



# Gracies Dinnertime Theatre

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## The Magic Wondershow

By Sean J. Stanley

This week: "Apparently, the Revolution Will be Televised..."

Reality TV? You asked for it! Maybe that's not a good way to start. In no way do I wish to undermine the significance of this event, nor do I wish to belittle those that are directly affected by this. That is not my point. I merely wish to call attention to what I feel is a travesty, a loathsome media barrage that in some ways is far worse than the event itself. I understand the necessary role that the media plays in the life and times of a culture, especially America. America, who derives its social identity by the mandates of the "goddamn teevee," to quote Paddy Chayefsky (there should be a mandatory screening of *Network* in college senior seminar classes). Drink Pepsi. Wear Gap. Watch *Friends*. The American TeeVee demigods have spent so much time during last thirty years tweaking the most banal and insipid forms of entertainment, i.e. the sitcom and the evening melodrama, that their role of primary public informer has languished into feckless garbage. "Seasoned" journalists like Dan Rather, Katie Couric, and especially Peter Jennings (that garrulous fuck) have no idea when to shut the hell up. If a picture is worth a thousand words, why do he and his cohorts feel the need to ramble over the live video footage of an AIRLINER CRASHING INTO A SKY-SCRAPER? I would have respected him much more if he kept his remarks few and foul. Mainstream culture shuns the use of expletives in public forums, but one cannot deny the effectiveness of their brevity. The heyday of the Walts (Winchell and Cronkite) was before my time, but as I'm an avid fan of TLC and the Hitler Channel, I've seen a fair number of their broadcasts. In the fledgling days of television, they managed to ask the pertinent questions without tarnishing the humanity of the events with narcissistic editorial

drivel. So what happened? Is the promise of winning some meaningless award too great? Undoubtedly, within every journalist (myself included) there is a genuine empathy for the participants and/or victims of newsworthy affairs, however it seems there is always a kernel of self-serving ego that cannot be destroyed or suppressed. Even now, as I write, I wonder how this piece will affect my reputation, however small it may be. I've graduated and moved on from college, which I might add was a terrible lapse in judgment; the scope of this publication exists five-hundred miles from my current position. Still, there is a chance that it might get picked up, syndicated, or noticed by someone else, someone "important", maybe even someone on TeeVee and I'll get a guest shot with Diane Sawyer a few months later.

One tends to wonder, is dead air so bad? Wouldn't the live sounds of emergency vehicles and response teams suffice without the play-by-play? Even during various press conferences, anchors felt the need to explain everything; Jennings went as far to comment over the content of the conference, stating that the New York Attorney General was "...of course, he is the Attorney General for the State of New York." In addition to this, within ten hours of the crashes, some network graphics lackey (whose job I wish I had) came up with some choice visual devices to frame the unfolding broadcasts. "ATTACK ON AMERICA", "AMERICA UNDER ATTACK", etc, painted over, get this, a looping monochromatic (pick a color of the flag) film segment featuring the second plane's impact, over and over and over again. Do you think the somber instrumental music in the background makes it okay for the TeeVee news gang to virtually taunt the

victims and their families with something they don't need to keep seeing? Tragedy brings out the worst in journalists as they will grasp at anything that might provide good cutaways; any starlet with a commercial credit or two was considered a "famous actress", reporters were dispatched to the Boeing factory that made the jets (for what purpose I have no idea, considering it wasn't a design flaw), and anyone with friends or family was goaded into sobbing on the air with questions like: "Now you've lost so many close to you, how do you feel?" We know how they feel; I would imagine that most Americans respect the loss enough not to twist the knife. The coverage got so bad that a few friends and I started playing the "Exploitive TeeVee News Drinking Game". If you at home would like to play along, here are the rules:

Most important: The words of victims and families DO NOT COUNT; that's not the point of the game. They have enough to deal with without you ridiculing their situation from afar. Only news professionals and the elected officials, experts, or famous personalities they interview are fair game.

#### **DRINK ONCE WHEN YOU HEAR OR SEE:**

Tragedy, attack, devastation, crisis, time of despair, time of mourning.

A replay of the crash and/or collapses (different angles count as separate instances).

The word "Exclusive" (CNN's a big fan of that one).

Choppy, full-of-compression-artifacts, video-phone footage (drink twice if it's coming from Afghanistan).

Anytime someone mentions American "way of life", "freedom", etc.

The phrase "And of course..." used in silly places – "...and of course, Rumsfeld." "and of course, the Pentagon."

#### **DRINK TWICE WHEN:**

Someone asks a stupid question at a press conference like "Any estimates as to how many dead?" even after being explicitly told they wouldn't be answered. (cheers to the administration, they're doing a pretty good job so far).

