

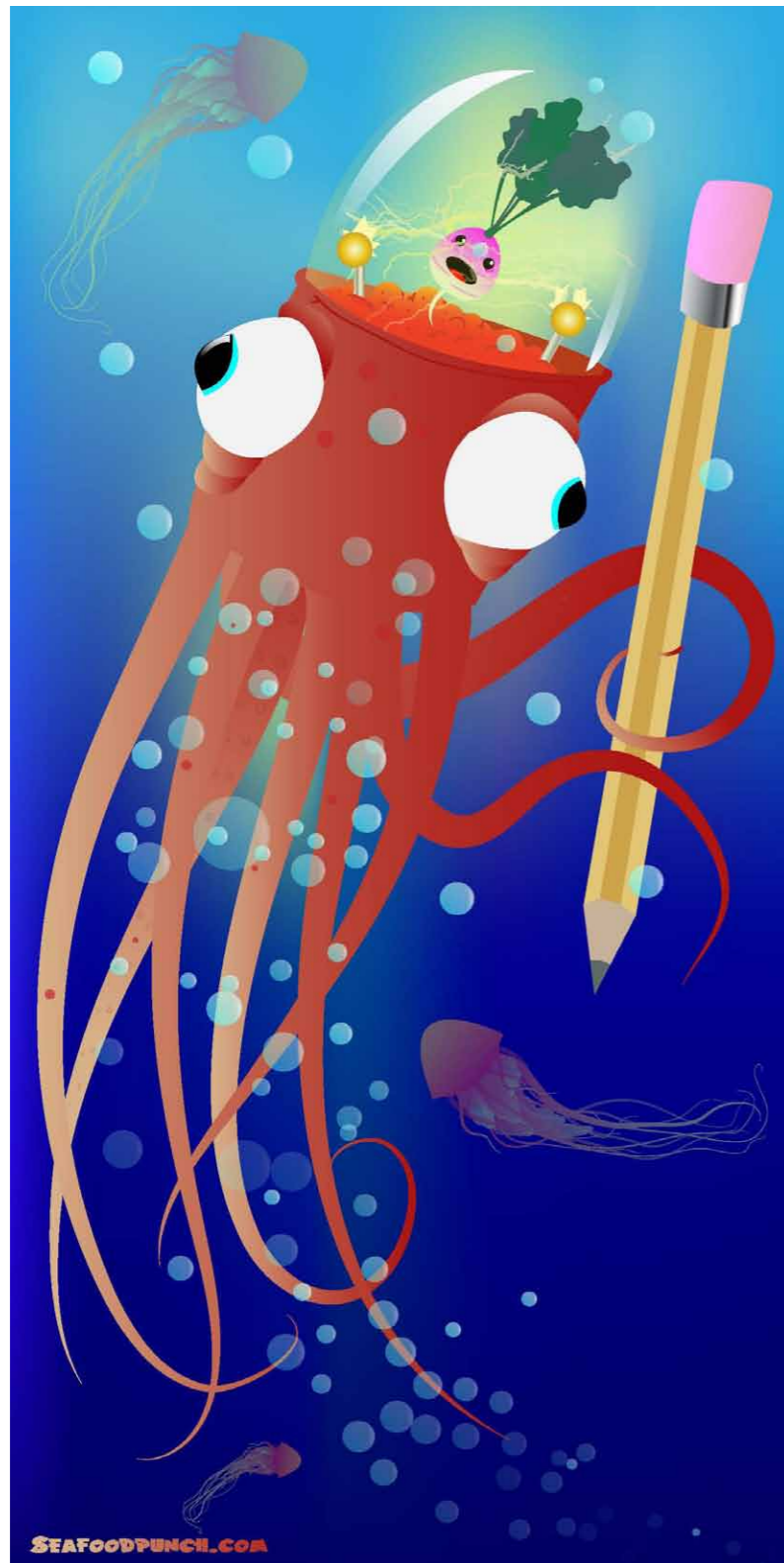
Free!

FUNNY_{net}**SLUTTY**TM

**Big Blog
Book
Vol. 1**



*laugh out loud,
or your money back!*



The Funny not Slutty Big Blog Book Volume 1 Editorial Committee

Publisher:
Jacki Schklar

Selection Committee:
Ann Imig
Blythe Jewell
Julia DeGraf
Terese Ramin

Seafoodpunch Illustrations Provided by:
Daniela Muhawi

Funnynotslutty.com - Comedy by Women for Women
Why "Funny not Slutty"? Well, when you get a number of females together who want to show off their stuff to get attention, they are usually slutty chicks. But we're not. We're funny chicks! We feature comedy for women created by female producers, writers, humorists and comedians. Our content may be a little smarter and a little deeper than your average web humor (sometimes).

Join the Funny not Slutty Community
Funny not Slutty on Facebook
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OUT OF ASPIRIN? TRY A NAIL TO THE FACE INSTEAD !



How to be a Producer

by Jacki Schklar

Jacki Schklar is a video and interactive content producer residing in Atlanta, GA. She publishes a website featuring funny female producers, writers and comedians called funnynotslutty.com. Funny not Slutty Original Videos have been featured by Funny or Die, BestViral.com, TVGuide.com and Internet Video Magazine.

1. Creative brainstorming. This usually happens when you are procrastinating. Like when it's time to clean the kitchen or break up with the guy you have been dating.
2. Planning. The key part of this is to be realistic about what resources you actually have at hand as opposed to what say, they have at Pixar Studios. Pixar Studios has access to a 3-D scanner. I don't have a copy of After Effects at home, just PhotoShop Extended.

3. Then the stress of working out all the crap. Seeking the basics of what you need and getting teams together. Who has a 1960's era suitcase I can borrow? Where can we shoot in the Atlanta area without getting shot?

4. Calming the storms. Will any cast members have to go into rehab just before taping? Will production geeks get a better gig or get pissed and leave when one of their rivals join the crew? Creatives always know a better way. Their way. You have to explain yourself a lot and win people over to your way of thinking. The producer is always an idiot.

5. Then wiggling out and losing sleep and rushing around like a crazy person right before. Try not to forget to eat and drink. My stomach growled throughout the voice taping of my SJP episode because I forgot to eat.

6. The mayhem ensues on your shoot. Any shoot. It's not for the faint of heart. People forget stuff. Things go wrong. Equipment fails. Someone wants you to get off their property or some BS...Producers and production fight.

7. Edit the sucker and think of what you could have done better, @#%! it.

8. Show the @#%! thing already. You are sick of looking at it.

9. Repeat.



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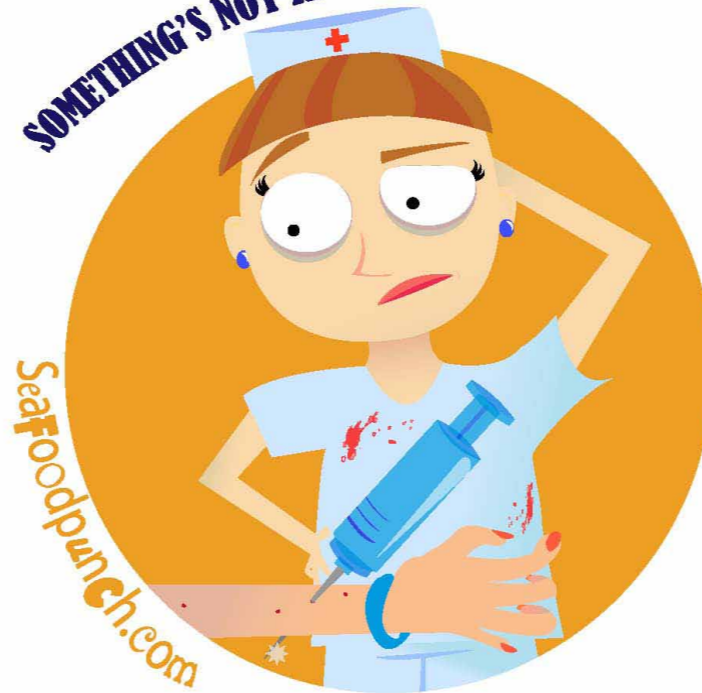
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SOMETHING'S NOT RIGHT HERE...



AN OPEN LETTER TO THE HOUSE OF PAIN by Ann Imig

Ann Imig writes humor essays and fiction after her two young boys fall asleep at night, and before she herself collapses. She began her career as a stage actress (office temp), eventually earned a Masters in Social Work, and now completes a trifecta of lucrative careers as a writer. A self-described "Scinnie (Wisconsin) Jewess," Ann's writing includes notes of Midwestern sensibility, Jewish humor, and the occasional 1980's sitcom reference. Her writing has been featured on various humor websites including McSweeneys Internet Tendency, Funny Not Slutty, and her humor blog annsrants.com. Ann's flash fiction "Date Night" was a Top Ten finalist for Women on Writing's spring 2009 contest.

AN OPEN LETTER
TO THE HOUSE OF PAIN
(AKA, PAIN MANAGEMENT RESOURCES).

January 4, 2010

Dear House of Pain (aka Pain Management Resources),

I just opened your quality assurance envelope, and found Discharge Instructions for the Epidural Steroid Injection. The first two of the three paragraphs include "What is an epidural steroid injection? And "What happens during the procedure?"

Your pamphlet description outlines the procedure mostly as I imagined—from pantsing/positioning me on the table and cleansing the area, to the painful-but-bearable local anesthetic injection. Actually, cleaning between the seat cushions was a little more than I bargained for, I'll admit, but I knew to expect some unpleasantness.

