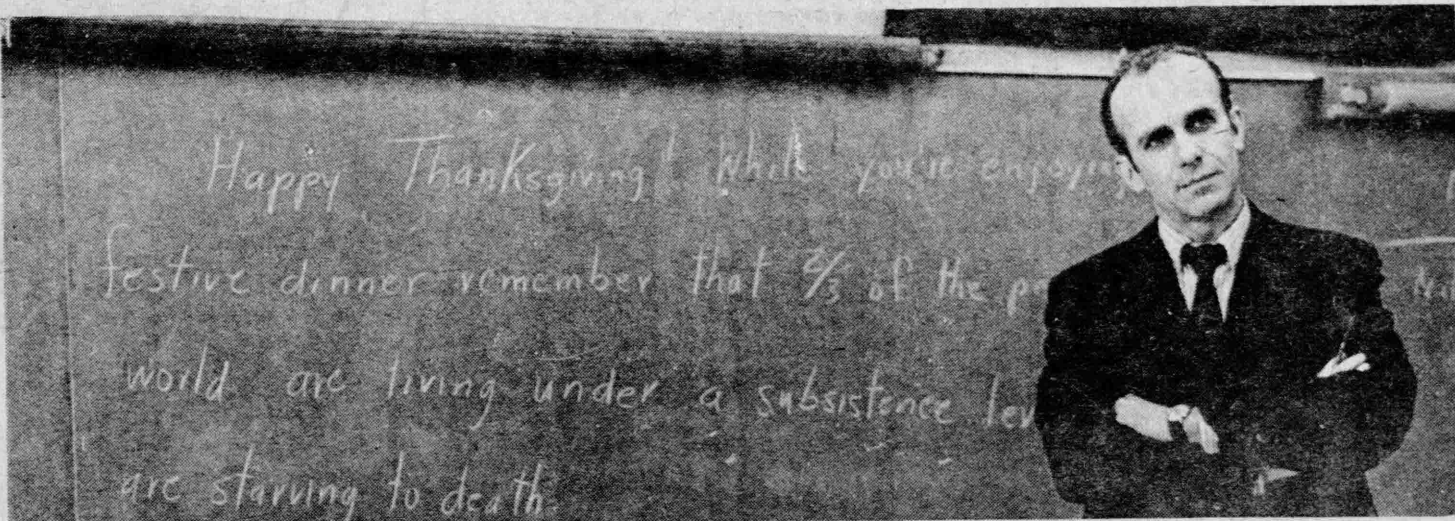


Everyone has to eat, of course, but that doesn't mean everyone has to eat the same things. It is in that spirit that we present some exciting tales of heroics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, including tales of Bexley Hall, romance, and, of course, Commons. Pictured at left, one of the famous Commons "specials," the "he-man's steak." Available only during the school year.
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VooDoo

The M.I.T. Journal of Humour

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VOO DOO is published often as not.
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BEXLEYOUS VIGNETTES

So here it is, the middle of January, and it's a good 70-80 degrees outside. I've seen some pretty freaky weather in Cambridge in my time, but this is something new to me. To the subjective body, such as mine, it is hot and stifling, so its no wonder that around eight or nine o'clock I start to nod out. Of course the fact that I've been toking up some pretty good feathery Mexican tops since ten in the morning might have something to do with my early fade-out. Be that as it may, I collapse early in the evening, only to be awakened some three hours later by the sound of a raucous party out in the courtyard. After a few moments of inner debate ("Can I possibly get more wasted? Well, I can sure as hell try!") I stagger out into the night. I shoulda stood in bed.

I get a few feet past the doorway, and am still trying to decide whether or not I am actually awake, when someone shoves a pipe in my hands and says, "Where've you been? You're way behind. Suck on this for a while." Not wishing to enlighten the dear little nimrod on our comparative states of mindlessness, I proceed to monopolize the pipe while browsing through the sundry bottles of beer, rum, tequila and 100 proof whatnot. Suddenly, a voice of doom wails out, "We're out of ice!" and just as quickly two young stalwarts cry out, "Fear not, we shall journey to the Main Building and replenish our supply," and take off across the

street. Such noble youth! Such selfless action! Such unmitigated stupidity!! I shoulda stood in bed.

Because our dauntless duo return momentarily with a plastic bag-lined milk case full of exceptionally finely crushed ice, which bears an uncanny resemblance to snow. In fact, the first thing I say when they return with their booty—clever me—is "Hey, this ain't ice, it's snow." Almost immediately, the air of the courtyard is filled with flying snow, but the stationary target provided by the Walls of Bexley soon proves too tame, and the snowball throwers move out onto Mass Ave to have at the traffic. I remain in the courtyard, nursing a small rum and a large bowlful of whatever it was we were smoking at the time.

The story at this point begins to grow more confusing, so I'm going to cheat a little and ask all of you to pay close attention to this next. We have one group so intent upon the calendar that they have neglected to consult the thermometer, and so are throwing snowballs at Mass Ave in January, 70 degrees be damned. We have me, staggering about the courtyard, drunk, stoned, half-asleep and more than normally out-of-it. And we have the Cambridge Police. "Cambridge Police?" you demand indignantly, "where did they come from?" Well I told you it was going to get a little tricky. Now as I pieced it together later from several informed

sources, the snowball contingent had sent one or two arcing over a Cambridge PD car, which had subsequently pulled over a few hundred feet ahead, and probably called for help. Minutes later, a taxi cab (but a taxi cab with a difference) had rolled s-l-o-w-l-y by, lacking only a blinking neon sign screaming HIT ME! HIT ME! Several people, none of whom very strongly resembled me (aha, subtle foreshadowing) stepped forward and sent fluffy white missiles cascading off the windshield. Within two feet the car stopped, and even before completely still the driver's door flew open, a blue leg leaped from the car, and the Bexley Snowballers took off for the nearest entryway.

Unfortunately, I had no way of knowing that these events were transpiring. Even so, the sight of the screaming hordes piling into that one entryway conveyed a message of "Uhhh—something's happening." But seeing the crowd at that one entryway, I decide to play it "smart" and head into the other entryway, the one being held open by a doorstop. Chorus: I shoulda stood in bed.

I just make it inside the doorway when this blue blur comes steaming around the corner of the courtyard, takes a flying leap and executes a perfect landing—in the middle of my back. I am thrown to floor, and slid along the hallway, not on any kind of carpet, mind you, but on one of them hard plastic runners used to dig the

ON NOVEMBER 2, THERE'LL BE A MAJOR ECONOMICS TEST.

If the Bottle Bill passes, beer and mixer prices will go up. Way up.

If you don't believe us, ask somebody who goes to school in Vermont.

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But it doesn't.

If you really study the Bottle Bill, you'll never let it pass.

Question: Would you vote for a Bottle Bill when a similar law in Vermont forced the cost of beer up \$1.80 a case?

Yes

☐

No

☐

VOTE NO-QUESTION 6

NOV.2

Committee to Protect Jobs and Use of Convenience Containers in MA, 21 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02108.

mud out of your boots. Wearing shorts as I am, it serves equally effectively at digging the flesh out of my knees. I start screaming, as of impact, "Help, somebody, this big dude's beating the shit help out of me! Help, hey somebody—" (at this point I squirm around and get my first good look at my assailant—) "Oh my God—it's a cop!"