An anchor rudely interrupts the heartfelt comments of a survivor or family to cut to some "breaking development" that's not nearly as engaging or important.

Any Republican politician calls for more defense spending or immediate retribution.

Pat Robertson criticizes the American government for not recognizing the "Islamic Threat".

An anchor or commentator discuss the attack plans on Osama bin Ladin.

#### **FINISH YOUR DRINK:**

A Democratic politician calls for more defense spending or immediate retribution.

Pat Robertson calls for immediate attacks (justified by God) on Islamic communities in Israel.

An anchor fucks up and utterly destroys the hope of anxious family members by saying something to the effect of "So, can you tell me a little about what your brother *was* like...uh...I mean *is* like?" (unbelievably, this has happened already more than once).

A body of elected officials sings Steven Foster or Aaron Copland.

#### **GIVE THE MIDDLE FINGER TO**

#### **THE TELEVISION WHEN:**

You see Osama bin Ladin. He's a motherfucker even if he didn't pull this one off.

You see stone-age sheep dancing in the streets and mugging for the camera. Especially if they're children because in a few years we'll be dealing with their shit as well, and I hope its not nuclear.

You see a celebrity calling you to action.

You see Peter Jennings.

I'm sure you can come up with more. This is just to pass the time until you can really help by giving blood or donating money, food, etc. These are the real ways to help. Use your mind by not succumbing to the savage impetus of those who run the big networks. Read foreign newspapers, not *Newsweek*. Watch Charlie Rose (whose wonderful guests have illustrated the non-blood-n-guts aspects of the crisis, like the

complexities of the politics involved) or the BBC news dispatches on PBS. Help where you can now. I think that the American populous has rallied together in something that hasn't been seen here since The Deuce (that's WWII for all you hippies out there). It's a good thing and best of all, it ain't artificial ("Hands Across America", what the fuck was that??). People are stepping out of character, caring less about the sexual practices of one congressman or sports, although you'll be happy to know that pro wrestling didn't seem to bat an eye during this crisis (drink!). I think for a brief surreal bit of time, modern patriotism will have meaning again.

And allow me to close with an unabashed bit of narcissism. My parents told me that I'm being overly critical of the media, that my comments were moot and not in the spirit of the times. Shucks, I guess I'm like many in my unfortunate generation; a victim of suppressed intellect, I and others like me float in a sea of swarming platitude, searching for one another amid the flotsam and jetsam of mainstream acquiescence, with cynicism the only means of coping. I've tried hard to turn my cynicism into satire, but it becomes hard to do when you see so many suffering and you

feel impotent in their midst; meanwhile, the lines between informing and exploiting are crossed with a cavalier and poorly concealed indifference. I don't know. Hell, I may be wrong about that, but mark my words about this:

When enough time has passed, you will see a rash of exploitative garbage, touted as "tributes to the aftermath", benefiting nobody but the deep coffers of the networks and the conglomerate enterprises who pull their strings. Made-For-TeeVee movies about the everyday people in the towers, the fire and rescue battalions who "lost so much on that fateful day", or perhaps big screen endeavors that feature Nicholas Cage or some other hunky stud in a dramatic recreation of the brave souls on Flight 93, as they overtook their hijackers and crashed the plane away from Washington.

When this tripe appears on your screen, do everyone a favor by switching off, lighting a candle, and raising a toast to the Divine Wind—may she carry nothing but warmth, song, and peace on her back from now on.

Awards  
Pending

Controversy  
Guaranteed

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wants YOU to work for US instead ...

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Your World.**

Come and be a part of the staff that continues to provide witty satiric content to the ubercool RIT student body, not to mention the rest of the world. The only black and white publication to raise hell here, we're looking for fresh meat to write some stunning articles for us next year.

Why the controversy, you ask? Some people do not understand satire (or humor for that matter), and these people are usually quite vocal. It's a small price to pay for publishing the bleeding edge of uncensored satire, opinion and fiction.

**Give us  
a SHOT.**

Don't give us the "I'm not a very good writer" line. That's just a bunch of wimpy bullshit. You might just be surprised at what you can do for us.

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Now you **could** go and write for a more respected publication, but you wouldn't get to stir up any trouble that way.

Interested? Email [gdt@helliskitchen.org](mailto:gdt@helliskitchen.org).