I had some idea that the procedure would prove painful. "I don't want to scare you" and "excruciating" served as two examples of cautionary phrases from close friends. I did not press those friends for more information. Instead, I got plenty of assurances from acquaintances who never had the Epidural Steroid Injection that sedation was probably meant for people with intense needle phobias, and that surely a local would suffice. Even if I had received said pamphlet before the procedure, I don't think "You may feel some pressure or re-creation of your pain symptoms during the procedure and after the procedure" would've changed my elected course of pain management.

I felt ready. Unafraid. I'm no hero, House of Pain, but I figured I could deal with a brief injection after numbing with an anesthetic. My last child's linebacker shoulders brought him into the world at ten pounds, one ounce, and no amount of Pain Management Resources can ease a side of beef through sausage casing. So to speak.
(continued)

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In fairness, this injection was the first epidural I'd received that didn't include the joy of a baby-chaser. During the throes of labor, a shot in the spine is of little consequence. In fact, I might've tried to open-mouth kiss my anesthesiologists in gratitude on both occasions. Thankfully, they wore surgical masks. I digress.

For those of you Pain Managers who've never experienced the Epidural Steroid Injection, whereas the epidural during labor feels like manna from heaven, a cortisone injection with only a local anesthetic on a typical Friday afternoon, feels like High tea with Hannibal Lecter—when he makes you his clotted cream.

Now, had your pamphlet described the process as "shooting flaming saganaki through your sciatic nerve" I might have chosen differently. If I'd known that Dr. Trapper John would quip, "Which is it? Is it an ooh or an aah? You must choose" in response to my OOOOOOHHHH AAAAHHHHH OOOOOH AAAAH-HH cries mid-procedure, I might have chosen a more convincing pain-phrase. Pain never caused me to speak in tongues before, so I can't be certain. Maybe "OPA!" would've been more appropriate.

I soon realized that Dr. Trapper John's lighthearted attempt at humor served as part of a staff-wide pain-distraction technique of ill-timed jolliness. Three different nurses employed this technique, assaulting me with "So are yer kids getteen excited fer Christ-miss?!?" as they chiseled me off the table, as they wheeled me down the hallway to my recovery cubicle, and finally when they lowered me into my trendy green recliner for my fifteen minute recovery.

The nurses then suggested I fill out your customer satisfaction survey, and proceed directly to the lobby to make an appointment for a follow-up injection in two to four weeks. I was welcome to drive home given that I wasn't sedated, if by "drive" they meant sob-clutch-break-sob-accelerate-wince-clutch-shift-break-writhe-sob.

I would not describe myself as a satisfied customer per se.

However, spending the afternoon at your clinic did provide me with an emotional catharsis unparalleled since 1992, when I cried—hyperventilating through my Milk Dud/Popcorn whippets—for all of inhumanity as personified by Rebecca De Mornay trying to frame Ernie Hudson in *The Hand That Rocks The Cradle*. Catharsis opportunity notwithstanding, If you'd like to know what you could improve? Strongly encourage sedation for all of your clients. Let them know they will spend three hours at your clinic in a hairnet, and for all that is holy stop asking the traumatized Jewess if her "kids er getteen excited fer Christmas."

Best,
Ann Imig



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New Year's Resolutions that I Have Like a 100% Chance of Accomplishing by Blythe Jewell

Blythe Jewell is a wife, mom, full-time editor of incredibly boring government documents and totally underappreciated comic genius. Her work hasn't been featured anywhere important, which just means it'll be worth more after she dies.

*You can find her usually hilarious, sometimes serious, always off-color blog, *The Bean*, at www.themusicalfruit.net.*

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS, 2010:

1. I resolve to lose my keys or glasses or some other item essential to my daily life at least twice a week and then embark on a mad search through the house while uttering vile curse words under my breath but just loud enough that the impressionable child who likes to repeat everything will be sure to hear them.
2. I resolve to later find said object(s) either in the door, on my head, or in some other painfully obvious place, which will then unleash a second round of under-the-breath-but-still-too-loud cursing.
3. I resolve to feel terribly guilty when the Bean repeats, in mixed company, the curse words he heard when I was searching for/finding my goddamnedbit-chassmotherfuckingshitty keys/glasses/important-life-related-object.
4. I resolve to whine about a lot of stuff.
5. I resolve to walk around with a letter, check or other item that I'm supposed to mail to someone but can't because I don't have a stamp and keep forgetting to buy one, only to find it a few weeks later at the bottom

of my purse and throw it away, defeated — five times or more this year.

6. I resolve to spend way too much money on iTunes.
7. I resolve to forget the name of every single new person who starts work at my office this year, knowing them instead by the names I assign them in my head. Past examples include: "Eyebrows," "Jabberwocky," "Pornstache," "Creepy Dude," "Way Too Happy to Not Be High Guy," "Myrtle," "Wouldn't You Be Happier in a Nursing Home?" and "MakeMeWannaYawnaYvonna."
8. I resolve to piss off many people with my driving inabilities.
9. I resolve to forget the birthdays of at least three people who matter and then try desperately to make it up to them by spending way too much on belated gifts and overnight shipping.
10. I resolve to sit at my desk, having to pee, until I absolutely can't stand it anymore, then race to the bathroom and *almost* pee my pants — at least once a week.
11. I resolve to eat my weight in cake during my birthday month.
12. I resolve to fly backwards off the treadmill at least two more times this year.
13. I resolve to make it through the entire year without winning ONE blogging award (not counting the ones I award to myself).
14. After the winners of each blog award are announced, I resolve to obsess for at least two days over what those people have that I don't.
15. I resolve to find a new kind of food that I really like, then eat it every day for several weeks until I find it completely disgusting. (*continued*)

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16. I resolve to totally screw up the alignment of this blog post.

17. I resolve to kill at least four plants through sheer neglect.

18. I resolve to commit myself to at least ten tasks that I'm sure at the time I will do but then will forget all about until the people I've promised ask me about them, causing me to smack my head with my hand and go "FFFFFFFUUCK!"

19. I resolve to kiss the asses of those people for at least three weeks, post-head-smack.

20. I resolve to post at least 50 totally annoying and assholeish status updates on Facebook, motivating at least 30 people to hide my updates or unfriend me altogether.

21. Beginning in September, I resolve to ask the Big Bean at least 20 times to explain the game of football to me, only to immediately forget everything he just said so I can ask him to explain it again the next time a game is on, probably at a point in the game when big things are happening and he will be the most inconvenienced.

22. I resolve to finish a whole bunch of sentences with prepositions.

23. I resolve to get hopelessly lost in my own hometown, forced to call the Big Bean for directions and thus endure his incredulous "Seriously? You're lost AGAIN? But YOU GREW UP HERE" comments, at least once a month.

24. I resolve to hold my cell phone up to my ear and pretend that I'm having an important conversation with someone when I'm really singing an 80's song at the top of my lungs in my car at least 37 times.

25. I resolve to trip or fall down in a public setting at least seven times (at least two of which will involve the

explosion of my purse and random dispersion of its contents, especially tampons).

26. I resolve to feel old, ugly and inadequate every time I walk past an American Eagle store.

27. I resolve to cringe and cry every time someone posts another photo of me looking like a chinless goose-man on Facebook.

28. I resolve to laugh and snicker at unflattering photos and profiles of other people on Facebook, once again begging Karma to smack me around like its bitch.

29. I resolve to watch obscene amounts of television at unreasonable hours.

30. I resolve to ask at least 143 really, really stupid questions.

31. I resolve to be unbearably obnoxious about how amazingly smart/funny/awesome my kid is, regardless of how much the person or people I'm talking to might care.



(see? totally justified)



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I Can Tap That so you don't have to by Julia DeGraf

Too scared to eat a bacon candy bar? Too nervous to get your wisdom teeth pulled? Too embarrassed to visit a nude beach? Don't worry. I Do Things So You Don't Have To.

<http://idothings.info/>



Recently I discovered a fun-filled Web site that's all about SEX only funny.

It's called Can I Tap That, and for those of you who don't have a copy of Urban Dictionary handy, that phrase simply means "Can I have sex with yo' ass?" Uh, not literally the ASS part, necessarily, just, you know, to have sex with somebody. It's street talk, yo!

Here are the instructions:

Text someone and ask them if you "can tap that." Submit your hilarious exchange to Can I Tap That.

Examples from the site:

Me: Hey, when are you going to let me tap that?

Her: In your dreams.

Me: Sweet! I'll see you tonight . . . rawr.

* * *

Me: When you gonna let me tap that?

Him: Gurl, i will slam your body down and wind it all around.

Me: Well that sounds . . . invigorating.

* * *

Me: Yo baby, baby check it. Can I tap that?

Her: I imagine you "can."

Me: May I tap that?

Her: That's better

Me: So when?

Her: NEVER!

* * *

Me: So when can I tap that?

Her: I'll have to get back to you on that.

Me: Well, me and my hand are looking to make it a threesome.

Her: OH MY, I don't know if I want to be part of that party.

Me: There will be punch.

Isn't this fun? So I thought I'd try it out on Dave. He doesn't have a cell phone, and I don't really text, so I planned to just confront him.
(continued)

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In my head, it went like this:

JD: Yo, can I tap that?

D: Girl, you know I be down with that.

JD: Day-um, yo' ass is fine! I'm a tap that mother!

D: Aw, hell, YEAH!

JD: Let's get down.

D: Tap it!

JD: Right now?

D: Fo' sho'.

JD: I have a headache.

In reality it went like this:

JD: Yo, can I tap that?

D: What?

JD: You heard me, man! Can I tap that?

D: (backing away) What?

JD: I wanna tap that ass.

D: Is this something for your blog?

JD: You're ruining it.

D: What am I supposed to say?

JD: Just answer the question.

D: What was the question?

JD: CAN I TAP THAT?

D: I don't get it.

JD: (sighs heavily and explains all about the Can I Tap That site, thereby wrecking the whole thing)

D: Oh, you young people.

JD: . . .