It's truly amazing how quickly one can become sober, perfectly straight, and wide awake, given the proper incentive. The man now handcuffing my hands behind my back, and lifting me to my feet by my hair was providing all the incentive I ever could have imagined. Immediately my thought processes became crisper and clearer, as I recalled that I had been holding a pipe in my hand when this neanderthal had nailed me. Miracle of Miracles, my new-found friend, who was now teaching me ballet (more on that later) had been so intent on coralling a piece of raw meat that he had failed to notice that slightly incriminating piece of baggage. Thus my heart and spirits rose, as well as the heels of my feet, as he walked me out of there in ballet-form (I told you I'd get around to that). What that consisted of was his getting a firm, I mean FIRM grip on my hair with one hand, and then proceeding to keep that hand far enough off the ground that I had a choice of premature baldness, or tip-toeing as a form of locomotion. I didn't care if it meant walking on my hands, I was anxious to get the hell out of that entryway and far away from that pipe. So naturally, he executes an about-face and heads back to the scene of the crime—his crime. Imminent heart failure. Not wanting to get too close to wherever the hell the pipe ended up, I try to convince him he wanted to go up the staircase near the beginning of the hallway by proceeding there ahead of him. By the simple means of retaining his firm grip on my roots and not moving, he manages to convince me that, yes, I like the first floor just fine. All of a sudden he starts to knock on this one door. Still as eager as ever to depart the immediate vicinity, I venture, "If you want the houseparents, they're across the courtyard." He ignores the issue, and instead barks at me, "Where are the houseparents?" Not feeling in any position to practice my snappy one-liners I reply, "They're across the courtyard." And so for the second time we bid a fond farewell to that entry and one slightly misplaced pipe, and head out toward Lettvin Country.

As we march across the courtyard, him attempting to see just how high on my toes I can get, and me attempting to converse with him, "Honest, you don't have to hold my hair like that I'm not going to try anything with my hands handcuffed behind my back I'm not that violent you don't have to do all this..." whimper, whimper, plea. I begin to realize that I hadn't actually done anything, but I still stood a very good chance of going to jail, and even if I didn't end up being convicted for anything I would still end up spending some time with the friendly, helpful, compassionate boys down at the Cambridge courthouse... HELP! With these pleasant thoughts as a backdrop, we march into the 48 Entry and past Maggie Lettvin before I make him realize that she is the house mother. Fortunately he still has his hand in my hair, and is able to use that as a brake before we go too far. The next few moments of conversation are pretty vague, since everyone else is talking about arrest and charges and stuff like that, and all I

really talk about is getting Gargantua to please let go of my hair. Suddenly it's miracle time again, and I get that feeling of relief one gets after one stops hitting oneself in the head with a hammer. Not only that, but the Blue Brute has decided to start communicating! "He," sez simple simon to Maggie, "is charged with Assault and Battery." Not once does he speak to me. He doesn't identify himself as an officer when he jumps me, he doesn't tell me what I am being arrested for, or even that I'm being arrested, he don't read me my rights, nothing. Adam-12 he ain't. And to top it all off he wants to charge me with a crime that he is guilty of. Before I can get all indignant and make a complete ass of myself, I find myself being propelled by friendly hands to the confines of the Lettvin's apartment and away from the action. I spend the next few minutes walking back and forth muttering, "How can they do this to me, I'm innocent for a change! Considering how that guy walked all over my con-

"First of all, this Patrol sergeant comes in and takes off my handcuffs. Great. He then proceeds to tell me that he will have to put them back on again when they take me away from here to the police station. Not so great."

stitutional rights, I should be able to avoid conviction, but I don't want them to get their hands on my body back at the police station, but I'm innocent, how can they do this to me? Assault and Battery? For a snowball? That I didn't throw!?" So as you can see, I was perfectly calm, considering my near state of hysteria.

This is the part of the story where I explain why I am now not serving 5 to 10 at Walpole. First of all this Patrol sergeant comes in and takes off my handcuffs. Great. He then proceeds to tell me that he will have to put them back on again when they take me away from here to the police station. Not so great. I wander out into the hallway where Jerry has shown up and is now engaging the officers in snappy conversation. I am about to continue my chorus of "But I didn't do it, for the love of god!" when my favorite ballet instructor says, pointing at yours truly, "He did it. I saw him do it. I saw him throw that snowball." Considering that I hadn't done it, that's a pretty neat trick.

At the time, however, I was too caught up in certain petty concerns to marvel at the incredible eyesight of the man. In short, I feel myself slipping from a standing position to a more comfortable heap on the floor, and commence to break down into incomprehensible mutters and sobs and recriminations. I have this picture of fifty Bexley residents in court swearing under oath that I had had no part in the snowball throwing, that yes, they remember me standing away from where the snowball throwing was going on, and yes they remember who was throwing snowballs and I was not one of them. Then You-Know-Who takes the stand. "He did it. I saw him," grunts the Pig. "Guilty," grunts the judge. "Clang" shouts the door as it shuts in my face. Goodbye.

Then, as the final touch, my saviours appear in the unlikely guise of Campus Patrolmen. The four brothers in blue retire to one side to discuss the issue. "Natter Natter Growl Growl Grunt I Got Him," explain the Cambridge boys. "Payment in lieu of taxes \$45.00 (or some such magic words)," whisper the Campus contingent. Shazam, the magic words take effect, the beasts turn into, well, semi-reasonable beasts. Mr. "We-gonna-have-to-handcuff-you-again" Patrol Sergeant says to me, he says, "I don't care whether you did it or not, as far as I'm concerned you were under arrest (although no one had yet bothered to inform me), BUT, we're gonna let you go this time." This time. Next time they're gonna frame me to the wall, huh? Oh well, you can't lose them all.

Final Tally: At the end of the evening I wash up and take account. My knee is well torn open, (nothing serious, but I really don't have the proper goodies to treat it with. It eventually gets infected, and late in April, after a few visits to the medical department is it healing.) I have a long peculiarly painful scratch down my back, and the left side of my fact hurts from contact with the ground or a fist, I'm not really certain. I am more than normally agitated, but nothing permanent. The only other casualty is a back door chain I opened a door through, the Lettvin's, on the way out of their apartment. I was slightly full of adrenaline at the time, and didn't notice the chain until after the door was open. I was very interested at the time in finding out whatever happened to, you guessed it, that bloody pipe! Turns out, someone had already collected it for me. Like I said, you can't lose them all, but on the whole, I SHOODA STOOD IN BED.

II

Now I suppose you're wondering why I'm telling you all this. Well..., you just keep on wondering. Good for ya.

One of the more incredible hacks I was witness to was the chaining of Danny to the wrecking ball in the Lobby of Building Seven. That was a wild one.

Danny was one of the last great Wildmen of Bexley. Getting involved in a comprehensive list of Danny's many accomplishments would be a bit much for me, but I can at least recount the one that was closest to being a catalyst for this particular adventure. It happens that there is in the basement of Bexley a room bearing the main power switches to both Bexley and the chapel. Upon the door to this room was one of the few padlocks in Bexley not classified as a joke. One night, in the midst of a lockpicking tutorial in the basement, one young man started

to work upon this most difficult of locks. He was an excellent lockpick, and one of good character. He labored long and hard at that lock, still working when all had left for the pursuits of the evening. Late that night, those still awake were startled to see lights and stereos blink on and off, and stay off for periods of time. When one or more finally decided to check things out, those who knew of our young lockpick's ambitious project hastened to the scene, and after some effort were able to restore light and sound on a permanent basis. Those still asleep, those with electric alarm clocks, were suitably upset in the morning, and this grievance combined with a general sense of revenge-need, to bring together might and main necessary to gain succor. Ah, but how to take fitting revenge?

This is where our other main character enters the picture, namely, The Wrecking Ball, star of stage, screen and construction site. Several weeks prior to the night of blinking light one of the more irregular Bexley regulars was driving past a construction site, on Vassar Street as I recall, and saw this lonely wrecking ball sitting in the middle of a semi-vacant lot, looking incredibly forlorn. Being of tender, if larcenous, heart, he drove in, stopped by the ball, jacked it into his car (god only knows how—no one I've met who was familiar with the case can figure it out, and the man in question ain't talking) and drove off. When he got to Bexley, he got a crowd together and rolled it up to the steps. Getting it up the four steps into a first floor apartment is a tale of such heroic courage, selfless effort, and monumental proportions that I won't burden you with it. Suffice it to say that it was delivered, and not having anything better to do with it immediately, it was spray-painted day-glo orange and emblazoned with the letters SUNKIST. A three hundred and fifty pound steel Sunkist orange. Aside from making a dandy paperweight, it was real handy for bringing showers of plaster onto the pool players directly beneath in the basement. But that little fellow was destined for much bigger things than being lifted slightly, and dropped, so as to chastize noisy pool players.

