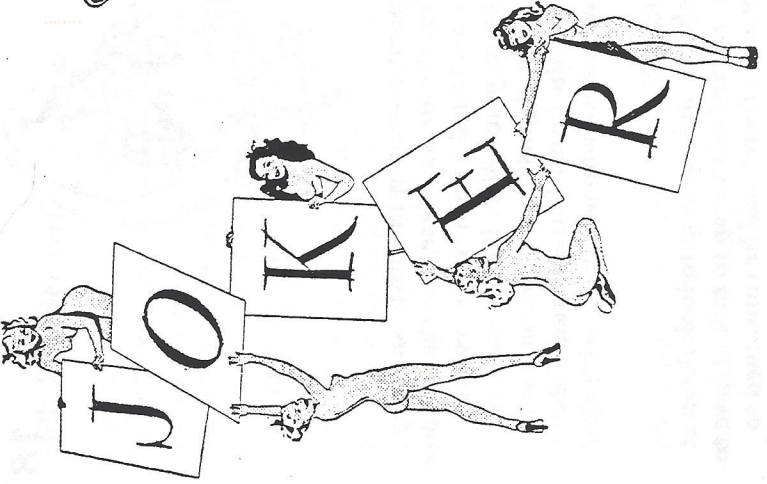
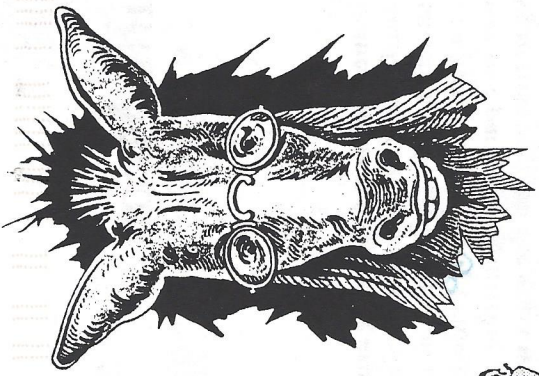
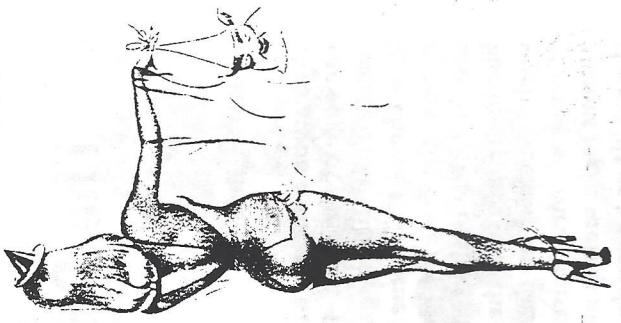
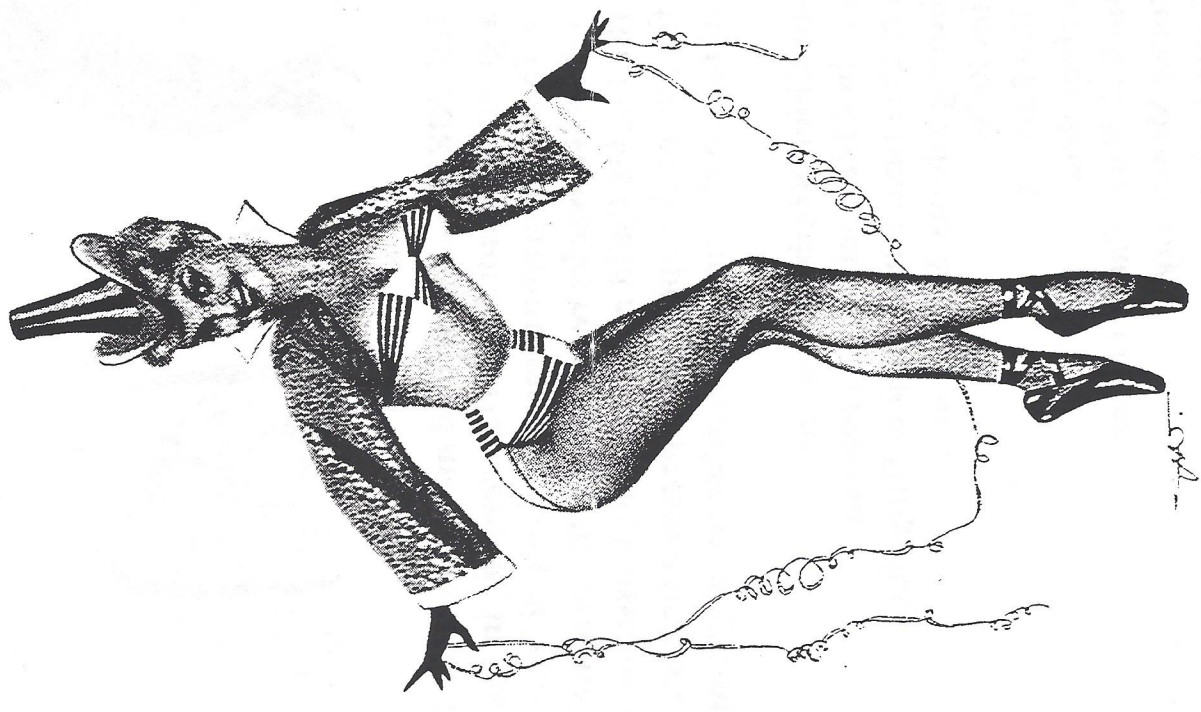


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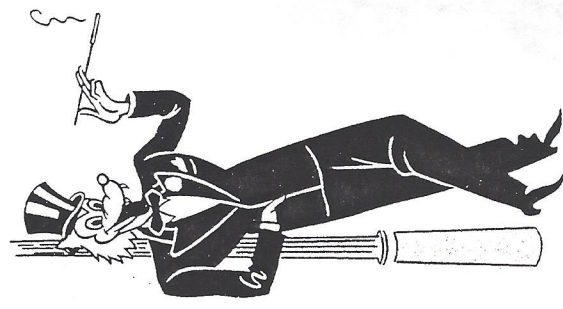
\$1.99
Cheap!

JOKER



The Fooles Guild
2108 Loma Vista Drive
Los Angeles, CA 90039

Daniel Singer
669 E Villa Street
Pasadena, CA 91101



LITE BOOKS

Madame Bovary LITE
 Madame B., dissatisfied with her lot in life, goes on a shopping spree. Later, she returns everything but a hat.



Anna Karenina LITE
 Anna K., a married woman, has a date with a Count Vronsky. He moves away, and they never see each other again.



THE JOKER is the official mouthpiece of The Fooles Guild, a group of kindred spirits, reveling in the mirth and wisdom of folly. Contributions are gladly accepted; all rights to published works remain with the original authors. The Fooles Guild and THE JOKER assume no responsibility for any of the opinions expressed herein. In fact, we're not responsible for anything!