D: Hey, I wanted to ask you. What's Twitter?

JD: I have a headache.

The problem, I realized, was that we were talking face to face. So later that day, I e-mailed him.

JD: Yo, can I tap that?

D: Yeah, sure. I guess. What exactly does this mean again?

JD: It means can I tap yo' ass.

D: Yes, undoubtedly. If I can "tap" yo back. Am I saying this right?

JD: More or less. You got a package today. Is there something sex-ay in that package?

D: Cool. That's my Chinese Jesus book.

J: I have a headache.

Why don't you try this fun game? Ask a loved one—or, better, a complete stranger—if you can "tap that." See what they say! Maybe you'll actually get to tap that. Or maybe you'll just end up with a headache. (pours Vicodin down throat)

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A Brief Song About Coffee

by Terese Ramin

Terese Ramin is the author of 10 romantic suspense novels, a novella and the creator/editor/producer and one of the writers in the charitable collaboration Bewitched, Bothered & BeVampyred. She lives in Michigan where she is frequently known as "the funny one." You can find her at www.witchychicks.com.

A Brief Song About Coffee



It is early in the morning and
my cup is steaming hot
full of milky coffee
just waiting for a shot

of a little something extra
a little something neat
a little something spicy
or maybe something sweet



Oh I love to drink my coffee
from a never empty cup
as long as it is HOT
I will sip it and slurp it UP.

Coffee's full of antioxidants
It's really good for you
so don't listen to the ones who say
you're wired out the wazoo

Because you're not you know
you're just really wide awake
from drinking coffee, coffee, COFFEE!
and that makes everything just Jake!

Terey, off to get another cup of coffee

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Kids are Creepy by Daniela Muhawi

Nobody appreciated the works of art Daniela Muhawi smeared on the kitchen walls as a toddler, so she eventually moved on to pursue other careers. She has enjoyed life as a field biologist, parrot trainer, government drone and editor-at-large. Daniela eventually fell back to what she enjoyed most, and is taking a stab at being a self-employed graphic artist. She currently lives in Northern California and is slowly going broke.
<http://seafoodpunch.com/>

If I've learned anything from watching horror movies, it's that kids are freaking scary. Orphans thank their adoptive parents by stabbing the family and poisoning the dog. Infants glare out from under their woolen bonnets with shining, red eyes, while possessed toddlers puke up pea soup all over your fresh linens.

I think horror movies are trying to convey a message: **Don't. Have. Kids.**

I have no problem watching a massive pink blob absorb a small village

.....or killer tomatoes roll through the neighborhood
.....or boyfriends transform into confused, snarling dogs
.....or a group of buxom blonds get lost in the woods, catch a crazy disease and try to kill each other, only to get skinned alive and turned into wax statues by the local hobgoblin.

But the instant you throw a baby into the equation... it's all over!
Example: Killer zombies. Awesome. Bring on the popcorn. Killer BABY zombies??!! I will curl up in the fetal position and possibly pee my pants. I can't do it.

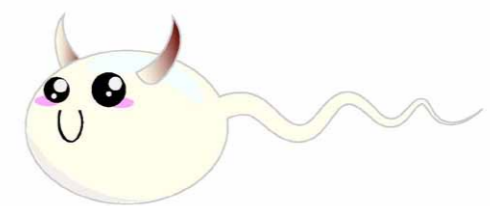
Kids are meant to be pure and innocent. The idea of a small, naïve child turning on an adult, OUTSMARTING them and potentially murdering them with their tiny little, baby hands is what nightmares are made of.

Children of the Corn, The Omen, The Exorcist and The Ring are arguably some of the scariest movies of their time, and they all involve a kid in one form or another. Now, I could be wrong...but what else would possess someone to make such a stressful movie besides wanting to teach people a lesson? Stressing us out can't be the only reason?!

Horror movies may be a community service-it's population control! Countless teens will abstain from jumping into each other's laps, even when their raging hormones make self-control almost impossible. The idea of an unexpected pregnancy is just too scary!

Or maybe it's just easy to make a horror movie...and kids don't really need a huge paycheck to be happy.

Just an FYI, I am excellent with kids.





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Maroon = Quiet Desperation

by Anna Lefler

Anna Lefler is an award-winning writer and humorist whose work has appeared online at TheBigJewel, MyPheme and HumorPress. Her essays on modern motherhood have been nationally syndicated and she spoke on the topic of comedy-writing at BlogHer's 2009 national conference, where she will appear again in 2010. Anna has performed original standup comedy in Los Angeles clubs including the Hollywood Improv and the Comedy Store. She can be found on her humor blog - Life Just Keeps Getting Weirder.

I'm Sorry, But "Cement" Is Not a Color

I lovelove paper. And pens. And pencils. I'm powerless over fresh tablets and spiffy notebooks and crisp leads and razor-tipped felt pens. Yum.

I have my usual stores where I get my office-supply fix. If I'm really jonesing I can get by with a visit to Staples for bulk binging. I'm not proud of it, but when

you need it you need it, yes? Then there are the really special stores, where I can spend hours poking through all the colored pencils and letterpress notes and little boxes to hold little clips and...well, you get the picture.

So the other day I was in one of these stores - one of the special ones - and I came across this piece of paper called a colorscope. It's beautiful - with a big grid of colors and a little description inside each one. The idea is that you stand back from the paper and pick your favorite color, then step closer and read what that color selection says about you.

So basically I get to indulge my paper passion and learn more about me?

I'm in.

But wait.

What is up with these descriptions?

Here's what the colorscope says about you if chocolate is your favorite color:

You are down to earth, comfortable with who you are and have a great ability to find joy in life. You don't take things personally, you rebound from failure, and you go for what you want.

Okay, do you know anyone who fits this description? Because I don't. And if I did, it would be difficult for me to form a true friendship with them since I'd be spending so much time wishing they would get gonorrhoea.

A quick scan of the other boxes revealed that they, too, were peppered with annoying phrases like "easy to love," "inexhaustible energy" and "incredibly skilled at innovation."
(continued)

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What is that crap?

And where are they keeping this super-human race of color-coded kiss-ups designed to make the rest of us look like slouches?

I do not need this. Therefore, I am blowing the lid off the colorscope conspiracy. Presenting:

The Crap-Free Guide to Favorite Colors and Their Meanings

RED

You have a disturbing predilection for jumpsuits, made doubly so by the fact that you have a really long torso [ahem]. Your coworkers are pretty sure you've had work done, but can't figure out where, exactly. Your ideal mode of transportation is a Renault Le Car in electric green. Favorite Olympic sport: curling. Favorite animal: ocelot.

ORANGE

If given the choice, you would live in Des Moines. On the weekends, you often can be found in your garage, playing with your arc-welder. You have not yet broken it to your children that you lost their college money in offshore Internet gambling. You are known by all as a sympathetic listener - as long as the subject of roller disco does not come up. Favorite snooty art word: pointillism.

YELLOW

People admire you for your moist, healthy cuticles. Due to an FBI filing error, you have mistakenly been under surveillance since 1977. You would be a fantastic knitter, if only you'd give it a try. The guy with the mutton-chop sideburns and Sansabelt slacks who was always on your sofa when you were growing up is not really your dad. Secret fear: that the guy on the sofa is not really your dad.

GREEN

When you hit 50, you will suddenly experience the uncontrollable urge to seal everything in your house with custom-fitted plastic covers. You like the idea of making the world a better place, but what's the pay-off for you, really? If you are a man, your preferred footwear is the zip-up, tasseled bootie. If you are a woman: same thing. Two words: mood swings.

BLUE

Seriously, enough with the make-up - you look like you're in the Kabuki theatre. You like to hide your sensitive side, to the point that children and animals both growl at you on the street. Yet people love to be around you because of your okra-cooking skills. You have a secret dream to be a podiatrist. Or a foot-fetishist. Depends on which pays better.

PURPLE

Everything you own is argyle. You once accidentally ate a sea anemone at the beach. Everyone admires your housekeeping, but then they've never opened the third door in the hallway, have they? You believe the glass is half full, but you also believe it has a lipstick smudge on it. It's time to learn to swim. I can't tell you why right now, but trust me: it's time. Secret fear: Disneyland.

GRAY

You are overly proud of your tractor and your neighbors despise you for it. Don't worry, everyone else gets Ava and Zsa Zsa confused, too. You are unlucky at love and even unluckier at cards. However, you kick ass at the dog track. Favorite song: "Turkey in the Straw." Favorite gemstone: CZ. It's all going to end in Vegas in the penthouse suite of Bob Stupak's Stratosphere, but it'll be pretty fun up until then.



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The Gym: Part One

by Leslie Goshko

Leslie Goshko is a Manhattan Monologue Slam Champion, recipient of the NY Fringe Excellence Award, and host of the monthly storytelling show at Comix Comedy Club, "Sideshow Goshko", which has been hailed as a "top comedy pick." Her one-woman show, "Vodka Shoes" debuted in the NY Frigid Festival and she regularly performs storytelling at such NY staples as The Liar Show, Risk!, and Speakeasy. She's also pretty proud to have performed on Broadway with the cast of Hairspray. Yeah, that was pretty cool.
<http://www.ohmygoshko.com/>

Leslie has been given a free week-long guest pass to one of Manhattan's swankiest gyms. She has never been a member of any fitness establishment nor does she usually work out. Let's see what happens...

I am amazed at the education I am receiving in the women's locker room. Apparently, there are a lot of unspoken rules: asking for someone else's preferred

locker number? Not okay. Standing in front of the wall mirror with one leg perched on the counter while you apply baby oil and give everyone a free vagina show? Totally okay! In fact, I've learned a lot about vaginas* this week.