It was a joint effort. One man supplied the chain. Another the locks. A third made a metal shackle (with spikes on the outside, no less) for the victim's leg. Somebody suggested pictures, and pretty soon we had two film crews, one with simultaneous sound, as well as a group of people taking stills. The question remaining was, when? The word comes down from the major organizers—it's go for tomorrow.

The morning of the day of days we gathered in the wrecking ball room to prepare. Two people were making last minute preparations with the locks. In order to prevent Danny from working his will on the locks, the one man was violating the lock with a screw driver, methodically ravaging the pins. The other was being a little bit more basic about it, driving nails into the key hole until there was no place to insinuate a lockpick. The camera people were ready, and it was time to go. I and a group of volunteers went over to the basement of the main building and convinced the physical plant men to let us borrow one of their heavy duty type dollies. We rolled it into the courtyard, loaded the ball onto it, and rolled it into the basement of the main buildings. After a few false starts and mistakes, the doors to the elevator opened, and the cart, with wrecking ball concealed under

cardboard box, was pushed across Lobby 7 to the little carpeted whatsis between the information office and the door. Two things became immediately evident less than halfway to what would become the scene of the crime. First of all, Suzanne Weinberg, of Lobby-of-Building-Seven-Committee fame, was organizing some sort of choral group between our carpeted whatsis and the main corridor. Secondly, we weren't going to escape her notice very long, because the cart we were using had metal wheels which were literally SCREAMING in protest. Sure enough, just as we roll the ball off onto the carpet, with an incredible THUD, she comes over and says, "Don't make anymore noise, we're having a choral group here, I don't want that cart making anymore noise." We promise her, "The cart won't make anymore noise, we guarantee it," and roll the cart away. She goes away. We're almost ready.

We had the ball in the lobby, with the chain locked onto it via a hole that runs through the ball. The other lock and the shackle hang on the other end of the chain, waiting. Someone called his room, where his roommate, our confederate, waited for the call. Upon receiving it he jumped up and yelled, "There's a bunch of maniacs in the Lobby of Building 7, I can't miss

*"Campus Patrol
wasn't sure what
they saw was really
happening, and
wandered off,
slightly amused."*

this!" and ran out. Danny, of course, was right behind him. As soon as he entered the lobby and took a few steps we jumped. At first only five people grabbed him, so he almost got away. Danny may not be big, but he has boundless reserves of manic energy. Fortunately we were prepared for this, and had come in force. With ten or so people on top of him, and one unfortunate person below him holding on for dear life, the shackle was attached and we scattered. The choral group had been interrupted by the sounds of struggle, and Ms. Weinberg had hurried over to Danny just as he became aware of his situation. She turned to Danny and demanded, "Get out of here, right now!" Danny just looked at the ball, rolled his head back to look at her, and gave her a what's-the-matter-with-you-lady? stare. She turned to me, then, and said, "I'm going to tell Campus Patrol." "Fine," says I, "I wouldn't want them to miss this." She stormed off, and I returned my attention to Danny. He had already examined the lock holding the chain on the ball, the one with the nails in it, and dismissed it with an ah, fuck. Not being able to see very far into a lock, he wasn't aware of the reaming given the thing, so he tried to pick it. I may have mentioned that he can be a persistent lockpicker. Even

when a member of the crowd volunteered the information, "Danny, God himself couldn't pick that lock," he persevered. Even when Campus Patrol elbowed their way through the crowd that had formed around him, and asked him if he wanted help, he waved them off with a cavalier, "Nah, I'll pick myself out." Campus Patrol wasn't sure that what they saw was really happening, and wandered off, slightly amused.

After a while, Danny realized that the locks had been doctored, and decided he would go home and hacksaw his way out. Some people suggested that he might want to use the elevator, but Danny was more interested in the direct route, the front steps. He grabbed the chain firmly and dragged the ball, over the marble, out one of the non-automatic front doors. Behind him he left a beautiful orange streak, ground into the marble (removed only after a few days). Once he had it outside on the steps he had two ways to go. He could try to slowly roll it down the front steps, as he was considering, or he could just push it off the side of the steps, and jump the ten feet after it, as everyone was urging him to do. Having sampled our helpfulness once already today, he opted for the steps. Very slowly he let the ball roll down one step, pulling above and behind it on the chain, so that it wouldn't get away from him and roll him down the stairs. This worked fine for the first few steps, but it got away from him just a few steps from the bottom. It rolled a little, bounced once, twice, and landed on the edge of the bottom step, tearing out a double-fisted hunk of concrete. Danny was hopping right behind it, and managed to keep it from rolling out into Mass Ave.

Now we were all ready for the great race. Danny stood behind the wrecking ball waiting for the light to go Walk. The moment it did, he was off! Pushing and shoving and rolling that thing for all he was worth, he was in the middle of the last lane, when the cars got the green light. The crowd was all hollering and screaming at Danny, GO, GO, GO, but he was out of danger—nobody is going to try rolling their car over a 350 pound wrecking ball. Over Danny, maybe, but that wrecking ball would have been positively brutal.

Over on the Bexley side of the street, the crowd was still with him as he rolled it home. Suddenly he spots the guy in whose room the wrecking ball was, the guy who made the shackle, the guy who locked it on his leg, the guy who immediately turns around and heads off, as Danny starts rolling the wrecking ball at him as fast as he can. As he took off, who should make a reappearance but Campus Patrol. And this time they brought a bolt-cutter with them. But once again Danny waved them off, "No thank you, I'll get out of this myself." So saying he rolled the ball into the courtyard and under his (lucky for him) first-floor room window. He has just enough chain to open the window and climb up on the window sill. He reaches in, but his hacksaw is a good five feet away from him. So he goes to work with a small carborundum file. He gets lucky again, though. Just to be spiteful, we enter his room, and wave his hacksaw in front of him. But one of the resident mental defectives waved it too close, and with a beautiful lunge, he captured it. Minutes later, after being advised to work on the brass lock instead of the steel chain, he regained his freedom, and went to work gaining revenge. But that's another story.

FEAR AND LOATHING ON COMMONS



It was near closing time and each of our trays was piled high with 4 to 7 pieces of Royal Worcester flatware soiled with the remnants of our O'Brien Potatoes, Turkey Tetrazzini, institutional size green beans with mushrooms and onions, Ruben Grill with and Ruben Grill without, all swimming in a buttery pool of chocolate non-dairy drink.

But the only thing that worried me as I moved toward the dish conveyor was the Ruben Grill. Unevenly toasted on the outside, the rye bread and cheese formed a perfect seal which protected the contents inside and presented an apparently harmless, culinarily aesthetic treat when served with the green beans and the creamed potatoes on a scalding commons plate. When bitten into, though, this dietician's Pandora's box spouts forth a noxious mixture of mild sauerkraut juice, ketchup, mayonnaise, commons special sauce and rehydrated leftovers tolerable to only the heartiest food plan veteran. This potent liquid now cascaded with

the chocolate drink down the plasticized edges of the flatware as I moved forward. Cautiously I balanced the tray in my left hand, my right holding my spanking new copy of the Kemp Notes, Newtonian Mechanics by A. P. French, and, protecting them, copies of the latest Cross Currents.

Annoyed by the gathering odor of the concoction and concerned about the ability of my wrist to withstand the pressure applied by this not insignificant mass, I quickened my pace; suddenly my eyes were met by those of a commons captain. There is nothing more threatening and potentially irresponsible than a 6' 4" beer bellied commons captain who has been impressed into dish duty by the absence of a forgetful freshman coolie and has just handled his 450th half-eaten Ruben Grill.

I considered returning to the table in an effort to regain my courage, but the precariousness of the structure on my tray, my momentum and my gathering fear of dropping this, my most ambitious lunch, on the commons rug, caused

and my gathering fear of dropping this, my most ambitious lunch, on the commons rug, caused me to lunge forward and thereby slam the tray on the metal channel encasing the conveyor, promptly speckling the captain with a monte-carlo method assortment of organic matter which would have delighted Viking researchers had it been found on Mars, but which instead enraged the dishhandler.