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- Billy Barrett
- Jeffrey Briar
- Buck & Mug- Paula Foster
- Rocky McMurray
- Diane Laskin
- Jack Albee
- Rigerd Elveman
- Dario Benjamin

I SUS-SABIE!

Sex, Blood, Rock & Roll



Thank you for your continued financial support,
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 Or, like this favorite subscription received,
 tape 20 dimes to a five dollar bill!

More information? call Kimbellini
 310 394-7707





King Ding A. Ling (aka Rung out)

VOODOO for TODAY

Letters to the Editor:

Dear King-a-lingus,

Hope you are enjoying your reign'd' ridiculousity.

So regarding the Joker/Jester thing. Here is a story I wrote for the writing contest that you and I were the only respondents to/of and that issue never came out and eventually Ms. Bramble included half of the story in the Joker and that pissed me off because it ruined it and I was outraged. So she says she'll put the whole story in the next Joker and then the next Joker comes out and there is no sign of my story in it.

So the right hand doesn't know what the left hand is doing etc. One editor promises something and the next editor doesn't know anything about it. Looks like a bunch of fools are involved here...

Anyway, I would like the story to be published intact for chrisake.

So lets talk on the phone re this and other ways I can participate in Jokerster production.

Thank you for your time and did you know that your fly is open and your cock is hanging out?

Billius the Ex-King of the Jackanapes

Dear Billius:

You've joined a very select group of doctors who have switched to the technologically superior ProElectron, Inc. X-Ray 2000 system.

Your purchase marks you as someone on the leading edge of internal medicine. The enclosed certificate is an excellent way to display to your patients your commitment to their well-being.

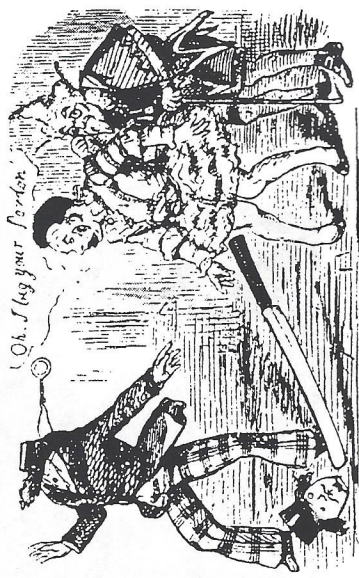
Thanks for choosing ProElectron, Inc.'s award-winning instruments. I'll call in a few weeks to see if you have any questions about your warranty or other fine ProElectron, Inc. products.

You will find your story in it's entire beauty here in this fabulous holiday issue of the Joker. So there.

- Extras count. A "certificate of commitment" advertises your name and is a constant reminder of your service.

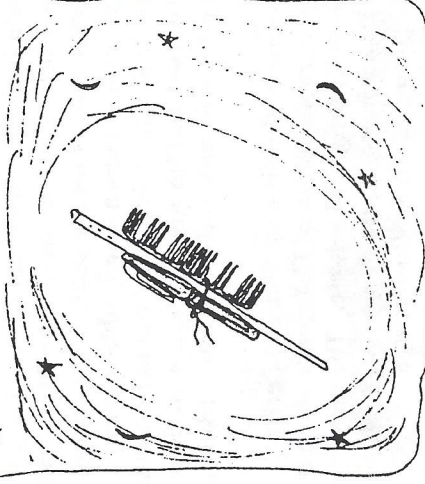
- Don't stop selling. Be supportive, and be available when the next buying decision will be made.

Sincerely,
Gidieous Maximus
p.s. Know it? I wrote it!



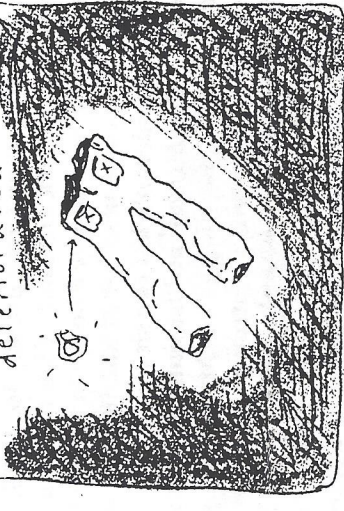
FOR GOOD HEALTH

Tie together a felt-tip pen, a chopstick, and a comb with seven missing teeth. Leave under couch.



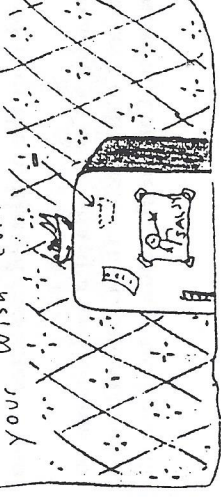
TO BECOME RICH

Crumple up a dollar bill and place it in the back left pocket of your favorite jeans. Wash and dry jeans until dollar has completely deteriorated.



TO MAKE SOMEONE FALL IN LOVE WITH YOU

In a food processor, combine 1 cup yogurt, 1/2 cup fabric softener, and a teaspoon of powdered after-dinner mints. Pour into Tupperware container and store in freezer until your wish comes true.



TO GET BACK AT SOMEONE

Without picking up the receiver, dial S-P-O-I-L-E-D-M-I-L-K on the telephone while thinking black thoughts about that person.



n. chort

FOOLES-

FOOLES- Who's up to what?/ Whatever happened to Whoozits? compiled by Billy Q. Barrett- Billy Q333@aol.com

King Dingaling aka Jeffrey Weissman was a big shit.. I mean a big hit at me Comdex Show in Las Vegas along with Derek Loughran and Billy Ex-Rex Scudder doing- dare I say it?!--MIME for Hitachi in November. His royal heiny can also be seen as an elf with Santa on an IBM commercial on your- dare I say it?!-- television. He continues appearing daily, it says here, at Universal as Charley-Groucho-Stan.

Wow, no wonder he's our King.

Billy Scudder was recently on Babylon 5 in fool regalia as Ambassador Hyac. Karla "Karlle" Drake Lusby met her husband Kevin in the fish meal hold of the biggest processing ship in the world (670 ft) the SS Ocean Phoenix and wa swed June 24, 1995 in much cleaner clothes. She quit fishing last year after 6 years on the boats and gave birth to son Zachary Lassen Lusby on July 30, 1996. The new mom runs a small rubber-stamp business, Ivy Creek Arts, out of her home just outside Seattle & is diggin' the mom thang. Kev & Karlle hope to buy a house in the next year or two, but for now are happy in their condo. You can e-mail her at KandKLusby@aol.com. A return to the theatah is likely as soon as the adorable kid can sit up.

Rocky Ex-Rex McMurray just finished the last episode of the sit-com "Almost Perfect" and got to utter the tag line of the entire series. The venerable Sultan of Flatulence also played the part of a disgruntled patron in "Townies", the Molly Ringwald vehicle. The only Fool's Guild luminary to ever bowl a perfect game has a DJ business, Porta-Party that is really taking off. New state-of-the-art high tech Karoke (pronounced Ka-Ro-Kay not Kerry-Okie) and real microphones. No wonder he doesn't need hair.