As I only have my own potato to deal with, I didn't realize how many varieties of potatoes there really are: mashed, fried, boiled, groomed, ungroomed... it's amazing! And while it seems that another unspoken rule is to not look at other's potatoes, I choose to ignore this and blatantly stare. But seeing a potato in the locker room is one thing, seeing that same person outside the locker room after staring at their potato is quite another.

After putting my things in a locker that I was sure no one would want, I happened to see (this time not intentionally) a 60-something yr. old woman's potato. I quickly looked the other way and exited the locker room. Upon my arrival to the fourth floor (there are freakin' 6 floors of fitness fun here) I see 60 yr. old potato woman has beat me there by taking the elevator. I felt dirty. I felt ashamed. I felt embarrassed. Here is this sweet old woman getting ready to slowly pedal away on the stationary bike and all I can think is, "I know what your potato looks like." I equate the feeling to someone who runs into an ex-lover on the street and while they are exchanging pleasantries all they can think about is, "I remember that time you farted during sex. And I know about that ugly mole on your back."

So for the rest of the week I'm trying to keep my head down (or up?) and see as few potatoes as possible. Mainly for the selfish fact that I don't want to have awkward, post-sex feelings about elderly women.

**"Vaginas" will be referred to as "potatoes" for the rest of this blog just so I don't have to keep writing "vagina" a million times. Plus I like potatoes quite a bit more than vaginas so it makes perfect sense to me.*



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The K-Mart Story

by Sara Wincek

<http://www.imnotjudging-imjustsaying.com>

I will start this story by saying that I am directionally challenged. Or at least I was. After I moved away for graduate school, I did get better at it. But the story I'm writing today happened about three days before graduate school started.

I finished college, moved and started graduate school in nine days. During those nine days, I decided to go to K-Mart. I didn't know my way around the big town (not a city by any means) but Mom and I had stopped at a K-Mart at some point, and I wanted to stop back there to pick up a few things.

If Mapquest had been invented at this point, I knew nothing about it. I also didn't know where the K-Mart was I intended to go to or what direction it was in relation to my apartment. I only knew that I had been there. And apparently I thought I could get there again, simply because I wanted to.

So I set off.

I know that a highway has only two directions. It either goes North and South or East and West. But I promise you, I went at least eight separate directions on the highway. At one time, I got off the highway and was driving through peoples driveways trying to get back on. I knew I was close to it - I could even see the damn thing. I just couldn't figure out how to get onto it.

I covered parts of three counties that day. I saw more than seven entrances to Route 6 also (which begs the question, how can one road only go two directions? Hmmm?)

I stopped and asked directions several times. (I'm also very bad with directions, once it's past more than two turns, I can't get there.) The last time I stopped, I was lucky enough to be on the same road that the K-Mart was on. The girl just pointed and said "drive that way for about ten minutes."

SCORE! Those directions mean, as long as you turn the correct way when leaving the parking lot, you're golden!!!

I made it to a K-Mart. It wasn't The K-Mart, but I didn't care. I had been driving for close to six hours. My plan was to go to that K-Mart, get everything I wanted and/or needed, get directions home and spend however long I was living there just going to school, work, and home.

In retrospect, I understand why the manager I eventually met was concerned for me. I purchased some odd things. I must have been on a banana kick, because I bought banana lollipops, banana pudding, and banana flavored taffy. I bought tongs, dish clothes, prepaid phone cards, at least four notebooks, but only one pen. If I'm not mistaken in my memory, there was a sale on toilet paper. Never one to pass up a good sale, I think I purchased close to fifty rolls. And a bunch of other stuff.

Again, I planned to get everything I possibly needed because I didn't plan to leave my apartment again for quite some time. *(continued)*

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Once I selected all of my purchases and was ready to start driving again, I made my way to the register. I asked the young lady for directions. Actually, I may have said something to the effect of "Can you please help me get home? I think I need to go here...." She said she wasn't from that part of town, but that she would get a manager or someone to help me. I waited at the end of the check out until she went to the customer service desk. Eventually a manager came up to me.

He took me to the snack bar area. He said "I've heard you've had a rough day today?" and I'm quite sure he gave me a bottle of water and some french fries. I said that I had, the entire time thinking about how nice everyone at this K-Mart was. Imagine, hearing someone needs some help with some directions and giving them a bottle of water and french fries for free. But they didn't know I needed help with directions. They only knew I needed help getting home.

As we sat there talking about nothing in particular, I started to notice the manager looking at the customer service center quite a bit. They seemed to be doing quite the body language involving the telephone. And it concerned me that he didn't offer to help me with directions even though I had a map and one of my new notebooks out.

So in the only way I know how to, I asked him about it. "What the Hell is going on here!?!?" I asked. The manager calmly replied that he was trying to get me some help. "WHAT? I just need some directions. I know I need to get here" and I pointed to the map. The next thing I knew, the manager was making a cut motion to the customer service desk, and that girl got on the phone quickly. The manager asked me to sit down and I explained that I had just moved here for graduate school and had spent most of the day trying to get to another K-Mart. I finally found this one, got what I needed and wanted directions back to my apartment complex.

That was when I found out that at least one police officer, an ambulance, and a paramedic were on the way. My saying "Can you help me get home? I think I need to go here..." caused either the cashier or the manager to think that I had either been kidnapped or had amnesia.

That's right, I needed directions and emergency personnel were dispatched.

The customer service desk girl was calling 9-1-1 (OMG!) again to explain that it was a misunderstanding while the manager gave me very clear directions. Amazingly, I made it home without any further complications.

When I called my Mom, I started out by telling her that I'd had a long day, I didn't want to talk about it, and that I was home safe and sound. As mothers do, she insisted on hearing the entire story. The only times she's laughed like that since, is when she's re-telling it.



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Rainbow Brite
by DG



I'm a middle aged wife and mother of two with a full time job and a dog and cat that don't realize they are different species. That's the vibe in our house . . . confused. With all the chaos around here, I manage to write about three blog posts a week. Our lives are frenetic and the chaos is scored by the soundtrack of my son's pop punk/metal band rehearsing in the den.

My life is crazy, but I love it. I guess the best way to describe our life is some where between Ozzy and Sharon and Ozzie and Harriet. So come on in, you are always welcome. I hope you like it loud.
<http://diaryofamadbathroom.blogspot.com/>

I work in a fairly conservative office. Being that it is a company in service to the financial industry, there are occasional client and potential client walk throughs, requiring that we maintain a professional appearance. Even so the prescribed dress code is "Business Casual" which loosely translates to no sweats, booty shorts or other hoochie-momma outfits. Unless you get your wardrobe by shopping the racks backstage at a VH1 reality show, it's a pretty easy thing to conform to. But buried within that last statement, lies my problem. I am a poor conformist.

When I was sixteen, I was infatuated with my own rebelliousness. If you asked me who my heroes were, I was likely to tick off a long list of rock stars and tortured artists. I wanted to be like them. Not in the sense that I had any real musical or artistic talent, but I saw myself as a creative soul locked in a gray bourgeoisie box of suburban sameness. As such, I spent a

lot of time pondering my emotional state and complaining about my "stifled creativity". In reality, I was really just a brat and a lazy student and I wanted to blame my lack of success in school on the oppression of the man. So I adopted a tough chick persona, wore outrageous clothes and too much makeup and got into the alternative music scene.

It was around this time that my mother, frustrated with my inability to focus on school work and by my mounting trips to the Principal's office and subsequent suspensions, decided that learning a trade might be the best course of action for me. When pressed for what I might want to study, I came up with three things - dog grooming, interior design and hairdressing. After lengthy deliberation and a consult with an aunt who had pursued interior design and told me of how cutthroat and catty she found her coworkers to be, I settled on hairdressing. Little did I know that cutthroat and catty was invented by hairdressers.

Hairdressing afforded me the opportunity to experiment with my hair and gave me an environment where outrageous clothes and makeup were embraced and encouraged. What it did not provide me with was benefits. No medical, no life insurance, no dental, no nothing. After a couple of years in hairdressing, I left it; partially due to the lack of benefits and partially from having sufficiently scratched the creative itch. Much to my surprise and the surprise of those around me, I ended up going corporate. Thanks to my mother's long tenure with a large NY based bank, I got an interview and managed to land an entry level job in Customer Service. This job gave me benefits, paid for school and gave me a sense of security that I was not aware that I had been missing.

The biggest adjustment for me in going from creative to corporate was that I was going to have to do a 180 degree turn wardrobe-wise. I bought a few things and borrowed things from my mother and before I knew it, I had a nice wardrobe of conservative (*continued*)

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pieces that mixed, matched and got me through a workweek. I was as contented as I had ever been at a job, but somewhere deep inside, the diva was raging. She screamed at me when I went to bed at 9:30 and she belittled me as I purchased khaki pants in Macy's. She was unsatisfied and boiling under the surface. Until one day, I found a way to quiet her.

I decided that I was going to have a secret streak of blond hair, buried at the nape of my neck. I could dye this secret streak any and every color in the rainbow and no one would be the wiser. I could go to work in a conservative blouse and black dress pants and my inner diva would be working her hot pink streak under the cover of my neat, corporate bob. Hell, she could rave and party 'til she puked and no one would know but me and the diva.

That was a very long time ago, but now, twenty-plus years into my career, I still do the secret streak but for a totally different reason. It has become a ritual of the annual girl's weekend getaway that I go to with my friends. Each year we choose a new color; Ultra Violet in '06, Pool Blue in '07 and so on. And we all end up leaving with a brightly colored reminder of our good time nestled at the nape of our necks. What started as an act of rebellion has become a mark of togetherness and friendship and sisterhood.

These days, my inner diva has been all but silenced by the oncoming train of middle age. She rarely pokes at me anymore and I feel little need to rebel. That is until I take my daughter shopping in Hot Topic where Acid Green and Road Sign Orange colored nail polish sits side by side with black tutus and dangly, day-glow earrings. Then she wails like a banshee. I could never get away with the tutu, but girl, put on your sunglasses because you HAVE to see my pedicure.