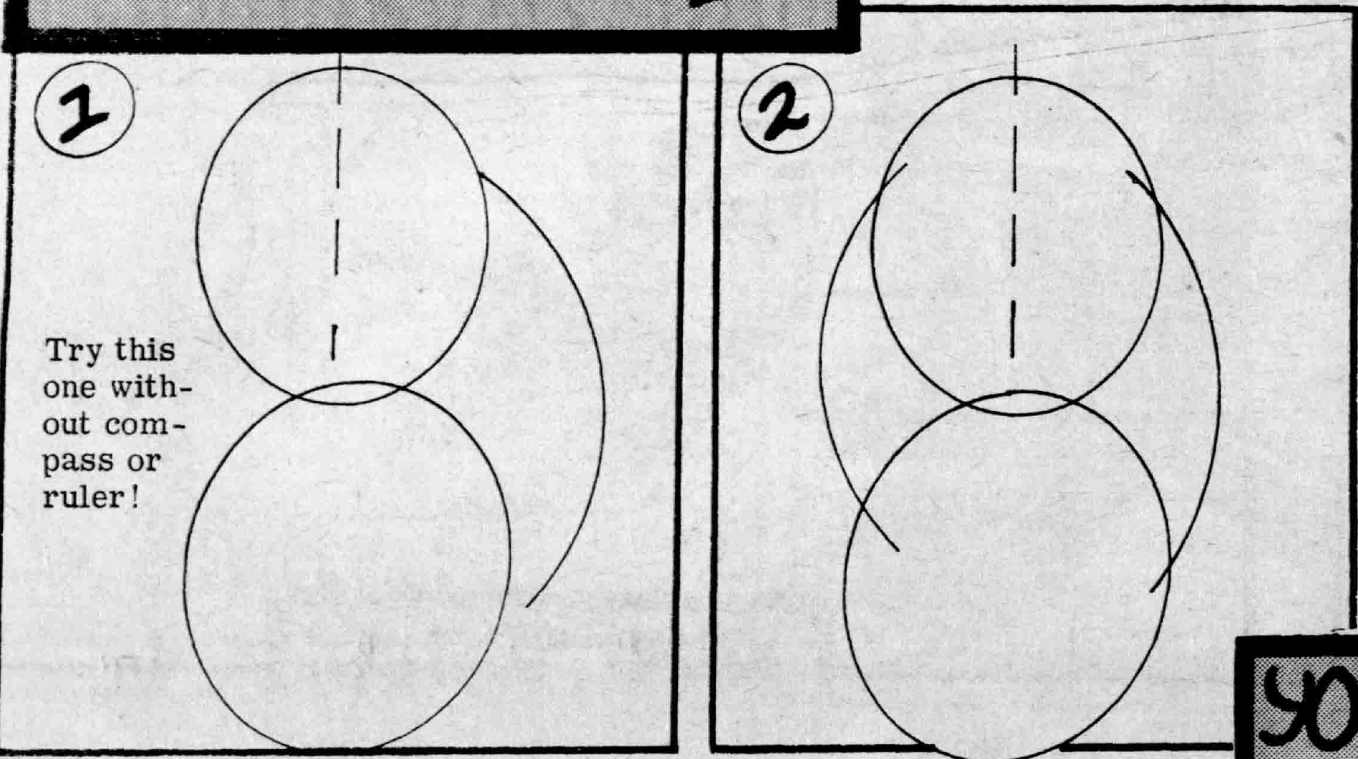
* * *

Yesterday, I was told that I now have the notoriety of being the first unmarried freshman given an off-campus apartment since Briggs Field, Jr., son of the wealthy patron of our Institute.

I hope the lesson to be learned is clear to all: eat sensibly, make no uncertain moves, and at all costs avoid Ruben Sandwiches—with or without.

Anything CAN DRAW

EXERCISE 1

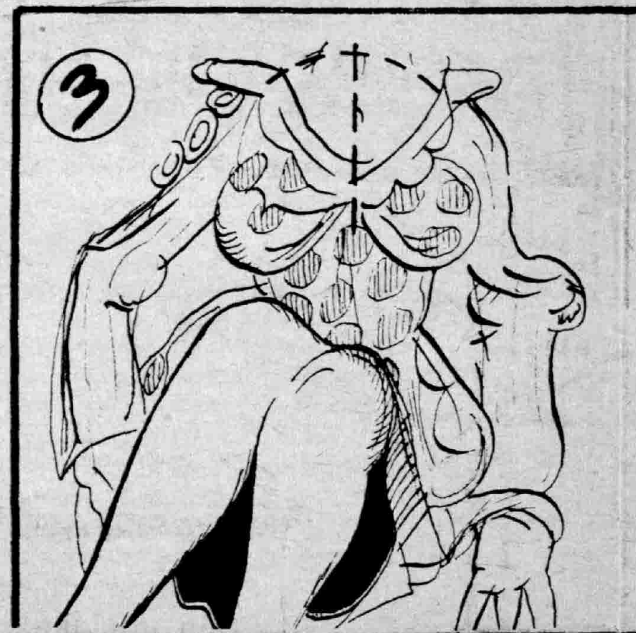


Try this one without compass or ruler!

Don't let anyone tell you it doesn't take talent—and lots of it!—to make it as a cartoonist. But sometimes you can get by for months, or even years, just on a couple of simple tricks that anyone can learn.

For example, in Exercise 1, you can see that even the most complex figure-drawing is nothing more than a couple of easy steps, made up of simple basic curves and ovals.

The most difficult aspect for the beginner is keeping faces recognizable as they turn from side to front to side again. Exercise 2 shows how to use a standard graph to make it easy and straightforward.



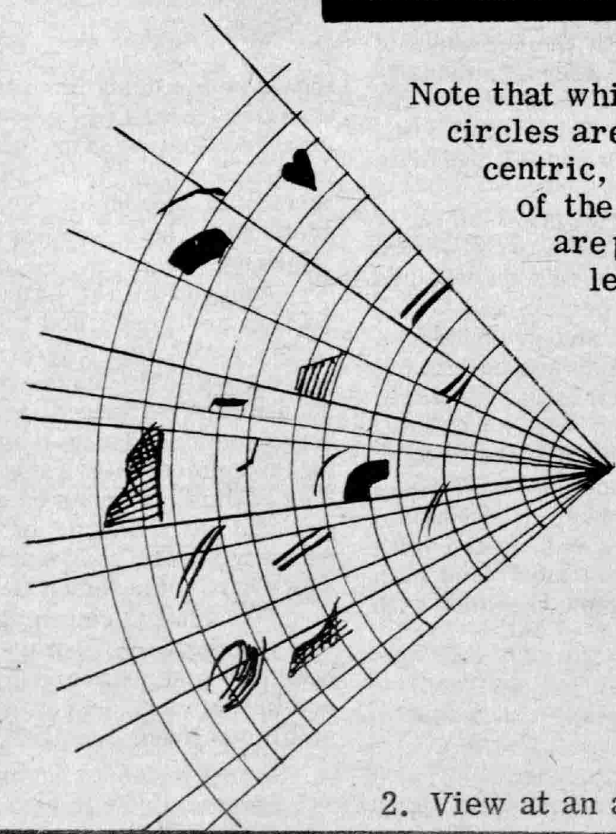
YOUR TOOLS OF THE "TRADE"...

THE PENCIL--

AND PAPER--

AND INK!

Note that while the circles are concentric, none of the lines are parallel, or skew!