Adam Ex-Rex Long is alive and well in London with son and spousal unit, performing in none other than the Reduced Shakespeare Company. The master of the bad wig and 108 (vaudeville term for standing back flip to one's butt) can be e-mailed at 10033.744@compuserve.com.

Closer to home, Uncle Dave Ex Rex Springhorn has put together a holiday treat for all of us to enjoy. On Dec. 21 at 8pm at John Bull Pub in Pasadena, Master Springhorn is transforming said pub into Mad Sal's Ale House to present a highly entertaining "low class" Music Hall entertainment ala great Dickens Faires 'o the past. The tickets are \$8 in advance and \$10 at the door (food and drink extry, of course). The show is a benefit for the Aids Service Center. Call 818 441-0187, Yay Dave!

Sandey "Bad Wizard" Grinn operates and speaks for the puppet character "Bram" on the USA Network's "Lost On Earth". The show premieres Jan 4, '97. Woo hoo!

Grainger Esch, former Ringling Clown and current Lou Wow and the Poi Boys drummer has perhaps reached the pinnacle of show biz glory playing the part of a Giant Turkey in a routine with "Bozo, the world's Most Famous Clown" in a Shrine Circus in Evansville Indiana the last week in November. Graiger is also the human model for the animated character "Simon" in the CD ROM "video" game Flux.

Judy Kory is having her dream come true, she is teaching Commedia and Melodrama to receptive young minds at a Waldorf School in Northern California. The Grande Dame of Lazzi will be teaching improv, movement and comparing Commedia stylings to those of Warner Bros. cartoons. That's all folks.

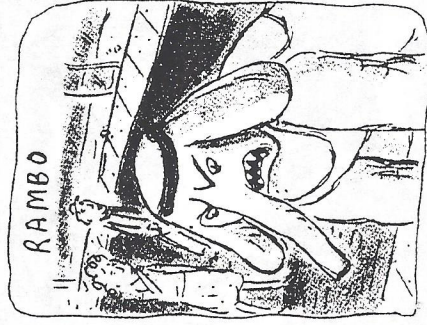
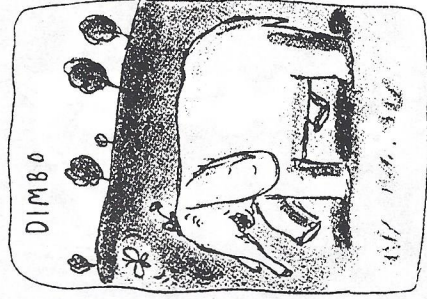
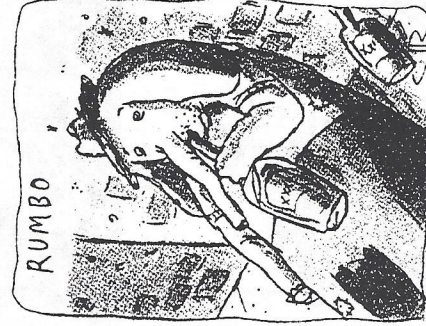
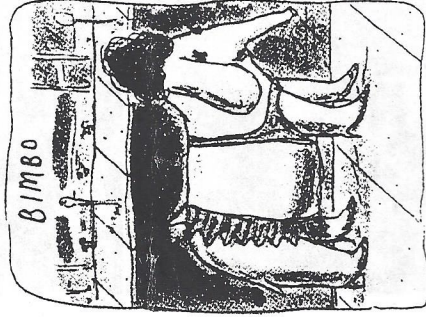


Jack Albee's Alley

Jack's words: Ferret out Barbra Striesand and tell her to stop chasing dumb men. I met her at a Christmas party while playing scrooge. Much as I like to lie, all I did was scrooge her. She was so meek and very shy (5' 4"). She apparently left early- too many bores and fawners (kissasses) I presume. Too many boneheads in a party of vipers.

THE BISHOP OF FOOLS WITH HIS DAUBLE

Dumbo's Distant Cousins



Phantasmagorical "Dead Clown Ball"

By Frivolous Ex-Rex

If you were there, you already know it was a stunning event. We were back at our old haunt of the Burbank Mooselodge, transformed this time (with the magic of Mackey and parachutes) into the midway of a macabre circus. Jack Tate, though not in attendance personally, contributed to the ambiance with his series of circus posters of Guild members as circus performers; Billy Barrett as a fire-eater, David Springhorn as Pagliacci and Jim and Jim as the Siamese Jims, etc. Thanks Jack!

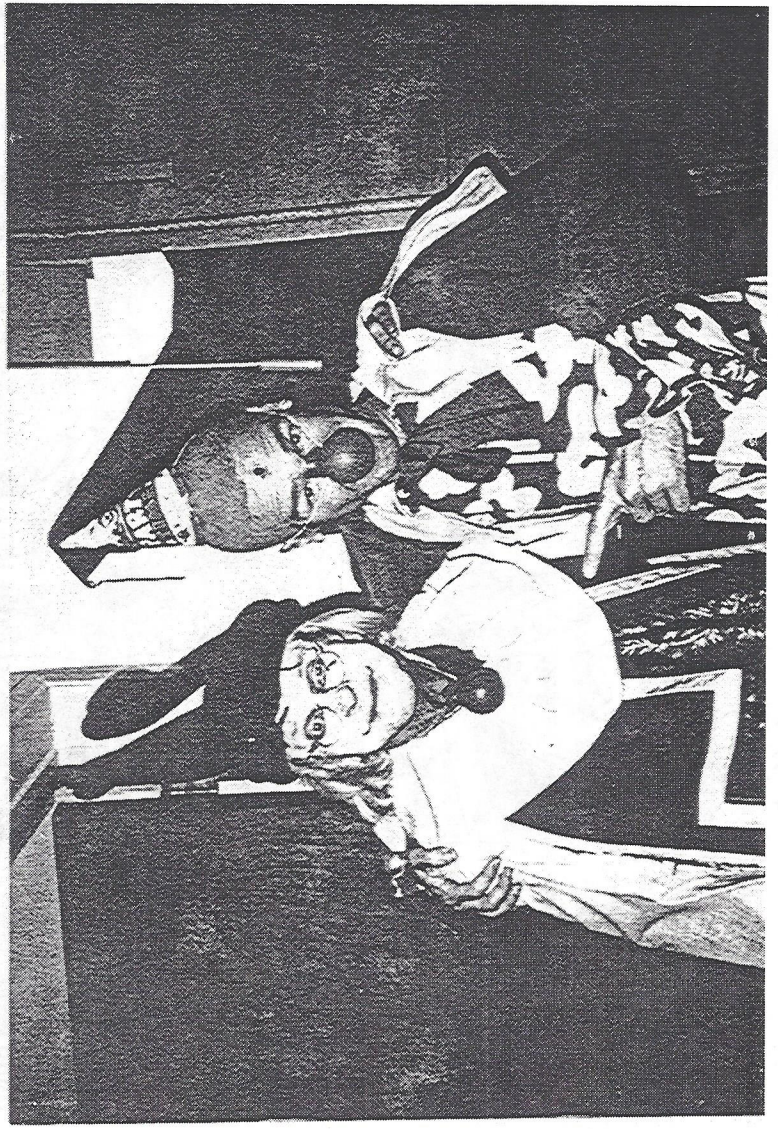
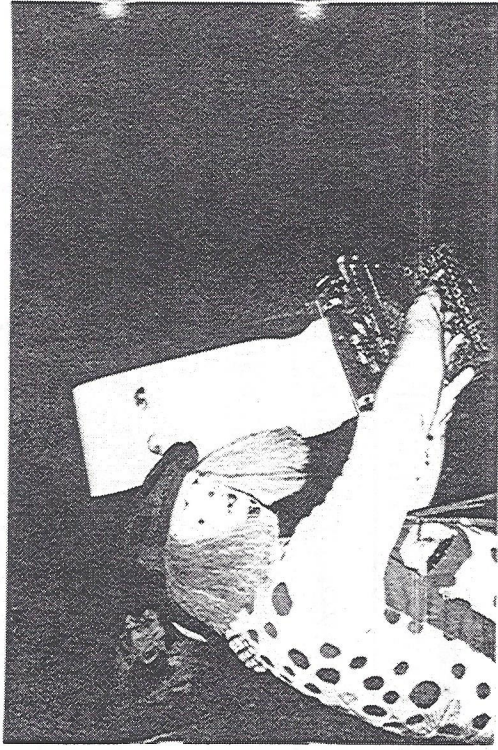
The food was lavish and appropriate; Marguerite oversaw kitchen production and demonstrated a sculptural hand with vegetables for a brilliant crudite centerpiece. Hot dogs, snow-cones, cotton candy, lemonade and popcorn were all gobbled up by moribund merry-makers. (Circus food- get it!)