# THE CROSSWORD PUZZLE OF DOOM

by Adam "Daimen" Fletcher  
title by Frances "Lucifer" Holt

**Across**

- 1. \_\_\_ *Racer*
- 4. \_\_\_ mic
- 8. English distance
- 12. Star of David Lynch films
- 14. A family member
- 15. \_\_\_ Pet
- 16. Unit of corn
- 17. Greek party
- 18. Green tea
- 20. A conflict, not a war
- 22. Sometimes with a feather
- 24. In the garden, not the bed
- 25. Friend of fro
- 26. Abandoned accident
- 30. Unfashionable wear
- 31. Resident of the fertile crescent
- 32. *Take On Me* authors
- 33. Old memory
- 34. Gear
- 35. Given gear not salary
- 37. Smarts
- 38. All-Clad makes these
- 39. Nahasapeemapieton
- 40. Careful childmaking
- 43. Small javelin
- 47. Film \_\_\_
- 48. \_\_\_ codger
- 50. More than a skirt
- 51. Ten Lincolns
- 52. Boron, carbon are examples
- 54. Religious snakes
- 55. Opposite of go
- 56. Makes clothes clean

**Down**

- 1. Richie \_\_\_
- 2. Catholic foreheads
- 3. Sacrifices are made here
- 4. Multimedia OS
- 5. Latin dance cry
- 6. Swedish name
- 7. Another word for 38 across, sans J
- 8. Not glossy
- 9. Imaging company
- 10. Squished letters
- 11. Not in love, but
- 13. Sci-Fi baddies
- 19. Prefix to 52 across

1	2	3		4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12			13						14			
15					16				17			
18				19		20		21				
			22		23		24				25	
26	27	28				29				30		
31					32				33			
34				35				36				
37			38				39					
40		41				42		43		44	45	46
47					48		49		50			
51					52			53				
54					55					56		

- 21. A long time
- 23. Mutations that win
- 26. Plantations, in Spanish
- 27. Native American tribe
- 28. Freeze is a variation
- 29. Frat letter
- 30. Not four or fore, but
- 33. Set of lessons
- 35. 7th \_\_\_ of a 7th \_\_\_
- 36. A place to get better
- 38. Nobel winner
- 41. A character in *Pulp Fiction*
- 42. Cause of a stroke
- 44. pro \_\_\_
- 45. With the mouth
- 46. Last wishes
- 49. Plan of proteins
- 53. Not your

Solution is elsewhere in the magazine.

## Logic from Ghana

By Mookie *Kofi* Harrington

<mookieghana@hotmail.com>

Well, the AWF is at it again! This week they reunited to perform at the annual Mash-potato Appreciation Festival. There were 6 singles matches between 12 different competitors. Interestingly enough, each match carried special stipulations for both the winner and loser.

The winning prizes were (in some order): A Map of the Island of Bochea [Island Map], an autograph picture of Ned the Nude [Ned Pic], a licensed "My Arms Feel Like Whatever" Jello Mold [Jello Mold], the Chyna Memorial Belt [Chyna Belt], PT's old buddy Admiral McWhirr [Adm. McWhirr], and the Gorton's Fisherman Plastic Lobster [Plastic Lobster].

The losers had a much rougher fare. One person had to attend a Yahoo Serious Film Festival [Yahoo Serious], someone had to change their character's name to the moniker "Insatiable Codpiece" [Ins. Codpiece], another had to drink

an entire liter of GOYA Malted Shellfish Party Mix [Malted Shellfish], one fellow had to pay for tickets to see Ghanaian music star Kujo Antwi [Kujo Antwi], one person was booked into a "Use-Luncheon-Meat-As-A-Weapon" match with Mike the IC [Luncheon-Meat], and a person had the dreaded "Mesh-Or-Mustache" clause invoked [Mesh-Must.]

All their matches had decisive winners and losers. The people who scored a victory were (in some order): CSC, Manny the Mime, HB2, HFM, Lou, and KGBeast. The unfortunate souls who lost were (in some order): Stella's Groove, Czar, Bugman, Mookie, Copperhead, and Freddy Franchise.

Using these fifteen clues can YOU solve: who was in which matches, with which stipulations? Thousands of cedis in prizes for the correct answers! Incredible Ghanaian surprises and popcorn for the kiddos!

HB2 fought in the fourth match.

One of the matches had "Chyna Memorial Belt" for the winner, and "Kujo Antwi Concert Tickets" for

the loser.

Lou's match was before Mookie's. The *Island Map* prize was not won during the third match.

Copperhead neither watched the "Yahoo Serious" tapes nor fought the wrestler who won "Admiral McWhirr".

Stella's Groove and Freddy Franchise's were for trying to win either the "Jello Mold" or "Island Map".

"Malted Shellfish" was the drink awaiting the loser of the first match, while "Mesh-or-Mustache" stipulation was in conjunction with the last match.