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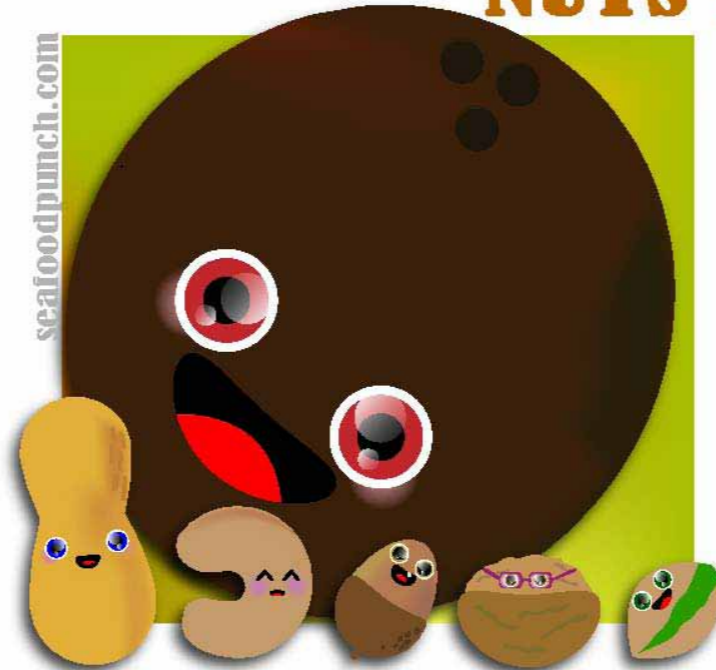
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Check out deez NUTS !



**The Reluctant Traveler
or... Hell No, I Won't Go.**
by Jayne Martin

Jayne Martin is an unapologetic bleeding-heart liberal who loves good horses, good friends, and good wine. A TV-writer in a former life, her credits include "Big Spender" for Animal Planet, "A Child Too Many," "Cradle of Conspiracy," and "Deceived By Trust" for Lifetime. Jayne started her blog, [injaynesworld.blogspot.com](http://www.injaynesworld.blogspot.com), in August of '09 where she writes on everything from politics to private parts. Pull up a chair. You'll want to stay awhile.
<http://www.injaynesworld.blogspot.com/>

My good friends, Kathie and Bruce, just got back from three weeks in France and Italy. Sounds divine, doesn't it? Last year, Pamela and Richard, traveled through Spain, while adventurous Penelope and Andy trekked through India and rode camels. I'm so impressed.

My friends travel, while I... don't. I don't even have a passport. I did go on a three-day cruise to Mexico in

2006. The best part was buying drugs that are illegal in the U.S. without a prescription, and cheaply at that.

It's not that I don't like seeing other places. It's the getting-to-them that presents the obstacle. The crowds, the packing, the delays, the flying. Not the flying so much as the potential for crashing. And don't give me that crap about it being safer to fly than to drive on the freeway. I drive a Volvo.

Besides, I mean really, isn't it all on DVD now anyway? If I want to see Italy can't I just pop it into the player and relax in the comfort of my own home with a plate of lasagna? China? Hey, pass me the egg rolls. And who wouldn't rather see Paris all cozy on the sofa with a savory Coq au Vin while avoiding all those annoying French people.

The last time I flew anywhere was in '93, from L.A. to Pennsylvania. To save myself the trouble of having to check a bag I decided that I would simply wear everything I would need over those next three days. It worked for "Heidi." Stoked by my own brilliance, I planned my wardrobe carefully and began to layer, starting with several pair of undies: a thong, a bikini and a brief, in that order. Next, a pair of knee high socks, some leggings, low-rise jeans and finally a long, black skirt. On top I donned a tank, a tee-shirt, then a black turtleneck and finally a large wool, cable-knit sweater. For shoes, black cowboy boots which went nicely with all my planned ensembles. Clearly, these were the days when you could still fly without enduring a cavity search.

Although it should be obvious, I will mention it anyway. The ingestion of any liquids that day was strictly verboten as peeing would be out of the question. This presented a slight problem, as I prefer to be dead-ass drunk when I fly, but the downing of a single 10-mg tablet of Xanax proved surprisingly effective. Were it not for the fact that even if you drink nothing for hours on end, the body will continue (*continued*)

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to produce waste fluids and deliver them oh-so-efficiently to the bladder, my plan would have been flawless. This I discovered about one hour from landing and by the time we taxied to the gate, the whole "Heidi" thing no longer seemed like such a stroke of genius.

Still determined to circumvent the baggage check-in folks, should I ever fly again I will pack my belongings in a cardboard box and FedEx them to my destination, but such an excursion is unlikely. Planes have been dropping out of the sky like flies lately. Have you noticed? So unless I'm guaranteed Scully at the helm, I'll be staying right here on good old Terra Ferma, thank you very much.

Trains and buses aren't much better. You're still jammed together with a lot of strangers carrying God only knows what germs. You've got some Einstein train engineer texting his girlfriend just when he's supposed to be switching tracks, and buses without seatbelts going off the sides of overpasses. Yes, I know. When my time is up it's up and God will initiate his own personal search-and-destroy mission. I could be securely ensconced in my own bedroom having safe sex with myself (all the safer) only to have a plane land on me. It happens. So why go asking for trouble when it can clearly find you any time it pleases?

I'm sure that I would enjoy lying on a white, sandy Caribbean beach, my toes dipping into the clear, blue waters of the Atlantic, while a large alcoholic concoction of some kind is served to me by a half-naked native Adonis. There are many places that I am sure I would enjoy, and it is my fervent hope to live long enough for the words "Beam me up, Scotty" to become a reality. But until then I'm afraid I will just have to remain the reluctant traveler.



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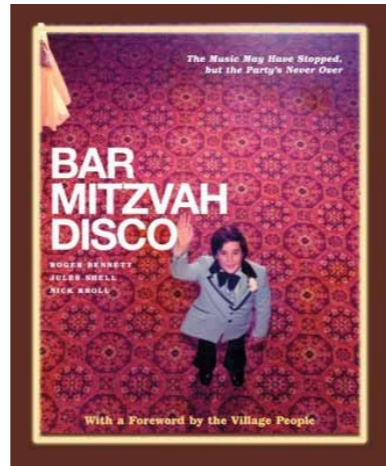
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Mazel Tov, 13-Year-Old Me. by The818

Morgan Shanahan (The818.com) is a freelance writer living in Los Angeles with her dashing hubby, two naughty dogs, and a four-month-old adorable tyrant named Dee. <http://the818.com>



It's days like this that I think to myself it's time to grow up and stop storing stuff at my parent's house. Case in point, my Bat-Mitzvah album, which is a time capsule of early 90's hilarity, and would have certainly provided some excellent imagery for this post. But I'm too busy organizing the crap I am storing at my house to trek the twenty minutes to Mom and Dad's and grab that particular embarrassing bit of memorabilia from my teen years. So instead, in honor of the (gasp) FIFTEENYEAR anniversary of the day I became a woman, here's a hilarious book to check out so you can laugh at other people instead of me: Bar Mitzvah Disco: The Music May Have Stopped, but the Party's Never Over. (Oddly, I actually know a few of the people who have their simchas mocked in this coffee table treasure.)

But back to my own torturous rite-of-passage. While our wedding featured a parade of vomiting cougars (I mean that in the best way possible ladies) and a ganja

circle 'round the bonfire, my Bat Mitzvah still holds the top spot for humiliating pubescent nightmares complete with party-crashers, wardrobe malfunctions, and Rachel's 75-Year-Old Grandma (my beloved surrogate Bubbie) swapping saliva with my DJ. That's right – Jews know how to fucking party.

Having a Bat Mitzvah, for those of you who weren't subjected to it, is not unlike being kicked in the teeth while naked on-stage in front of your peers and loved ones during the most awkward phase of your entire life. Somehow (and I'm not sure if I owe this to my Mom or myself) I managed to escape having to do it in a frock of technicolor taffeta – a fate which befell most of my friends at the time. And I was spared the horror of having my mouthful of braces immortalized in photos lining the family hall, because like most self-respecting Jewish Moms of her day, my Mom took me to the orthodontist to have the front six brackets removed especially for the occasion. But looking back my simple black dress and hardware-free smile were the only reprieves I was granted by the Gods of the B'nai Mitzvot. I'm tone deaf, but I had to chant the torah portion. That wasn't so bad (terrifying, yes, but not emotionally scarring.) I concluded my super awesome "speech" with a quote from the Lion King (Hakuna Matata.) Apparently my speaking Swahili from the Bima really pissed the Rabbi off, but again...could have been worse.

I'm not sure what the kids are doing nowadays, but in early nineties Los Angeles, if your Bat (or Bar) Mitzvah didn't have a theme (which would then be interpreted in an explosion of metallic tissue paper and glitter on each table as a so-called centerpiece by your second grade teacher who moonlighted as a party planner) you just weren't cool. My theme was The Beatles, which again, sounds harmless enough until you imagine the album cover to Yellow Submarine depicted in glitter 8 feet high, and you're finally starting to get the gist of what being a guest at "Morgan's Magical Mystery Tour" was all about. (Then again, my good friend Becca's special day *(continued)*)

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featured a larger than life – we're talking 10 feet tall here – Cabbage Patch doll to go with her theme; an image which I'm sure any young children who were present are still haunted by at night.)