Music was provided by Rocky for the taped portion of the evening and Ronnie Mack's band performed live for the balance. Even the most persnickety among us (me) was pleased with their mix of covers of rock tunes. We were able to rhumba, swing and generally shake our collective and individual booty quite successfully.

Costumes included the prizewinning Dario and Kristen (awarded a way-cool engraved flask shaped like a coffin!) as Evil Ringmaster and Bearded Lady respectively. Several clowns had been the victims of recent assaults and still bore the wounds; one mime had a knife still sticking into him. Our personal favorite was a man with a typewriter at his belt and a sheet of paper transforming him into a Ghostwriter. Everyone looked fabulous as befits our organization.

Lastly, the entertainment during King Ding-a-lings Circus- in a word- Great! First, Jack Albee officiated at a memorial service for deceased clowns and we all participated by invoking the names of honored dead. Mackey mimed, Billy Barrett pyrotechniqued and sang a hilarious song of his own composition, Tuba amazed all with his plate-spinning and juggling, Siouxashe as Little Egypt danced delightfully, and lastly the Morgan family performed a contortionist act. A small box was carried onto the stage, a small box. Out of it was tumbled a limp doll, a lifeless toy that was then bent and wrapped and twisted in various impossible ways. Finally, after numerous indignities had been visited upon this object of amusement, both legs were grasped and the two assistants ran around the table in opposite directions- several times. Everyone gasped as one because the doll was not a lifeless lump, but Bonnie Morgan in her alter-ego (She'd attended the party as the Mad Hatter). Kudos to the whole Morgan clan for making us squirm.

The Great Kimbellini is to be lauded and lavished with overblown praise for her directorial skills at managing the party. Next time, however, we have to help Kimbell and Jeffrey watch the door so they can party too!



The Foole's Guild
&
King Ding-a-Ling

Cordially invite you to ring in

THE NEW YEAR

Dinner/Dancing
Beer/Wine/Soft Drinks
Champagne Toast

Live
"Guys & Dolls"
Revue
Door Prizes

Royal Flush
Supper Club

Tuesday, December 31, 1996
8:30 PM

Hollywood
Women's Club
1749 N. La Brea
between
Hollywood and
Franklin

Tickets: \$25 (advance)
\$32 (door)
Reserved Seating (8 per table)