The week after the festival, HFM tagged with the person who won the lobster against the person who had to have the luncheon-meat match with Mike the IC and the person who won Admiral McWhirr. Copperhead was appointed the special referee of these important contest.

Manny the Mime did not participate in the match that involved the "Insatiable Codpiece" name.

Stella's Groove, CSC, Czar and Lou all fought either in the first or last matches. One of them ended up with Ned's pic!

CSC did not fight for the "Chyna Memorial Belt".

Neither Manny, nor HB2, nor Lou's opponents ended up seeing Kujo Antwi perform live!

Mookie watched HFM's match from backstage. Afterwards, Mookie congratulated HFM on avoiding the losing stipulation of attending the "Yahoo Serious Film Festival".

One of the matches had the receiving the "Jello Mold" and the loser wearing "Mesh & Moustache".

Bugman did not see the Kujo Antwi concert. Bugman wrestled after Mookie.

Admiral McWhirr was won in the second match.

INDEED!

# milk on brown formica

by dalas verdugo

poor julian.

i'm thinking about your dark, shining curls, always styled by chance into a shape that runs right for my soul. you, julian, hold all that sits safe in my mind, in the way you laugh off girls who can't help it any longer, rise from their seats half a bar away and approach you; their hands already resting on your rocky shoulders, their eyes lost in a face admired a thousand times before. you are a sublime work in life's gallery, julian.

let me tell you something beautiful.

this julian started life in what he swears was the smallest room ever constructed. only enough space for his mattress on the floor and a pile of cheap, plastic toys in the corner. only enough air to breathe once every minute or so. his parents' room was on the other side of a wall as thing as imagination, and most nights julian was carried off to sleep by the lullaby of their lovemaking.

this is where he says his taste for women comes from.

i'm feeling the thinness now, julian. like a small strand of hair between my fingers, twisted gently, i don't wish to hurt her. all my heart is in my hands now, and i'm kneading living clay into shapes that won't stay. i don't care. the love lies in creation. and i'm laying here, hands in hair.

and i'm thinking of you, julian, and your first girl.

from the current view, it seems so distant, that time that held julian's first for him. i ask him what he's gained from having so many, and he tells me he feels them in every moment. when he drinks tap water he tastes their skin, he knows their bodies have been there. i feel julian's words scraping my spirit; and my emotions, ageless layers of concealing paint, fall flaking to the floor.

my bare walls are exposed and stand open to his wind.

julian talks about his early years; these are kindergarten memories. one morning, after his parents have had a particularly loud night, julian has made up his mind; and his mind wants a woman. five-year-old julian stuffs his dad's old briefcase with things he finds on the floor. his career seems to include dealings with the cable company, the publication of comic books, and phone numbers for people with abbreviated names written in something that really can't be ink. he climbs his stepstool and locks eyes with himself in the mirror. he tries and finds the perfect face. his father's cologne sits on the side of the sink, and julian mimics the act he's watched his father perform almost every morning. he sprays the cologne into the mildew-scented air of the bathroom and steps into the mist of fragrance this creates. julian collects his briefcase and waits patiently by the door.

it's charming to see a man on a mission inside a round little boy.

all day long, julian's teacher gives him curious glances, and his fellow students follow him with eyes attracted by his strange scent. julian plays it cool, he pretends to not notice. when they're out on the playground, he knows that now is the time. slowly scanning youthful faces, his eyes land on one he likes. he doesn't know why,

L	L	A		Y	A	T	S		S	P	S	A
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W	O	R	R	A		C	I	N	E	G	U	E
			U	P	A		T	O	P		Q	I
D	E	R	O	S	N	O	P	S		G	O	C
E	R	O	C		A	H	A		B	A	R	A
R	U	F		N	U	R	D	N	A	T	I	H
O	T		E	O	H		A	O	B			
M	A	N	T	E	I	V		N	O	S	Y	H
A	G	O	T		R	A	E		A	I	H	C
N	I	K	A		A	L	L	E	B	A	S	I
E	L	I	M		M	O	O	B		D	A	R

but she is the one. if he had a picture of his mother as a little girl and a basic understanding of freudian psychology, perhaps his choice would make more sense to him. but julian only knows about colors and a few numbers, and all he has is his father's briefcase.

he's hiding it behind a bush.

now he's heading towards her. he's thinking about what to do. a glinting bottle cap catches his eye, and he bends at the waist, picks it up. julian looks it over carefully, it whispers a plan. he continues, comes closer to her. she's playing in the sand. she smells him first, then sees him. his shadow, then his self.

julian reaches out and gives her the only gift he has: a slightly shining bottle cap is roses in his palm.

she takes the gift and smiles. this boy has been the center of attention all day, and now she has his. she asks him what he wants. julian's mind hasn't gotten that far, and it looks around the playground as it races to catch up. then the idea comes. he tells her to follow him. she does. julian leads her to a large, plastic snail shell: hollow and on its side.

they enter dark echoes together.