Other staples of the era not to be forgotten: The inevitable "name in glitter" towering above the dance floor. The sign-in board, usually featuring a photo of the guest of honor in their formative years, possibly either dressed up for a Dance Recital/Little League Game, or with birthday cake smeared on their face. The neon light sticks and jewelry – both of which support my theory that Candy Ravers were just trying to relive their days on the Bat Mitzvah circuit. Inappropriate slutty Go-Go Dancers? I had 'em. Blow up guitars? I had 'em. Rainbow (and/or metallic) Rock-Star wigs? I had 'em. Mom's boobs popping out of her dress while she was lifted up on the chair during the Hora in front of every boy in my 7th grade class? Oh yeah. I had 'em. (The alterations place forgot to re-insert the boning in her strapless dress after they'd taken it in, resulting in a wardrobe malfunction of epic proportions.)

And then there's the issue of the "Party Crashers." I had a crush on this boy Andrew who was a few years older than me, so natch, I decided the way to win his heart was by inviting him to my Bat Mitzvah.

My parents still give me the stink-eye whenever the topic comes up. Much to my delight, Andrew showed. Much to their chagrin, he brought two friends, wore his usual grunge uniform of a plaid/flannel shirt and ripped up jeans, and proceeded to melt candle wax all over the dance-floor in what the "grown-ups" viewed as an attempt to burn down the synagogue.

As far as the 75-year-old woman who made out with the DJ? I was only 13, so no one ever really explained to me how that happened. All I know is that it did. I saw it. And it was amazing.

It's occurred to me that there are less years spanning the gap between today and the inevitable Bat Mitzvah of my unborn daughter than years now separating me from my own. My friend Lisa reminded me of that when she announced she had already decided what to buy our baby as a welcome gift. (Seriously, how cute is that onesie though? Clearly I'm going to make my child wear it for an embarrassing cake-smeared photo which will inevitably end up on her own bedazzled sign-in board.)





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Explain the Dead Thing to Me Again by Suzy Soro

I've been in the comedy business for over 20 years. From my standup jokes to my writing gigs for Uproarious Entertainment, Scrivel, Shecky Magazine, L.A.'s the Place and American Greetings. I'm also a speechwriter and punch-up for Hollywood celebrities. You can find me at my blog Where Hot Comes to Die as well as here on Funny not Slutty. I've also appeared on Seinfeld and Curb Your Enthusiasm and am currently living in Hollywood waiting for the next earthquake to hit.
<http://wherehotcomestodie.blogspot.com>
www.twitter.com/hotcomestodie

My father used to say, "Live every day as if it's your last." So does that mean I'd be picking out a coffin, a headstone, and talking to a mortician? Or that I'd wake up thinking 'Today is my last day on earth?' Then the next day I'd get up and say what? "Shit, I just blew yesterday."

I'm not too worried about dying because only fabulous people die. 'He was always smiling and was such a beautiful person. Everyone loved him.' Just once I'd like to hear, 'Well good riddance. Yellow teeth, didn't flush and never returned things.' And if someone dies too young they 'were a ray of sunlight and never hurt anyone's feelings.' I might just live to be a hundred and twenty.

They say that when you die there's a bright light, ethereal music and all your dead relatives line up to greet you. So now you're trapped in eternity with people you didn't even want to spend Thanksgiving with? And apparently your whole life flashes in front of you. I'm going on the record right now that I refuse to revisit any of my exes, geometry and anything from the 80's. So if anyone's listening, please delete those items from my Instant RePlay Book.

Around children, parents use euphemisms for death because they don't want to upset them. When I was a kid my mother and father said they were putting my dog to sleep. And all I remember was that one night they went to his bed and I never saw the dog again. I didn't let my parents near my bed for weeks.

I think the reason so many die during a disaster is that they save the wrong people. Women and children first. Then the elderly. I'm thinking specifically of the Titanic. They put the women, children, and old people in the rafts and left behind the only group who had the strength to row....The men.

I can just imagine another ship passing and their captain saying, "What's that noise? Crying kids? We're outta here."

Everyone knows that you should only evacuate women and children first if there are spiders and bogeymen on board. And old people? How long will it take them to get to land when they can't drive faster than 18 mph on the highway? They're just going to get back to shore and run us over with their 1978 Lincoln Continentals anyway. I'm glad the captain had the good sense to go down with the Titanic. If he lived, what were they going to do, transfer him to the Hindenburg?

I don't like all the phrases we use as a substitution for the word 'died.' 'He's in a better place.' If he was truly in a better place, wouldn't we all be trying to get there? 'He's gone to his reward.' So that's what you get for spending your whole life fighting with spouses, having stoner kids, working a crap job and paying bills? Death? 'They kicked the bucket.' Unless you're talking about Jack and Jill, fine. Otherwise? Dead. Dead. Dead.

Some people take ads out in their local newspapers to commemorate the anniversary of the death of their loved one. 'For John: his first birthday in heaven.' How do they know which newspapers are delivered in heaven? And I'm not knocking heaven; it might be okay, although there's probably nothing on TV there either.



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Don't Say 'Vagina' at the Dinner Table

by Heidi Lipka

Heidi Lipka is a full time wife, mother, adoptee, and a part time Registered Nurse, writer and crafter. She is the author of Heidi's Notes from Vermont, a humorous blog about her life, parenting, nursing, and her search for her biological family. She has a short story published in the book 'Reflections on Doctors: Nurses' Stories About Physicians and Surgeons'. She lives in Vermont with her husband, two children and three cats. greenmountaincountrymama.blogspot.com

Some ridiculous things I have done this past week...

- 1) Burnt my forehead with my hair straightening iron. Burned it significantly, so people have asked me what the hell I did to my forehead.
- 2) Burnt my forehead a second time. I look retarded.

3) Noticed that there are heat settings on the iron and turned the heat down, finally.

4) Said "Vagina" at the dinner table.

Why did I say vagina?

T, my six year old son is in need of speech therapy. He has trouble with a few letters but mostly the teacher and I are concerned because sometimes he has a trouble getting whole sentences out. It's almost like a stutter but he repeats the beginning of a sentence over and over.

Anyways, when I told him he needed speech therapy, he asked "What's sweech farapy?" Heh heh.

The other night at dinner T exclaimed "This vagina is dewicious!"

I nearly spit out my wine.

"Did you just say vagina?" I asked.

To which E, my 11 year old daughter, turning bright red in the face, yelled "MOTHER! He said LASAGNA!"

So I turned to T and said "Thank you. It's meat loaf."



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I Like It Rough...



Excuse Me, But That's Not a Table

by Kathy Frederick

By day I work as a computing consultant. By night, I'm the one family calls for tech support. It never ends. I prefer cats over dogs, cheese curls over chips and non-fiction over novels. Talking animals in movies make me laugh. I hate winter. Room service is a must. Calculus was a breeze, but I can't balance my checkbook. I don't understand people who jump out of planes. The square root of 3 is my favorite irrational number.
<http://www.junkdrawerblog.com>

Every few months, I go to my doctor to get an injection that must be administered at a ventrogluteal site. What's a ventrogluteal site, you ask?

My big 'ol smiling butt, that's what.

I've gotten quite used to getting injections this way. It's not painful at all, and subjects me to only a mild amount of embarrassment. Pants down. Inject. Band-aid. Pants up. Done.

Not the last time I went.

This time, I got Nurse Rached who was either in a terrible hurry to get me over with, or never got the instructions for making her patients feel comfortable in a vulnerable position, or both.

I got myself in position, leaning at roughly a 60 degree angle against the examination table. Pants down. Cheek in position. Knee bent. Ready.

I could hear Nurse Rached prepare the various paraphernalia necessary to give the injection.

Typically, the nurse will toss out the syringe plastic wrap, cotton ball and Band-aid behind her on a counter. Nurse Rached apparently felt it was too time-consuming to turn around and lay the items down behind her.

So she piled everything up in a heap on my butt. Yep, there I stood. Me and my ass table.

Plastic wrap. Check. Needle cap. Check. Syringe!!! Check. Used cotton ball. Check. Band-aid wrapper. Check. Got anything else you wanna throw on there? Your coffee cup? A phone, stapler and tape dispenser and you've got yourself an office.

Needless to say, I was mortified. Um, you almost done back there?

Listen, I don't go around leaving garbage on her butt, so I'd really appreciate not getting her again for my next injection. Besides, I hope to lose 20 pounds by my next visit, so it's possible there won't be enough room for disposables.

Lady, check the nurse manual. I'm pretty sure it says exposed butts are embarrassing enough.

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The One In Which She Has To Represent

by Swirl Girl

I am the mom of two girls, ages 10 and 6. I used to be in the wine business (back when I got paid to do my job) but have moved across the country so my husband can pursue his career. I started 'catharto-blogging' in February of '08 after losing 4 organs to surgeries and my wonderful dad to cancer. Nowadays - I try to fight the hormones of menopause while trying not to fight the hormones of my 'tweenaged daughter, manage our household, manage the thank-less task of being PTA President while managing to learn what there is to know about emerging social media like blogging, twittering, Facebooking...and wonder "How can I get some of what everyone is getting?"
<http://www.swirlgirlspearls.blogspot.com>

Each year at some point in my life, I have had to be the one to check the calendars. The token, if you will.

The wiser on the subject. The Chosen One. All eyes will look to me to whip out my handy calendar of customs and practices and see what is what and when. Whether it be a school function, a soccer practice, a PTA meeting, a meeting for work (when I actually did things and got paid for doing them) - I am the one who was the gate keeper to all things Jewish. Even here in the cyber meeting world - I have been called upon to "represent" for my peeps. And, as I am forever channeling my inner Linda Richmond - I will do so with as much seriousness as I do most things.

Hell, I can't get through a day without letting out some self-deprecating humor or a good yiddish expression. Or ten. Oy Vey - see? There I go again.

This was a typical conversation with me and my calendar in the days of yore...