For reservations
call Rocky 213-663-7562

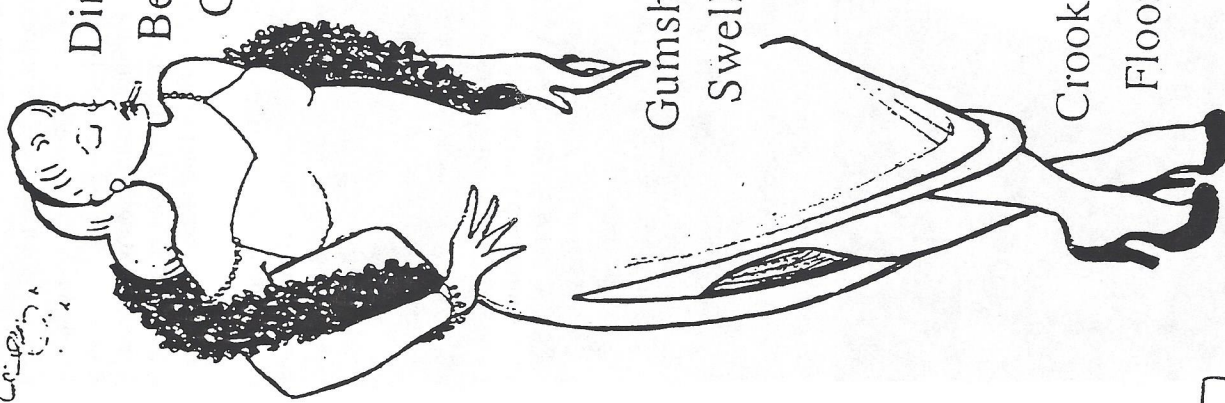
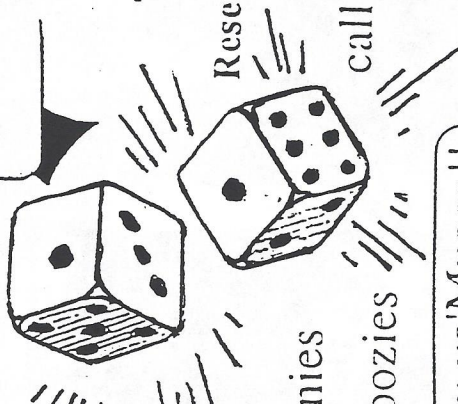
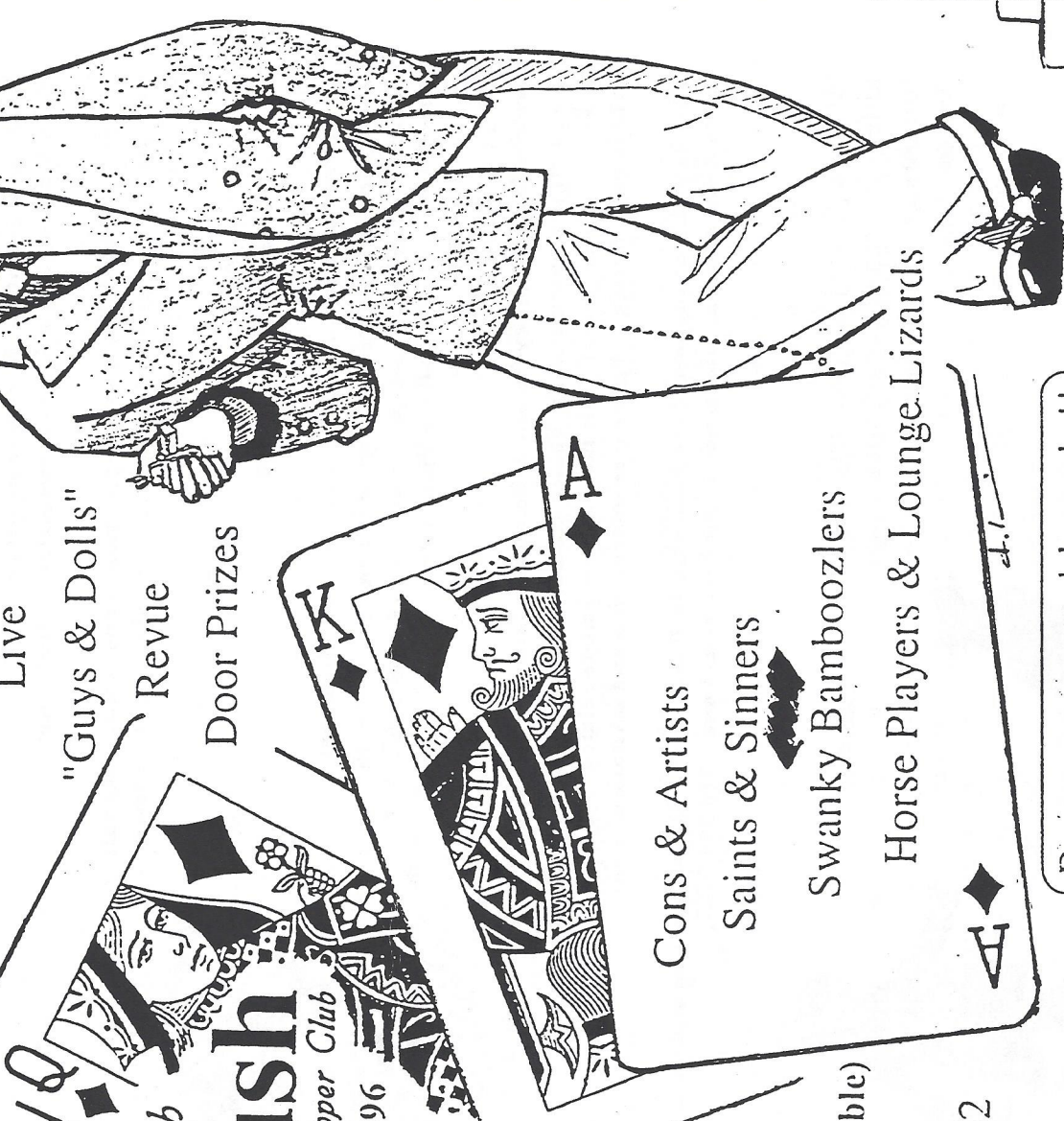
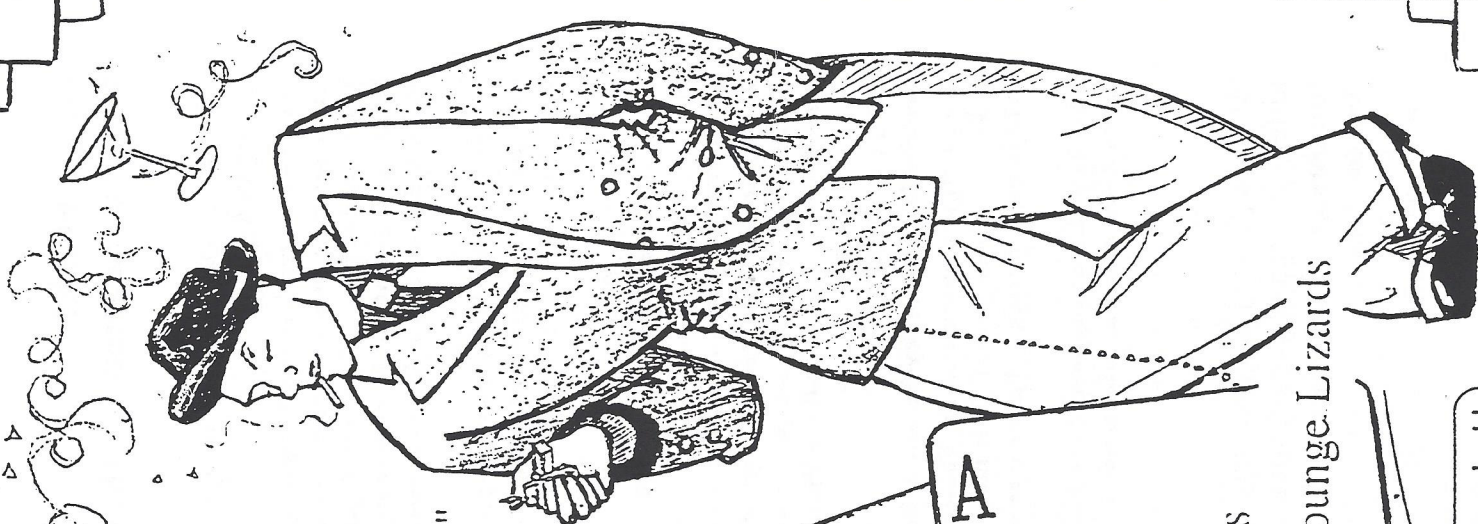
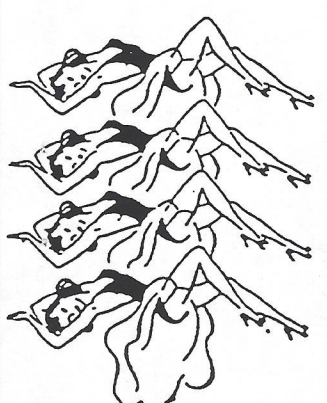
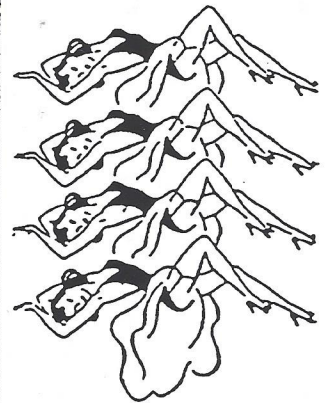
Gumshoes & Gamblers
Swells & Gangsters

Crooks & Grannies
Floozies & Doozies

Call Now ya'Muggs!!