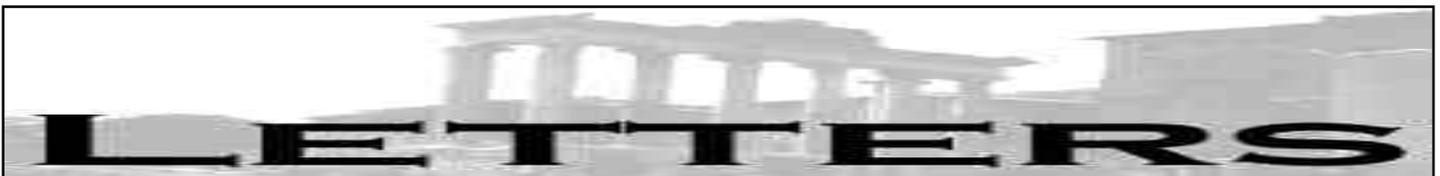
she is studying his soft-lit features, he is staring

at the ceiling, searching for the next step in his script. he tells her to lie down. she asks if it's a game. julian gives her a solemn look. his eyes are answer enough. after she is sideways in the sand, he lays down behind her. julian is looking at her curly brown hair, and he starts to pet it like he pets his friend's dog. this brings a smile to his face. she is unsure; she asks him what they're doing. julian decides it's time, he tells her what he wants. she thinks she understands, and they both begin shouting, yelling, and making something similar to moans.

within seeming seconds, a scolding teacher has drug them from their makeshift love-nest.

i think i know your pain and shame, julian. i think i understand why you spent so much time after that incident trying to justify your childhood scandal. you had to prove you weren't in the wrong. you wanted to redeem the beauty of your love. it's still unfortunate. it's sad for me to think about how abruptly your first love was torn from you. and when i'm lying like this, when i'm staring at hair, caressing it gently, i can only bury my face in its soft, sweet smell, and think to myself:

poor julian.



Dear Editor,

On July 17, 1996, TWA Flight 800 exploded and plunged into the waters off of Long Island. All 230 people aboard were killed. Dozens of eyewitnesses reported a firework/flare-like object rise from the surface followed by Flight 800 exploding. But missiles were quickly dismissed by the NTSB/FBI in favor of an explosion in the center wing tank caused by an unknown ignition.

Investigator James Sanders made contact with an inside informant,

Terrell Stacey. Stacey provided Sanders with two crucial pieces of evidence. A 104-page NTSB printout giving the coordinates of all TWA Flight 800 wreckage locations. When Sanders put the coordinates into his computer, it gave him the pattern of how the plane broke up. It matched missiles, not mechanical. The NTSB has never made this data public. Stacey then gave Sanders two swatches of red/orange residue covered foam that was found on seats only in rows 17, 18 and 19, exactly where the front of the plane broke off. Analysis found that it was consistent

with solid fuel missile propellant. The NTSB said it was glue. This was later proven to be a lie. Today, hundreds of witnesses have stated that they saw missiles hit TWA 800. They were so outraged that the NTSB/FBI ignored them, they took out a full-page advertisement in the *Washington Times* (August 15, 2000) entitled, "We Saw TWA Flight 800 Shot Down by Missiles And We Won't Be Silenced Any Longer."

Commander William Donaldson is a retired Navy pilot with over two decades of experience in virtually all phases of naval aviation. Donaldson started investigating Flight 800 in April 1997. Regarding the government's theory Donaldson writes, "Such an event is literally impossible because of the extremely low volatility of aviation kerosene and the superb ignition free design of the 747 fuel tank system". In the

entire flying history of the 747 there has never been an in-flight fuel tank explosion caused by some unknown ignition source whilst using Jet A-1 fuel. There are no wires in the fuel tank to set off an explosion. Donaldson points out that the positioning of wreckage in the debris field proves beyond any doubt that a missile struck Flight 800. He writes "Either the aircraft was hit by an Amtrak metro-liner on the left side or by a powerful anti-aircraft weapon." Donaldson's conclusions are that terrorists, most probably in two locations, shot the plane down using shoulder-fired surface to air missiles.

Yours Sincerely,  
Gavin Phillips.



**Gracies  
Dinnertime  
Theatre™**  
**DRAMATIS PERSONÆ**

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