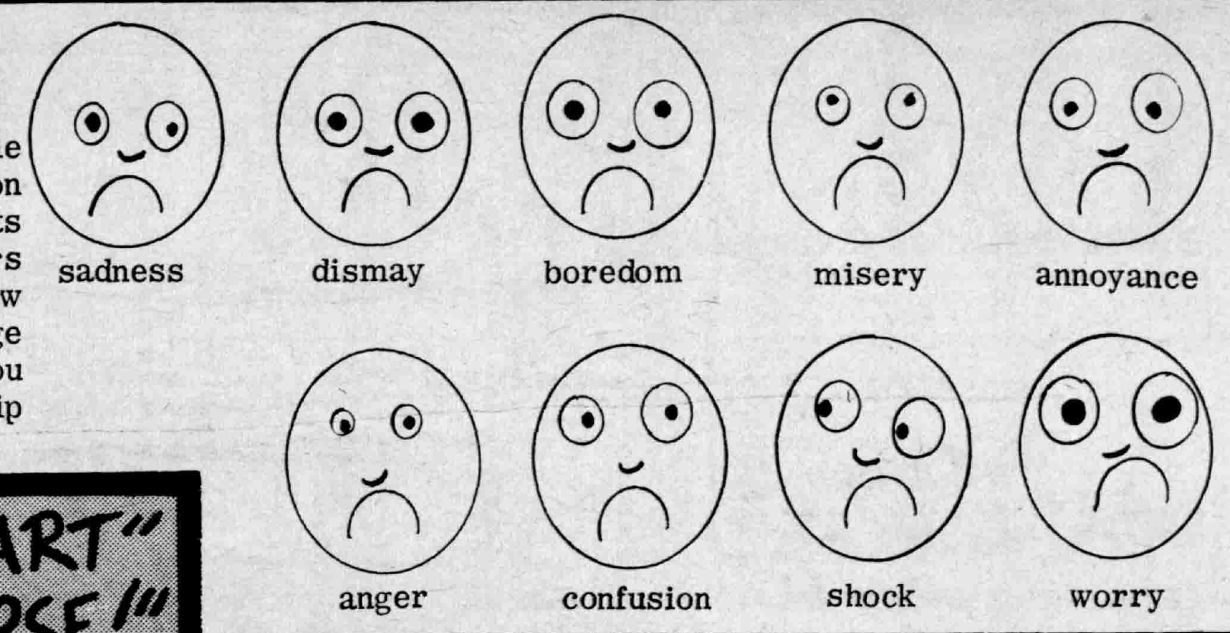


1. View from the front.

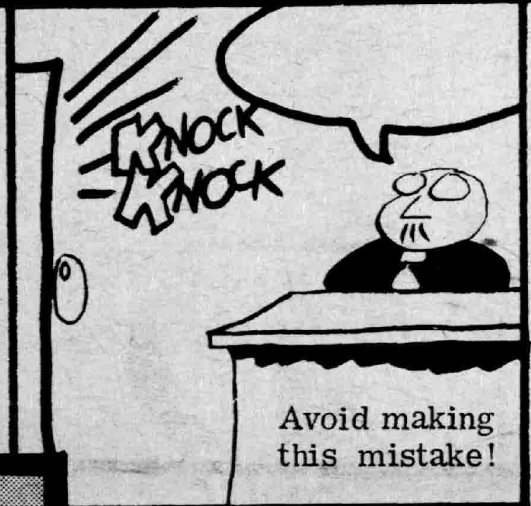
2. View at an angle.

REMEMBER--

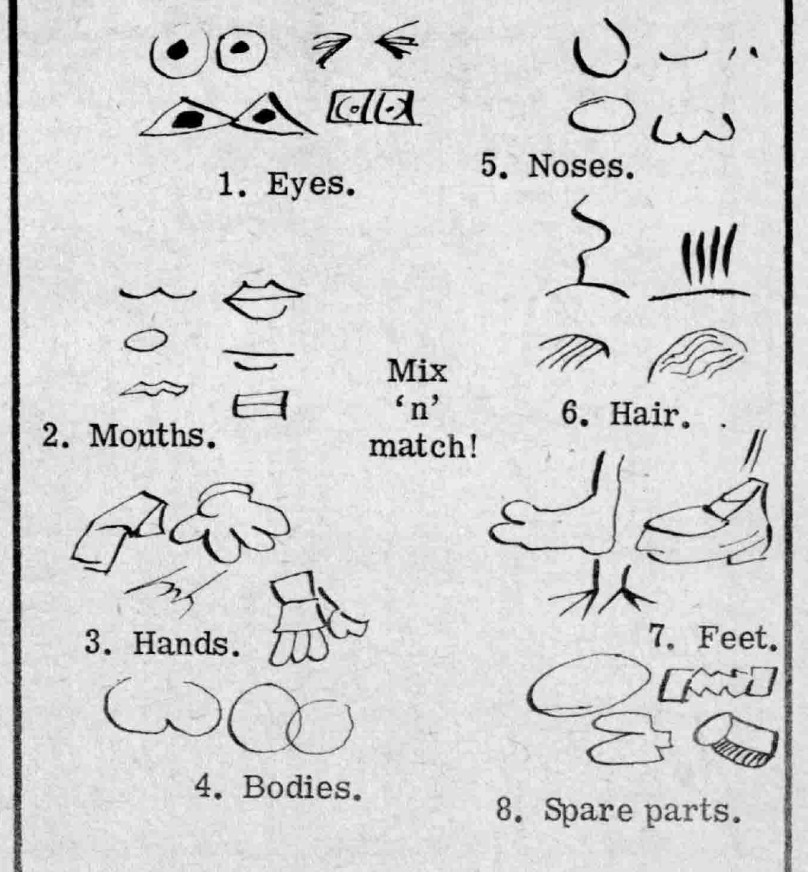
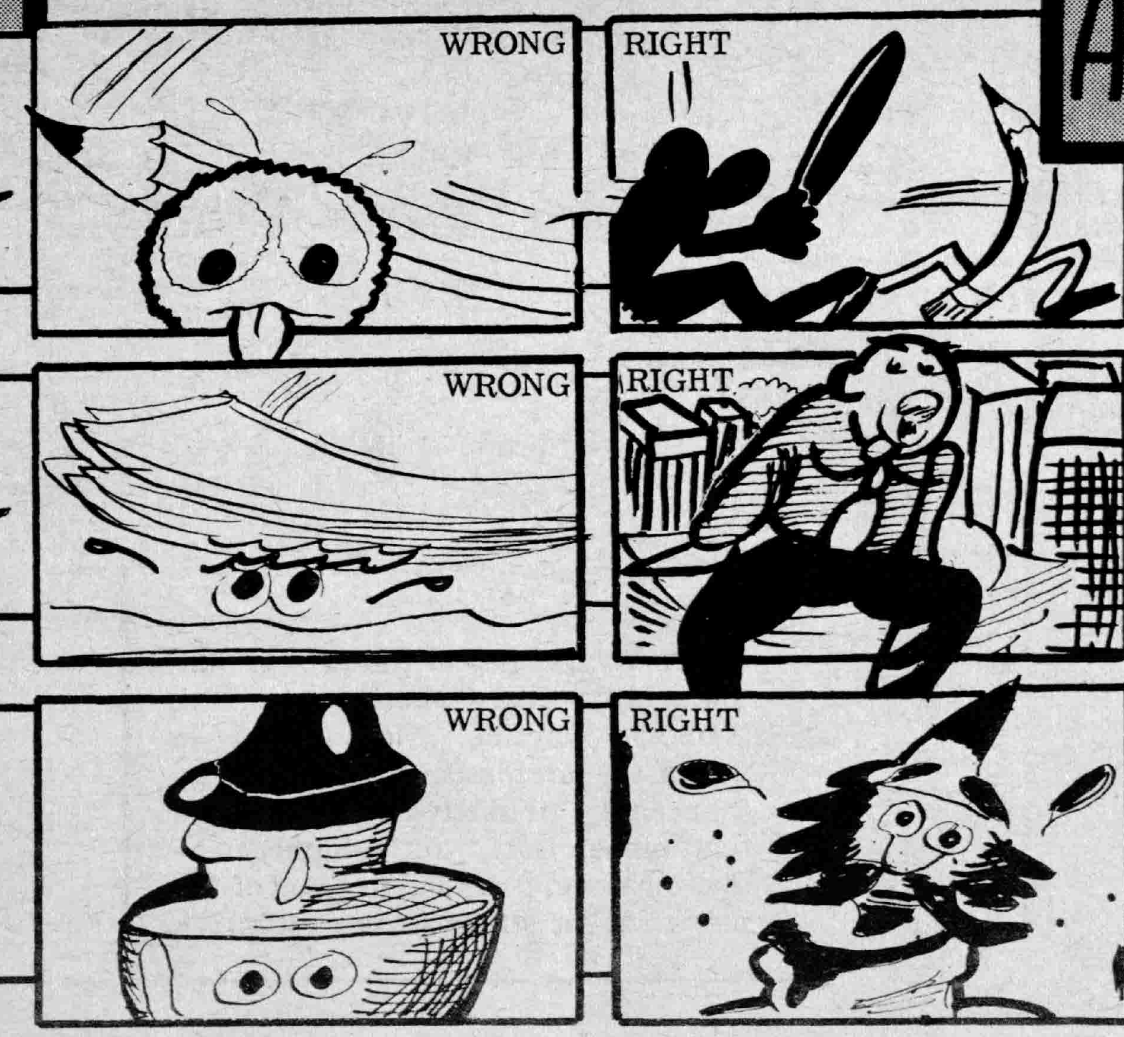
The human face is a subtle thing. You can change expression as easily as a car can change its tires—and so can the characters you draw! These examples show just some of the incredible range of emotions and expressions you can give to your "comic-strip actors."