Cons & Artists
Saints & Sinners
Swanky Bamboozlers
Horse Players & Lounge Lizards

Reserve your table early!!



Breakfast in Hell or Turn Your Head and Kafka

by Billy Q. Barrett

Greg Proctor woke up on morning to find he had changed into a hideous freak. He had been yanked out of sleep by the sound of his own snoring. A deep mocking chortle of a snore. "Odd," he thought. "I don't snore". Greg, model citizen, man's man, GQ, Details, proper yet "hip" went to scratch his nose. Wait a minute. This wasn't his nose. This was a big gross spongy red thing. What the hell was going on? He sat up in bed with a start only to focus on two huge protusions at the foot of the bed. Feet? He jerked off the covers to reveal two gargantuan brown and white wing-tips that could only be described as *big old clown shoes!* Now that the covers were off other strangenesses were apparent. Bright purple and yellow checked pants of the baggy variety. A red and white long sleeved shirt under a paisley vest and yellow gloves with the fingers cut out.

"What the hell?" he thought, but what he heard himself say in a high-pitched nasal whine was: "Yike-a-rooney!"

"Who the fuck was that?" he thought, but it came out of his big painted mouth as "Holy Guacamole, Yowweee!" He scrambled to his humongous feet, stumbled across the floor in a frenzied panic and lurched to his full length mirror.

"Oh my god", he thought to say as he skidded to stop in front of the looking glass but what reached his ears was: "Well I'll be a blue-nosed gopher!" But he wasn't, he was a red-nosed green-haired, bg-shoed clown. Disgust and terror washed over him as he saw himself, a big goofy joke of an oaf. A ridiculous pitiful freak. A clown. This must be some sick gag. Was he

drunk last night? Think. No, he just had one drink on the way home, watched the game on ESPN, worked on the proposal, and went to bed. "Oh, this is bullshit". He tried to yank off the green wig. "Ouch." All attempts at removing the make up and costume failed. It was as if the bizarre appurtenances were fused to his very being. "Damn it, I don't have time for this crap." Or as he heard it, "Golly Wolly, I don't want to be late, late, late!!!" He thought to himself, silently. All right if this is a dream, I'll wake up. If it's a gag I'll kick whomever's butt is responsible. I just can't afford to miss this meeting. Focus. Damage control. He tried covering the clown suit with a dapper overcoat but the second the Armani settled on the motley, 'Boom!', the coat exploded and disintegrated.

"This is too weird. I've got to cancel." He grabbed the phone and speed dialed his office, or was it his partner's cell phone, or his bosses pager? Panic once again set in as he realized that the lucidity of his thoughts was retreating rapidly, like a circus crowd running from an escaped elephant.

"Greg", said the voice on the line. "I was just going to call you, the meeting's been moved up. Meet us at Chez Omelet on Main in fifteen minutes. Don't be late. This is big, Mr. Bla, bla from bla bla bla is going to be there. We're a shoe in to cement the deal. This is big Gregory boy. We don't want to blow this. See you in fifteen. Oh, and for christ's sake don't forget the proposal. Ciao." Click.

"Okey dokey, chokey blockey. I mean fine. I'll just go and hope that I can figure out how to deal with this on the way over." He started out the door. "Whoopsie doodle. Can't forget Mr. Proposalini." He turned to pick up his black leather briefcase but as soon as he lifted it off the floor it transformed into an overstuffed battered suitcase plastered with stickers; a pair

Guild Flash! Vital Information for Those Who Wish to Participate!

Dec 7, Saturday 9am-4pm
YARDSALE

One persons trash is another persons' treasure!
Come see for yourself... many items to select from...
Much needed proceeds direct to guild coffers...
Donations, visitations & moral support accepted...
927 4th Street, Santa Monica (Between Idaho & Washington)

NEW YEAR'S EVE Party preparation is under way. Dingaling could sure use your support with setup, security, show and teardown. VOLUNTEERS? 310 394-7707.

Deadline for submissions for the next issue of the JOKER - Feb. 29

The Thyme is upon us (and the succulents, and flowers)!

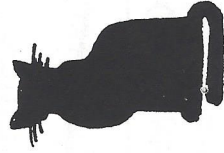
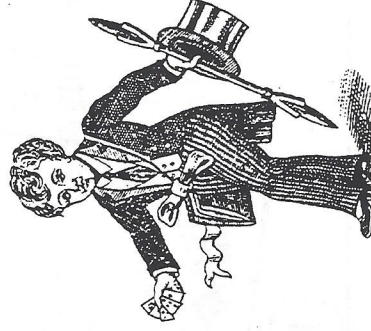
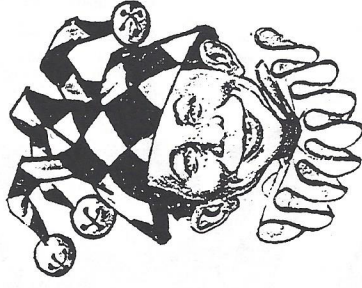
The Guild propagation project is a success, and with your donations of ceramic pots and bowls, it can be more so...
March 15th is the date for the Plant Sale...

TO BE ANNOUNCED:

Princes Boinky-boinky-boinky & Boioioing(aka Nick & Spence) are plotting amusements for Fooles Guild youngsters at a storybook character theme party (Their favorites are jungle-related..) to be held in early Spring. Phone tree information and invitations soon.

Thanks to all for support of the Fooles Guild Phone Tree. Whew, what an undertaking! If you know someone who is not on the list, let us know. 310 394-7707.

Mahalia (Diane) has four very cute kittens in need of a good home...One, two, three, or all...give her a call! 213 931 2689 Mcow.



Breakfast cont.

of rubber chicken legs and a striped sock hanging out of one end. He sprang out the door, tumbled down the stairs and into his Lexus. As soon as the door shut, his car morphed into a small 1978 postal jeep painted pink with purple polka dots. Within minutes he was pulling up to the valet parking attendant at Chez Omelet. Greg sprang from the jeep, ran around it three times, leap-frogged over the attendant and cartwheeled into the up-scale breakfast spot. The group of businessmen seated in the corner booth tried to ignore the ridiculous buffoon, dismissing the apparition as a tasteless singing telegram until it started toward them. Out of nowhere a seltzer bottle and cream pie appeared in the clown hands. Then Greg's partner recognized him. "Oh no," the rapidly paling partner panted. "Howdily-do gents. Call me Greg-O. And you must be Mr. Bla bla bla." and with that, Greg-O flung the pie square into the face of the distinguished Japanese businessman. Then the prankster fired a blast of seltzer at each of the assembled colleagues. "Mustn't forget the proposalini." He lifted up the battered suitcase and flipped opened the lid releasing a dozen crazed monkeys who flipped and spat and screeched and shat and ripped the place apart. The maitre d' grabbed Greg-O by the collar but the clown squirted the guy right in the eye with his lapel flower. Greg-O squealed with delight, bent over, pulled down his baggy pants, mooned the room and as a finale lit his farts with a Bic. As the blue methane blast hung in the air the clown pulled up his trousers, produced a small unicycle from his suitcase and rode out of the chaos he'd created.