Me: "We can't have that meeting on that Tuesday after 5:00pm in September, it's the first night day of Rosh Hashana"

n.j.. Boss* "but my calendar says it is on Wednesday.

Me: "Yes, n.j. Boss, it does - but the Jewish calendar is lunar, with each month beginning on the new moon. And the rest of the world operates by the solar calendar. This is because a Jewish "day" begins and ends at sunset, rather than at midnight. If you read the story of creation in Genesis Ch. 1, you will notice that it says, "And there was evening, and there was morning, one day." From this, we infer that a day begins with evening, that is, sunset. Holidays end at nightfall of the date specified on most calendars; that is, at the time when it becomes dark out, about an hour after sunset. And, the Jewish day begins at sunset the night before the day of the holiday. When the mathematical calendar says that a holiday starts on Wednesday, it actually means that the holiday starts on Tuesday night. So in actuality we can't have that meeting until Friday because Rosh Hashana is a two day holiday and ends Thursday night.... (continued)

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n.j. Boss: {{crickets}}

me: "...and don't ask me why sometimes the holidays are in September and sometimes in October...and how sometimes Christmas and Hanukah coincide and sometimes they are weeks apart. I was never very good at the Metonic system....."

n.j. Boss: oh jesus mary joseph swirl girl - when can we schedule the meeting?

me: ...I'll consult the Talmud and get back to you on that n.j. Bossman.

For observant Jews who work in the secular gentile world, this can be problematic in some years: if all of the non-working holidays fall on weekdays (as they sometimes do), an observant Jew would need to take 13 days off of work just to observe holidays. This is more vacation time that some people have available. But don't get me wrong - sometimes this came in handy. We got to take the regular national holidays as well as the important Jewish holidays off from work!

(Heh-heh-heh)

So let's start with Hanukah, since it is coming at us faster than a bunch of jews lined up in front of the Two for One Sansibelt sale at Jacks for Slacks in Boca Del Vista(self deprecating jew joke) - Contrary to popular sitcom folklore, we don't all move to Florida (a.k.a. God's Waiting Room) when we retire, and suddenly wear polyester stretchy pants. We don't all talk like Seinfeld's parents, suddenly find orange an attractive hair color, and play mah jong. Well, some of us don't anyway. (I fear it's a genetic predisposition..)

Anyway - Hanukah, also known as the Festival of Lights, is a holiday to commemorate the rededication of the Temple desecrated by the Greeks in ancient Syria a wicked long time ago. According to the story - when the Greeks , led by Antiochus and his hoard of

Greek guys blew into town, they oppressed the Jews (oy, vat else is new?) by trashing their 'hood, prevented them from practicing their religion - and even sacrificed pigs in their Temple. Now- a Jew named Judah Maccabee didn't like those Greeks gettin' jiggy with the piggy in his house - got together with his boyz and decided it was time for the 'throwdown'! The Jew crew defeated the Greeks and it was a mitzvah. But, when it was time for the rededication of the Temple, legend has it that there was not enough oil to light the menorah , or candelabrum, which was supposed to burn throughout the day and night. Miraculously - the little they had lasted 8 days and 8 nights. (such a deal-and you know how we jews like a good deal!) Hanukah celebrates that miracle of the lights, not the victory over the Greeks. We're a peace loving people y'all.

Most people know Hanukah, not because of its religious significance (it really isn't that religiously significant to begin with) , but because of its proximity to Christmas. In fact, the only religious ceremony is the lighting of the menorah itself. The whole gift giving thing is a relatively modern answer to the Christmas tradition of gift giving. (can you say 'jealous much'?) And while all of you out there need additional square footage or another garage just for the boxes of ornaments, the prestrung Martha Steward artificial spruce and the inflatable Rudolph and Frosty yard snowglobe...we get to go into the cabinet over the fridge (that is reserved for stuff you don't use because you can't reach it) pull out our menorah (and we usually have two or three homemade firetraps from preschool) and a box of candles- and maybe a little dreidle ; a game whereby contestants spin a square wooden top to win some (really gross tasting) chocolate coins a.k.a. Hanukah gelt.

Sounds festive doesn't it? We might even get crazy and fry up some Latkes (potato pancakes) - and this year, because we've been very, very good...we'll serve those with applesauce and sour cream! Wheeee!
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On the first night of Hanukah around here - after we've lit the 1st candle on the Menorah, opened one present ('cuz we have 8 frickin' nights of this my friends) ..my kids like to put on their jammies...watch the Burl Ives' claymation classic of...(uh, not for us) hop in the car (sans carseats and seatbelts)... pop our favorite carols into the c.d. player- (no wait, we don't have any of those.)..and drive around the 'hood checkin' out Christmas junk, er um , sorry - I mean decorations! ***

So there you have it. 2000 years of history and tradition as interpreted by your favorite (or perhaps your only) cyber Jew! If you think Hanukah was fun...just wait until springtime for the interpretive dance of the Pascal lamb and the Matzoh!

* n.j. stands for non-jew

**much of this post was stolen..er, um adapted from the site Judiasm 101.

***and no it's not okay to have a tree or lights or decor when you don't celebrate Christmas people. Blue and white lights hanging from your eaves and mailbox do not mean Hanukah. If you put up lights and junk, how will Hanukah Joe know where the Jews live? How would he know whose sliding glass doors are open so he can sneak in and leave some gelt and a dreidle under the pillows of good little kinderlach? Huh? I guess he could wait until Christmas Eve, and just got to the local Chinese restaurant and movie theaters. Because that's what Jews do on Christmas Eve. Gotta Represent.

Oh yeah- and let's send a Chchchchchappy (summon up all yer phlegm folks, we are a very phlegmy people- what , with all those years of walking in the desert and all) Birthday to my sister in Florida! She is not retired, and does not have orangey blonde hair (yet)...and I wish I could celebrate her 48th with her!



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EVERYONE
LIES ON THEIR
RESUME



**It Was an Accident!
Honest!**
by Paula Larew Wooters

One day I woke up and discovered I had become a cat lady... just without the cats. Like a crazy cat lady's house, my brain is a cluttered jumble of thoughts, ideas and memories. I write to sort through some of the clutter in my brain. Oh, yeah... and to get attention!
<http://howtobecomeacatladywithoutthecats.blogspot.com>

have a brother (we'll call him Waldo) who's 13 months younger than I am. Because of our closeness in age and because my older sister thought we were total pests and refused to have anything to do with us, we used to hang out together a lot. And it was usually my brother who came up with the good ideas for things to do.

When he was in about sixth grade Waldo got a paper route. He'd go out every day to deliver the daily

news to the neighborhood... almost like the old fashioned town crier. I was in awe of the great wealth he amassed from this gainful employment. As a man of wealth, Waldo got to buy all sorts of swell stuff.

Now, being children of the 50's, our heroes had always been cowboys. After playing "Cowboys and Indians" with pearl handled cap guns and suction cup bows & arrows for so many years, Waldo was finally able to buy a real live bow and arrow set!

I still remember the day he brought it home. We marveled at the sleek bow, which had to be carefully bent with a powerful arm to attach the string. And the arrows! Wonderful pointy ends, the shaft fletched with real feathers. So cool!

Not wanting to miss out on a moment of fun, Waldo ran outside to set things up. The neighbor kids were also excited. So much so, that one offered to hold the target for him.

That would be the paper target.

That he held between his two grubby little hands.

And he stood steady on as my brother notched the arrow onto the string.

And pulled back.

Whish! Away the arrow flew! How graceful! How dramatic! It arched upward into the air, sailing, sailing, until it found it's target!

No, it's not what you're thinking! GEESH! How crazy do you think we are?

Lucky for the neighbor kid, Waldo had not yet perfected his aim. He missed the bulls-eye.

Waldo only managed to wing him in the hand. Seven stitches later, we had all learned our lesson. *(continued)*

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Or, so we thought!

In the attempt to avoid further accidents (and lawsuits) my parents started taking the entire family to a nearby indoor archery range. It was really cool. The targets were on conveyor belts so that when you were done shooting, you could simply push a button and the target would come to you so you could retrieve your arrows from the bulls-eye... or surrounding area.

One day, as we were enjoying the range, I was poised in the lane next to my older, more refined sister. (She actually condescended to join us on this family outing and got dressed up for the occasion. She was wearing a skirt, sweater and hosiery to impress the young men at the range... I'm sure she was looking really hot.) This time it was I who notched the arrow, drew the string back to my ear and aimed at the target.

As they say, always keep your eye on the target.

Just as I was about to let go of the arrow, someone said something to me and I got kinda distracted. My fingers slipped and the arrow went flying.

No worries, though... it was headed in the right direction.... almost.

It only went slightly off course, making contact with a steel beam strategically placed between the lanes. (Shit! Who put that there?)

Was it my fault the sucker ricocheted off the post, causing it to come flying back in the opposite direction and hit my refined, well dressed older sibling in the leg. I mean big deal!

You'd think I'd done it on purpose, the way she went on, screaming and yelling at me and shit! I mean, it hardly even bled or anything... it didn't even stick in her leg for more than a fraction of a second! And she didn't need any stitches like the neighbor kid did.

What a whiner! I think she just hated me and wanted to get me into trouble because it ran her nylons.

Anyway, neither Waldo nor I ever made it as Olympic archers. Our interest in archery began to wane soon after that incident. But it's not like the experience was all for nought. I simply added this to my store of cautionary tales to share with the kidlets at school. They all think I'm very wise... if somewhat accident prone.