DON'T PUT THE "CART" BEFORE THE "HORSE!"



ANATOMY



1. Eyes.

5. Noses.

2. Mouths.

6. Hair.

3. Hands.

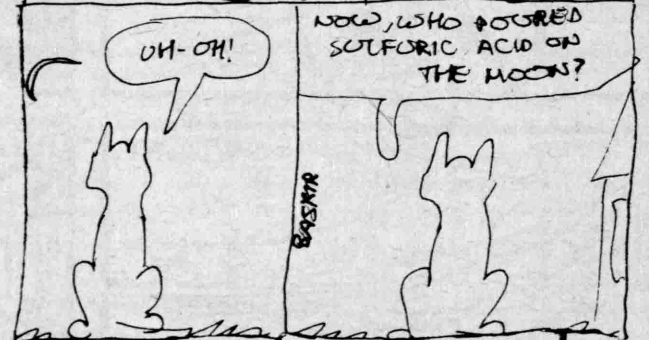
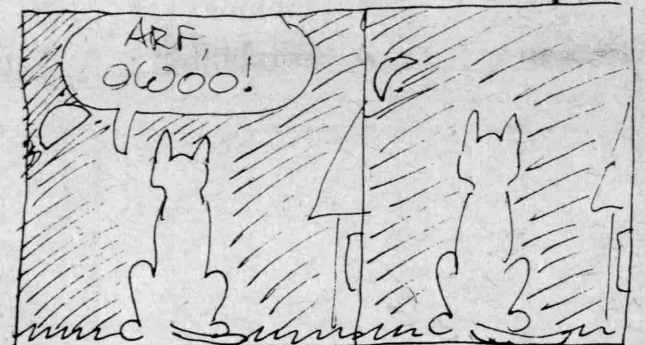
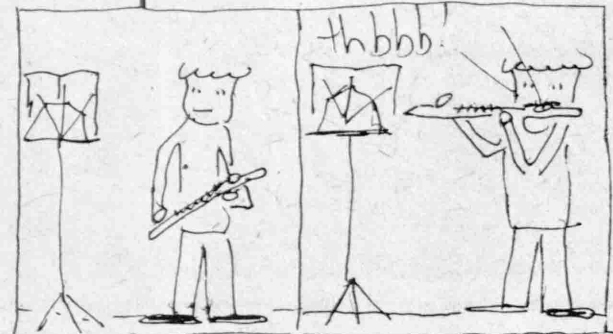
7. Feet.

4. Bodies.

8. Spare parts.

Mix 'n' match!

THE PAST



These strips depict the growth and maturation that takes place with time and practice. Note the way in which the strips develop as they go from early, primitive style and content (upper left), to the highly professional and polished product of the more recent strips (lower right).

THE FUTURE

dybo Stickle

HAVING LEFT THE PLANET OF PEPTO-BISMOL FAR BEHIND, LIIL'TNG AND CKL'I' FIND A VISITOR ON BOARD...

HI! I'M CALLED CSTII'KLZ! I STOWED AWAY ON YOUR SHIP BECAUSE I LOVE TO GO TRAVELING!

WHO IS THAT OBNOXIOUS ONE?

AND SO, PROPERLY CHASTIZED IN THE CLEANSING UNIT, CSTII'KLZ LEARNS TO REFRAIN FROM SPEAKING...

BASKIR

Much as is done in television, the trend in the comics is toward consolidation and continuity of characters. Here is a prime example, as several different strips' characters meet for the first time, above.

Below, the strip begins to reach its stride. Note the standardization of size, as well as the clear-cut characterization. Following the adventure depicted here, the plot develops with several more strips added to the continuity.

YOU KNOW, LIIL'TNG, I THINK WE WERE SUPPOSED TO VEER LEFT AT THAT LAST ASTEROID!

NOW YOU'VE DONE IT, ENAMEL BRAINED IDIOT!

WE'RE IN S.G.S. SPACE!

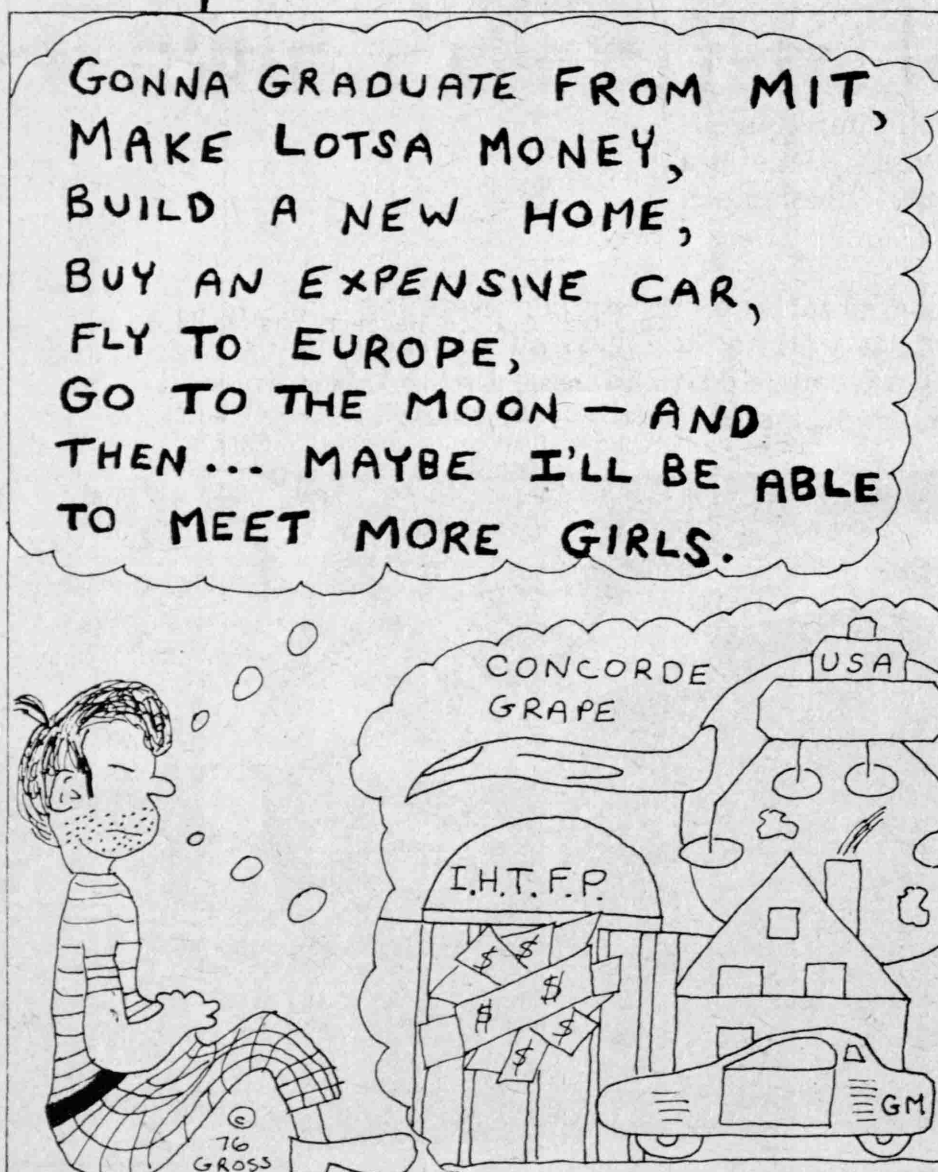
SIX! MY CRUISER WIPES OUT YOUR SCOUT SHIP!