Twenty minutes later as Greg was riding out of town, stopping only to make balloon animals for homeless kids, this message was being left on his answering machine. "Greg, you nut, you're

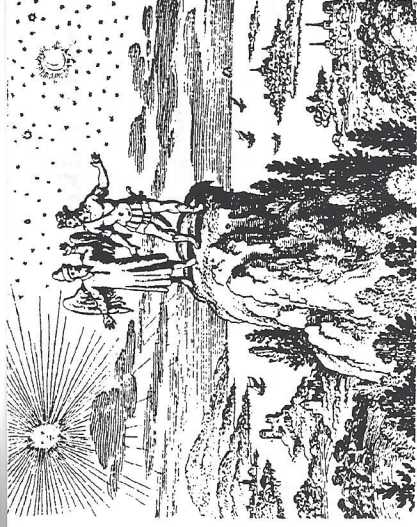
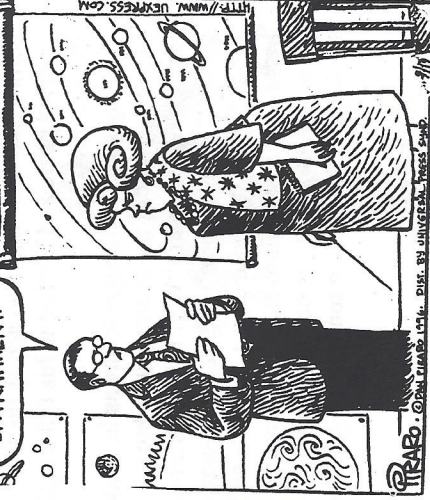
a fucking genius, they loved the presentation, they said it was inventive and daring. We're in pal, we're in. I love you, you crack pot. But you really should have checked with me first and where the hell are you?" But Greg Proctor never heard that message. From now on he would hear only laughter.



BIZARRO

Dan Piraro

WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO LET KEVIN KERR BACK INTO SCHOOL—THE COURT RULED THAT ASKING THE CLASS CLOWN "WHERE'S URANUS" DOES, IN FACT, CONSTITUTE ENTRAPMENT.



"In Praise of Dreams"

By Wislawa Szymborska, Nobel Prize in Literature 1996

In my dreams
I paint like Vermeer van Delft.

I speak fluent Greek
and not only with the living.

I drive a car
that does what I say.

I am talented,
I write epic poems.

I hear voices
no less often than saints do.

You would be amazed
at my skill in piano playing.

I fly properly
all by myself

Sliding off the roof
I fall onto the soft grass.

I do not find it hard
to breathe underwater.

I cannot complain:
I discovered Atlantis.

It's a relief to wake up
just before dying.

I turn sideways comfortably
when wars break out.

I am, but am not forced to be,
a child of this age.

Some years ago
I saw two suns.

And the day before yesterday a penguin.
I saw it quite clearly.

Excerpts from the **Buck & Mug** Interview with **Billy Scudder**- Issue 47, Vol.19, No. 1 Editor- Paula Foster

B&M: What was the role there for the fool and folly back then? Was there a niche for one to be a fool, or were you just doing what you were doing and folly was just sprinkled everywhere?

BS: It was spontaneous chaos. It was like watching an explosion implode at the same time. There was an energy within the streets of Agoura that you would just step into and be swept away by. And of course when we mimed, Kathleen and I, we never talked, all day long. We never talked.

B&M: What is the difference between a fool and someone who is just acting foolish?

BS: Wisdom. [laughter] As Shakespeare said, "wit, and't be thy will, put me into good fooling! For you know, those wits that think they have thee do very oft prove fools; and I am sure I lack thee, may pass for a wise man. For what says Quinapalus? 'Better a witty fool than a foolish wit.'" [Feste the Clown in Twelfth Night, i. v. 32.]

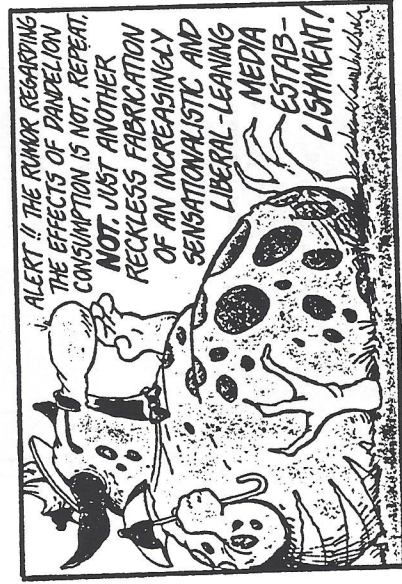
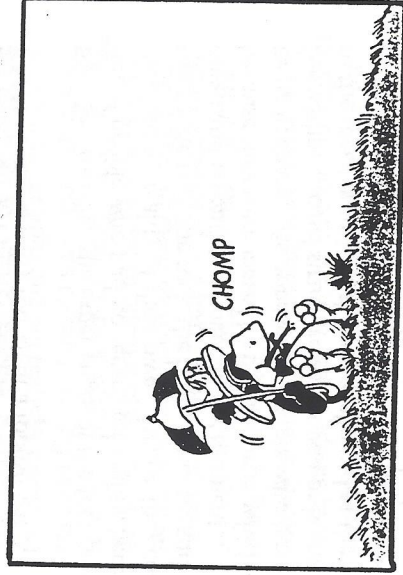
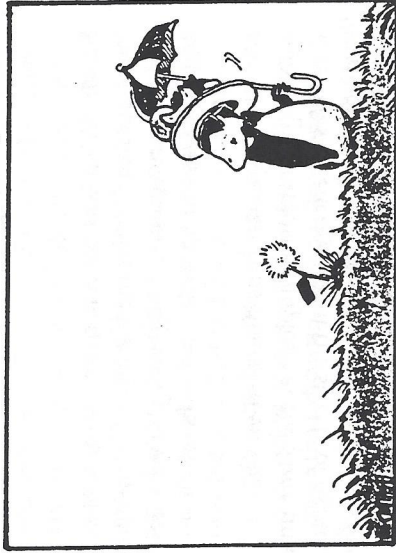
B&M: Better a witty fool than a foolish wit.

BS: See, usually, the experiences of the fool came out of people who had no regard for reality, because they had no reality of their own. Hence, they could talk to the tree, the rock, the bush, jump up and down and scream and holler at any moment, because they were *moved* by the moment, which is being in chaos. As opposed to people who learn to live within a social structure where you only reacted to the social emotions that were allowed at the time. So when the king came by, everybody else would socially respond to his presence by bowing down,

(I never metamorphosis I didn't like....)

BERKE BREATHED

from a Bloom County Book



Billy Scudder cont.

whereas the fool would jump up and down and scream and holler, [doofy voice] "Hiiii guyyys!" Only a fool would do that.