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO OUR INTREPID HEROES?



CAN YOU DO BETTER?

These delightful comics are the result of a well-educated writer-artist returning to a primitive style by rejecting and/or ignoring everything that he knew about wit, and forgetting everything he knew about drawing.





MEMORIES OF A CATHOLIC HOOD

In second grade I wet my pants. I remember it quite clearly. I was sitting next to Ernest Guglielmo. We hated each other, so every year our desks were pushed together. It was Music Day, a Wednesday morning. We were in the middle of learning hymns for the May Procession when I knew I had to go to the bathroom.

Sister Marie Michelle was saying the lines to the song. We had to repeat them after her. Lucille Mauricio sat three rows away, but you could always hear her the best. Sister's voice droned on in that tone which I now realize only a nun's voice can achieve. It reprimanded us for nothing with every word. I thought it sounded Holy.

"Hail Holy Queen, Enthroned Above, O Maria." Our voices would echo back, imitating her tone in our high childish voices.

"Hail Holy Queen, Enthroned Above, O Maria." About this time I raised my hand and made the appropriate noise for a second grader at St. Maria Goretti School who wanted to get the teacher's attention. It was a sort of hissing noise which sounded like an abbreviated form of the word "sister." It always worked. If you did it long enough, the "S-s-s-t, S-s-s-s-t" would elicit some response. On this particular occasion, I wasn't having much luck. I tried waving my arm and leaning forward onto my desk. I decided to give the noise another try.

"S-s-s-t, S-s-s-s-t!" The second noise was always longer than the first. It worked this time.

"Miss O'Connell, what is the problem?" Until I reached fourth grade, I thought all Catholic girls were baptized with the name Miss in front of the other names. I guess I got lost in the thrill of the moment. I was so relieved to be acknowledged that I forgot to answer. Sister repeated her question, "Miss O'Connell, what

is the problem?" I hadn't exactly considered my need to urinate a problem up until this point.

"Sister, may I go to the lavatory?"

"Just sit quietly in your seat until we've finished learning our Hymns to the Blessed Mother."

I sat down next to Ernest. He had a mole next to his ear, right where his ear lobe connected to the side of his head. Ernest liked to chew little balls of the yellow, lined paper that we used for Penmanship. After roughly five minutes of watching the mushy ball of paper make its flash appearances between Ernest's front teeth, my insides were starting to get all tight and nervous.

All I could think about was the lavatory, the blue stalls, and the funny little locks on the

doors that Colleen Haggerty had taught me how to use in the first grade, and the smell of the yellow soap in those squirt things, and the crunchy folded squares of school toilet paper. I thought about the wonderful feeling that would come, and wondered if I'd have to wait so long that all the pressure would be gone. It would take a delightfully long time if the pressure was gone. That happened sometimes.

Ernest was a perceptive little bastard. He must have noticed that my mind was miles away from "Bring Flowers of the Rarest." He began to torment me in his smelly-breathed little whisper.

"You gotta go to the bathroom. You gotta go to the bathroom." I squirmed uncomfortably in my seat. I tried shifting my weight around and squeezed to hold it in. My eyelids and neck felt sweaty. I could think of nothing but the sound of urine piddling into the toilet water. Again I raised my hand.

"Miss O'Connell, don't ask me to go to the

bathroom again!" I pulled my hand down quickly and pressed it in between my knees. I spent the next few minutes thinking about nuns and bathrooms and the bums they had under those black habits. It was very funny to think about those things.

Sister was standing behind the black podium with the gold cross on the front of it. We were all done with memorizing the lines. She began teaching us the tunes, singing one line at a time in her high nasal singing voice. When she sang she always put her left hand inside the big white cardboard part of her habit which covered and protected her chest. My eldest sister, Jayna, had once said that she played with her breasts under there. At the time, I remember thinking that Jayna's theory was absurd. My parents had been angry because Jayna had relayed the idea to me and my best friend Leslie. Everyone got so mad that Father Delaney had to come the house one night. He taught me that my initials were K. C.

While Sister fiddled inside her habit and sang lines I tried to distract myself from the urgency of my situation by staring at the Bosco the Bear head bank which sat on Sister's desk holding the mission money. Mostly it was pennies. Anything else was put in by Karen Rapoza. Her grandmother still walked her to the cross-walks at Smithfield Ave., and came to get her with an umbrella on rainy days.

While I tried to think of anything but the lavatory, Ernest persisted in tormenting me, this time resorting to p-s-s-s-s-ing noises. His breath smelled like a musty old magazine I'd found in my Aunt Kath's garage. I wondered about what Ernest had eaten for breakfast. He wouldn't stop making the pissing noise, so I tried to fight back with some superior knowledge.

"Girls don't make that noise, Ernest. It doesn't sound like that," I whispered. Ernest only had a brother in the fourth grade who everyone called "Mental Guggie." I figured it was safe to assume that Ernest didn't know much about female genitals. Besides, if he challenged me, I had the first hand experience of having taken baths with my brother Bobby. He had all different stuff on the front and it really did sound a little different when he urinated.

By this time I was sweating. I can remember feeling shaky and ill with nervousness. I was about to raise my hand again, in great fear of being refused again by sister, when Ernest firmly stuck one end of his wooden ruler in my stomach. I let out a wild little yelp. I sounded like an animal. Everyone turned to see who had screamed in the middle of "O Mary We Crown Thee With Blossoms Today."

"What is going on back there, Mr. Guglielmo?"

I didn't wait for Ernest to answer. I jumped up and blurted out something about how I couldn't wait any longer. When my body stood up, the rest came down. My bladder poured forth its contents. I think I died for a brief moment. All I remember was Ernest lifting his feet onto his chair. Looking down, I saw my maroon knee socks grow darker. My urine ran onto the floor, making a glaring greenish puddle on the waxed blue tiles of the linoleum floor. I don't remember anyone snickering, although I'm sure they must have. I don't think I heard anything.

Suddenly it was over. I looked up, feeling the cold dampness of my socks and underpants.

I was directed down the aisle and headed toward the door. Out in the dark corridor, I stood motionless with my back up against the coolness of the wall. I pushed my bare elbows into the wall and concentrated on not crying. Sister was only a few steps behind. She told me to move away from the Honor Roll which hung on the wall above my head. After staring at me for about fifteen seconds, Sister Marie Michelle grabbed me by the shoulders and shook me until her anger had subsided.

I never saw anyone look so ugly. Her skin was a sickly white with pink blotches all over her cheeks. An EXIT light at the end of the corridor cast a red light on her face to add to her ugliness. Little chunks of apple pie crust sat in the corners of her watery, colorless eyes and as her nostrils flared wide I noticed a million black wet hairs that I had never seen before. She had no hair for all I could see; just a black veil on her head and a curved white thing on her forehead. It looked like it had been cut out of the bottom half of a clorox bottle.

Sister Marie Michelle walked toward the fourth grade, leaving me to contemplate my fate and feel the cold flesh on my wet legs. I wanted to get dry somehow, but I couldn't even touch myself. I discovered that the moisture which

"When I tried to think of anything but the lavatory, Ernest persisted in tormenting me, this time resorting to p-s-s-s-s-ing noises."

had run into my shoes made a wonderful squishing noise when I scrunched up my toes, or when I lifted my foot very slowly and then squished it down hard.

I played at this game for what seemed an eternity. I heard my brother Bobby's voice. When I looked up, I saw Sister Michelle approaching with Bobby and Sister Mary Clotild, the principal. I was both relieved and embarrassed to see my brother. Bobby was nine and knew how to make nuns smile.

"Robert, you'll have to walk your sister home. She had an accident in front of the whole class."