B&M: So would you say that he or she is an emotional non-conformist?

BS: Oh, absolutely. Who has no regard for formality of purpose. In essence what I mean by that is that some people respond to what has been set up as a social structure and abide by that all the time.

B&M: Like they're reading from a script.

BS: Exactly. Everybody has a script. They walk up, "How are you? I'm fine." They don't really want to know, but they say that to people, all the time. And if you say, "I died," they say, "Oh. Fine." They never say, "What?! OH! That's terrible!" You know? I mean, if you say, "I feel bad," they don't *really* want you to feel bad. But they don't want you to say that to them.

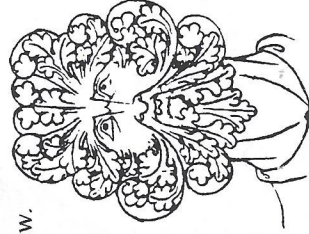
B&M: So how can a person who finds him or herself attracted to that kind of a nonconformist, individualistic state...how can that person do that and communicate joy to others as opposed to being just seen as an asshole?

BS: Well, by truly succumbing to joy.

B&M: What's it like to succumb to joy?

BS: Well, it's ecstasy, isn't it? And the opposite is fear. Fear is self-exile from joy.

B&M: Fear is self-exile from joy. Wow.



BS: So if you exile yourself from the blissful moment of joy...But see, we can't live in the moment of joy at all times. It's like living in the dream world all the time.

B&M: Right. We can't be there all the time. It's impossible.

BS: That's why there is this reality. What we aspire to, though, is that moment when you transcend the reality which you're in as a performer or as an artist, and you reach up for the muse, whatever your muse is, and it comes through you and you become the vehicle through which the creative muse moves. That's the way I experience what I do. I do all these technical things, moving in one position like a spinning dervish, and you get into a point of doing it where all of a sudden, you stop being in control of it and you're free. Because you start "flying," as the dancers call it. If you watch a jazz musician playing and he closes his eyes and he puts his head down, and all of a sudden he playing notes and doesn't know *where* they are, you know?

B&M: It's like they're playing him.

BS: Exactly. The music is playing *him*. He is the vehicle. And so you can be that as a fool. You can be that way as a mime, as a dancer, an artist who just can't stop painting until their brush falls out of their hand and they fall down, you know?

B&M: Wow, that's really beautiful.

BS: And this world, this faire, allows you to do that, at the turn of your head. This Puritan society that has been created for us, this homogenized society, where we have lost all of our ritual and sense of community, because we no longer get

together as a communal people and worship each other's presences. We talk on phones, we go to parties and we see all kinds of things that *aspire* for that moment, but we never reach it unless we go to a church, or a football game—all cheering for that one thing, all experiencing that one moment through some form of transinduced state. That's what all the shows are about: "Hip hip, hooray!" It's getting everybody functioning on one level at something, and all of a sudden they elevate everybody.

B&M: Sharing an experience of vicarious rapture.

BS: Exactly. Absolutely. That's what we're doing here.

B&M: So does the word "rapture" perhaps substitute for the word "folly"? Sometimes? Is folly almost identical with rapture?

BS: Well, maybe, because I think they both dwell in the heart of chaos. Because I don't think you are in control of rapture. It controls you in some way. You have to be free of yourself to be in the rapture. That's what religions are all about, I think: to seek the moment of *being* the god-self on the material plane, by sharing the energy God. God is the energy, and the earth is the matter. Like the Native Americans said: God is the creator, and Mother Earth is what we all came from. Our bodies belong to Mother Earth, but our spirit belongs to God the Father. There's three things in the universe: there's spirit, or energy, there's mass, matter, and nothing, or space. That's all there is. And there's more than nothing than anything else. Now if we take away the nothing, what's left?

B&M: Just energy and matter.

BS: But what keeps them apart?

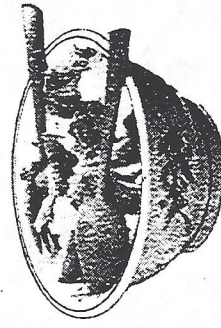
B&M: ...

BS: ...



The SALAD BOWL

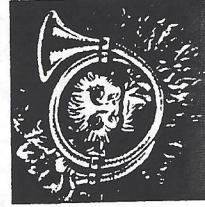
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The Trip to the Moon

By Jeffrey Briar

Once upon a time, a little rabbit named Selma was hopping around a meadow in a little forest by the edge of the river. It was a beautiful day: the sun was shining, the air was clear, and the meadow was full of delicious grasses and succulent berries. The rabbit even found a few tasty morsels of goat cheese that some happy human picnickers had left behind—yum yum! After having eaten the cheese, the little rabbit hopped over to a particularly inviting clump of grass at the base of a very tall tree. The delighted animal began to munch on the grass when she heard a strange noise above her. She looked up into the branches of the tree and saw a tiny brown mouse who was trying with all his might, to climb up the tree.

"Excuse me Mr. Mouse," the little rabbit said. "What are you doing?"

"About eight meters an hour," the mouse answered, breathlessly. He did not stop to look down at the rabbit as he continued his desperate efforts to climb the tree. "So I can't stop to talk! I have to get to the top of the tree before midnight, and it's a very long way up there!" and he continued to clamber up the tree.

"Why do you have to get to the top of the tree?" the little rabbit asked.

"Silly rabbit!" the mouse replied. "Yesterday I overheard two human boys say that the moon is made of green cheese. And, being a mouse, I ADORE cheese. Last night, I woke up at midnight and saw the moon, full and green, up at the very top branches of this tree. So I must climb up the tree to catch the moon when it arrives tonight. Then I can eat some of that delicious cheese!"

At that very moment, the branch under the mouse's foot gave way, and the little mouse fell from the tree. Fortunately, the rabbit was in just the right spot, and she leapt up and caught the mouse. They landed on the soft ground together, unharmed.

"Thank you very much," the mouse said. Then he looked down and made as sad a face as a mouse can make, he said, "Alas, now it is too late for me to climb the tree and meet the moon."

"Don't worry, my friend," the rabbit said. "I'll come back tonight and help you."

That night, the rabbit returned. The mouse was waiting patiently at the foot of the tree, and the moon, luscious and with a little tinge like a cauliflower, appeared suspended in the topmost branches of the tree.

"Hop on my back," said the rabbit. The mouse scampered up the rabbit's side, grabbed on to the fur of her back, and held on firmly.

"Ready," the mouse cried, and shut his eyes tight. (He didn't like to admit it, but the mouse was actually afraid of flying.)

"Okey dokey, Arti-chokey," the rabbit said, "Here we go! Hey-hup!" And with these words, the rabbit took a mighty leap and in one great jump, arrived at the topmost branch of the tree. (By the way—did I forget to tell you? That rabbit was the cousin of "Super-Kangaroo.")

And there (thanks to the plastic forks the rabbit carried behind each ear, and the Swiss Army Knife the little brown mouse always carried with him), they munched on the delicious green cheese of the moon all night long.