I liked Sister Clotild until she told my brother. She had gone to school with my mother when they were still girls. My sister got in trouble once for telling everyone in her grade that Sister Clotild's real name was Elizabeth Quirk. Every once in a great while, my sister and I would become amazingly silly late at night and laugh at Elizabeth Quirk's picture which was in my mother's high school yearbook. When I needed my sister's approval, I'd grab that book, point to the picture and laugh hysterically. My sister usually told me to shut up.

I could never understand why Elizabeth

Quirk's picture was only funny when my sister wanted it to be funny. All of these thoughts were swimming through my head while Bobby and the two nuns stood before me. They were talking. I'm not sure if they had been talking to me the whole time. My ears zoomed in on Sister Clotild's voice.

"Why didn't you ask Sister if you could go to the lavatory? There is no excuse for a seven year old girl who still wets herself for attention. No excuse."

She made it sound so awful. I knew I didn't want to be recognized among my peers as a pee-er, but I couldn't say a word in my defense. Sister Marie Michelle demanded that I answer Sister Clotild. I was in the middle of contemplating how I would explain that I had twice asked permission to go to the lav, and twice been refused, when Sister Marie Michelle's hand deposited a quick hard slap on my left cheek.

I knew then that I should never have stolen Margaret-Mary Belliveau's dessert. I thought I was dead. A slap in the face can be shattering to one who has so recently urinated in front of a room full of people.

"Kathleen O'Connell, you never asked to be excused," Sister told me. For a brief moment, she was most convincing. Bobby was embarrassed. I could tell by the way he chewed on the lip. I wanted desperately to save myself.

"I did ask you," I said, "I asked to be excused." I waited for another slap. It came, only it was pleasantly warm, tingling all the way over to my ear.

"Sister, she isn't telling the truth," Sister Michelle said to Sister Clotild. It was decided that a first hand witness should be brought into the case and into the darkness of the corridor. Sister Clotild went into Room 2 and came back with Patty Roderick.

Patty Roderick had been an Angel at last year's First Holy Communion. Her uniform blouses were as white as my grandmother's sheets and the sleeves were as crisp as hosts. Her school tie was always on straight and her belt was never unbuttoned. Sister once told the whole class that Patty's mother had said that Patty was a wonderful help with her baby brother. The clincher, however, was that Patty Roderick's knee socks never fell down. You had to trust a girl whose knee socks never fell down.

"Patricia, did Kathleen ask Sister Marie Michelle for permission to go to the lavatory?"

"Yes, Sister, she asked three times."

I knew I had only asked twice, but I wasn't about to argue. Sister told Bobby to go get his jacket. "Everything is all settled," she said. Patty was dismissed. Bobby went for his jacket. Sister Clotild walked toward the tunnel to the Convent. I stayed where I was, my head barely touching the Honor Roll.

Sister Marie Michelle stood in front of me, staring. She didn't look angry or happy. She just looked. I didn't find her face ugly anymore. It was just a face.

"Go get your coat," she said quietly.

I turned toward the room and whispered, "You're a nun. You're a nun and you tell lies." I never knew if she heard me. If she did, she didn't say anything. My mother let me chop up little pieces of green olive to put in our tunafish sandwiches for lunch. I gave one Yodel to Maureen Hannaway at recess the next day. I guess everyone forgot that I wet my pants.

VOODOO



— Βαρελότο κρατάς; Πέταξέ το γρήγορα!..

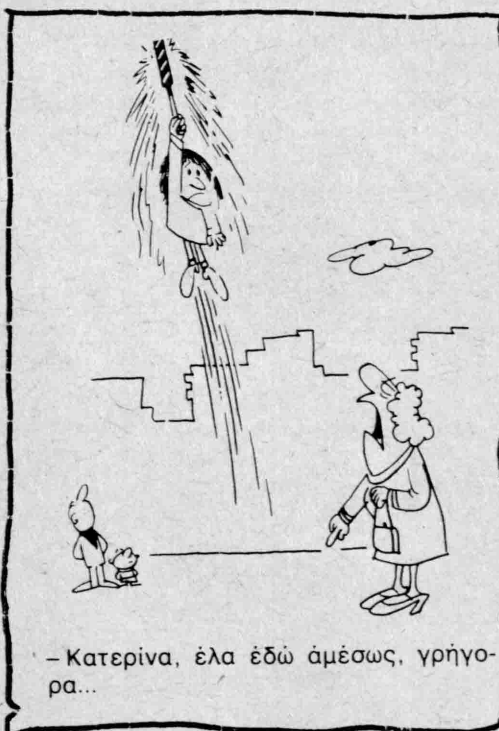
HUMOR THE UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE



— Πρόσεχε, πρόσεχε. Στην πίσω τσέπη έχει βαρελότο!..



— Έκτός από λαμπάδες, έχω και τρακα-τρούκες, αν θέλετε...



— Κατερίνα, έλα εδώ άμέσως, γρήγο-ρα...



— Βάρδα, φουρνέλο!..



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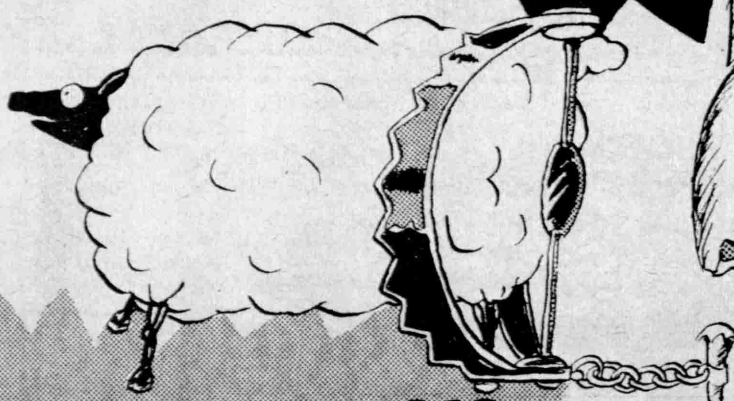
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QUITE...



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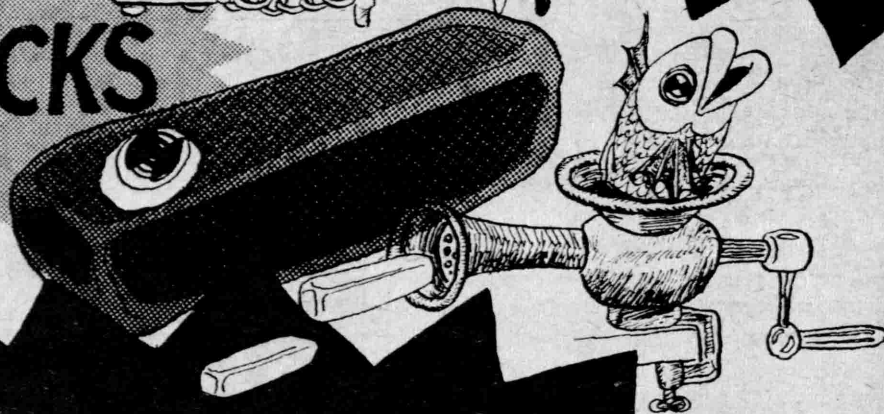
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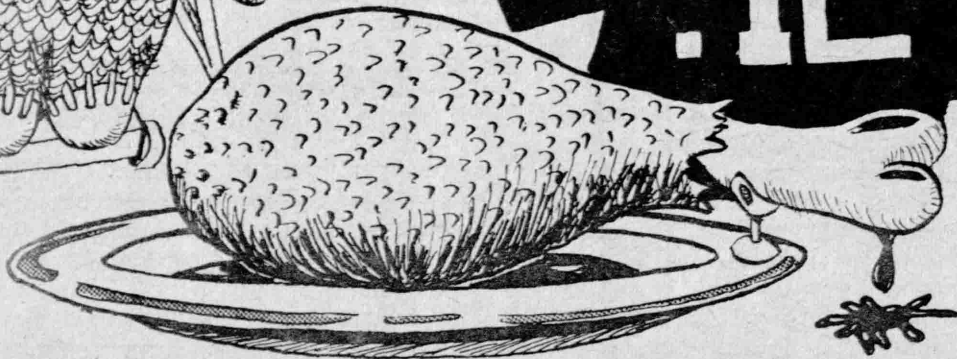
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