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To Wax, or Not To Wax?
by The818

Morgan Shanahan (The818.com) is a freelance writer living in Los Angeles with her dashing hubby, two naughty dogs, and a four-month-old adorable tyrant named Dee. <http://the818.com>

Back in my first trimester, I briefly pondered the idea of a bikini wax. Before the plus sign I wouldn't have thought twice about it, but at the time I was barfing 4-5 times daily, and blowing chunks into rapidly hardening hot wax covering my private areas seemed like something that deserved a moment's consideration. Then there was the issue of this "increased blood flow" to the region that happens while pregnant. At the time a quick survey of all the women I knew who had recently been pregnant came back with a resounding TRY A RAZOR, so I put the issue to bed and proceeded to do my own grooming.

But, uh...now I'm at that point in my pregnancy where...err...safely reaching my lady bits has become a bit of a challenge. You know how I said I can no longer see my lower-belly tattoo? Well, suffice it to say that I can't see what's going on below that tattoo either. So the question arises again...to wax, or not to wax. As I consider this very important issue (I mean...I can't be walking into Labor and Delivery looking like

I've got disco fever, now can I?) I can't help but remember one particularly brutal waxing session that took place a few days before my wedding, and shudder from the sheer horror of it.

Her name was Angelique, and she worked at this fancy new salon around the corner from my house. She came highly recommended, and while some may think it was ill-advised for me to try a new beautician just a few days before my wedding, that's kind of just how I roll. I arrived, and as she ushered me back to her waxing studio she leaned in like she had a secret: "I just got this great new wax – It takes a little longer to cool, but it's about half as painful, if you don't mind." Half as painful? Oh happy day. Count me in.

Now for anyone who has never experienced the sensation of hot wax hardening over your private areas (ie: french women, straight men, and hippies) let me tell you that it can be rather unsettling, and is certainly something that you are looking to have happen as quickly and painlessly as possible.

...And to avoid any future confusion, ANGELIQUE, that's A) quickly, and B) painlessly, yes in that order, and yes, I do mind!

What I am NOT looking for when I walk in to your salon THE WEEK OF MY WEDDING for what may well be the MOST IMPORTANT BIKINI WAX OF MY LIFE is for you to glue those silly paper panties you just handed me to my effing labia with this new-fangled-slow-cooking wax. Nor am I looking for you to unceremoniously give that wax, and those panties the hardest yank you can muster, nearly tearing off half of my lady parts in the process. And what I am really seriously definitely not looking for is for you to then cut those stupid paper panties off of me only to pluck my slow-cooling wax covered pubic hair out one by one for AN HOUR AND A FREAKING HALF as a result. *(continued)*

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I walked out of there hobbling like a cowboy and feeling like I had just taken a power-sander to the cooch. I was lucky to heal in time for the big day...and it took me months before I was ready to brave the waxing table (someone ELSE'S waxing table) again. So, you can see why I might hesitate to relive that experience with a belly the size of Texas and that infamous increased blood flow.

So I ask again...to wax, or not to wax? Is it worth it? Any tips? Can you use that numbing stuff while you're carrying a child?

(Now excuse me while I crawl under my bed at the thought of any of the men in my life who might read this and weep at the very mention of me even having parts that would necessitate a bikini wax. Sorry guys. Although on the bright side, I'm pretty sure I scared my Dad off for good with my Dildo post, so there's one less weeping man for me to worry about.)

(Oh, and no – that picture is not of me. There is no way in hell I would let a guy who looks like ex-KGB wax me, let alone post a picture of it on the internet... although I'm sure he's very quick and efficient about it.)

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Remember When That Happened?

by Lisa Page Rosenberg

Lisa Page Rosenberg is a survivor of 16 years in the television business. She worked, by turns, as a writer, director, producer, casting associate, and the gal who gets everybody's Starbucks order. Later she spent time as a counselor at an outpatient program for adorable teens with un-adorable psych and addiction issues. Working in the orbit of actors, rock stars, comedians, and teenagers prepared her for her current gig as the stay-at-home mother of a pre-schooler named Bob. Now it's like the circus has come to town everyday. She is living the dream. <http://www.smacksy.com>

It's 9:30 AM on a Tuesday. You are, as per your elegant usual, at home and wearing pajamas. You sort of have to pee but you can hold it until you after you drop off an armload of towels outside in the laundry closet on the back patio. Arms full, you use your left foot to shut the sliding glass door closed so that your 20

month-old son will not be able to follow you down the stairs. You move quickly. It's colder out here than you thought.

You glance up the stairs and see your boy waving excitedly at you through the glass. Then, with a horrible "click" sound that echoes through your entire flashing-before-you life, you realize that your charming son has just locked you out. You slow-motion run back up the stairs just in time to see him take off down the hall towards his room. The pounding on the heavy glass door and repeated yelling of "Bob! Bob! Bobby! Let Mama in! Bob! Hey Bob!" is ignored. The dog wags her tail sweetly at you and then follows Bob down the hall.

You are still living in the old house, the house with the insane security features because it is wholly necessary in your just-inside-the-border-of-super-crap neighborhood. The Spanish style bungalow has 12 windows. Six of the windows are impenetrable, 1970's stained glass monstrosities. The other six are higher than 9 feet from where you stand on the ground and locked. The fence surrounding the backyard is 10 feet high. The one gate out of the yard is locked with a deadbolt that can only be opened with the key that is inside the Target diaper bag sitting on the couch. You are not only locked out of your house, you are locked inside your backyard.

There will be no help from the neighbors. The people living to the east and west are at work. The neighbors in the creepy apartment building in back are sleeping off last night's beer bong follies and would not call 911 if their own meth lab were on fire. (Proven.)

You notice that one of the bedroom windows is open a few inches. You speculate that you can scale the wrought iron fence next to the bedroom window, push back the wooden shutters, and pry the window open and pull yourself up and in. Your plan stops just short of the knowledge that you have little to no upper body strength. *(continued)*

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You are now hanging off of the side of the house by one hand. Your silky, now sweaty pajamas not providing great traction as you try to heave yourself up to the window frame. You are becoming increasingly more aware of your need to pee. You are getting shivery.

Suddenly, this all strikes you as very funny. You get the giggles for 20 seconds but then pull it together, assess the situation and immediately start crying. You then laugh and cry simultaneously. You have a foggy recollection that this might be the definition of "hysteria." Your son arrives in the bedroom and seeing your tear-stained face in the window, yells, "Mama! Mama!"

"Bob! Bring Mama her keys. Bring Mama the diaper bag. Or the phone. Bring Mama the phone, Bobby. Bob. Bob. Bob. Bob."

You realize that he is attempting to climb on the rickety, flea market bed side table to get a closer look at "funny, funny, Mama!" in the window.

"Bob! Get down!" He turns and runs out of the room and back down the hall, the dog trots behind him. You drop back into the dirt with a thud.

You decide against peeing in the yard for fear of being watched/photographed/videotaped by the cat-condo-in-lieu-of-blinds guy in the rear building. (Plausible.)

You position yourself at the side gate that has a partial view of the street in front. You yell, "Fire! Fire!" at passing cars because you read somewhere that statistically, people are more willing to get involved with someone yelling, "Fire" than with someone yelling, "Help."

Loud ranting is crack-business-as-usual in this neighborhood and cars do not stop, even those not drown-

ing out your cries with the dulcet tones of Ghostface Killah with car stereo bass set to 10. You wait. You check on your kid by trying to get a glimpse of him through the sliding glass door. You see the dog standing with her front paws on a dining room chair, eating the breakfast leftovers from the plates on the table. You go back to yelling at passing cars. You wait. You wait. You do not pee.

A police car drives slowly down the street with the windows open. "Fire!" you yell as it continues down the street. "Fire! Fire!" 30 seconds later the police car comes back into view as it reverses up the street, stopping in front of your house. You wish you were wearing a bra. You realize that if wishes were really being handed out, a more convenient wish to ask for might be something closer to the you-wished-you-weren't-locked-out-of-the-house variety of wish.

As the tall-ish teenage-looking cop, Officer Wilson, and his markedly shorter partner, Officer Martinez, approach you through the yard, you can hear your dog inside the house barking her maniacal "Intruders!" bark.

You explain the situation to the policemen in one crazy-lady-run-on-sentence. You don't mention the part about how close you are to wetting yourself. You can see your own disheveled reflection a little too clearly in the lenses of Martinez's wrap-around sunglasses. He asks if there are any imminent safety hazards for your son inside such as a pot boiling on the stove? Full bathtub? A tear stained and unbalanced mother? He doesn't say that last part out loud, but you can fill in the blanks. You answer no. They do not ask you about the "fire."

After testing the locks on the side gate and the security screen on the front door, they agree that picking these types of locks would be difficult, if not impossible. Martinez gives you his cell phone so that you can call your husband at work. As you would expect, your husband does not recognize the number (*continued*)

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and lets it go to voice mail. You softly curse his name and the entire Caller ID system. You call your friend Jennifer. She answers on the second ring. You explain the situation. She might have a set of keys to your house and will look for them and also try instant messaging your husband. She is a 25 minute drive away, not including key-searching time.

While you are making calls, Wilson is climbing the neighbor's gate into their yard. He scales the fence, heaves himself over the top and lands hard in the grass. Now you and the baby-faced police officer are both locked in your backyard.

You walk with him as he surveys the windows of the house, as you have now done countless times.

"Your windows are really high up."

"Yeah."

"Those stained glass ones are... interesting." Everyone's a decorator. You blame HGTV.

"It's a rental."

Together, you return to the front gate and see that two more squad cars have arrived on the scene, doors open, dispatch radios blaring. Martinez drinks coffee from a Starbucks cup and laughs with another officer. You don't believe that they are problem solving your situation. You shift your weight back and forth from one foot to the other.

Wilson decides to take a look at the sliding glass door to see if he can lift it out. You explain that because everything in the house appears to have been "installed" (jerry-rigged) by someone's not-so-good-at-do-it-yourself grandpa, you know that the sliding glass doors are in backwards and upside down. You found this out when you tried unsuccessfully to install the non-returnable sliding door child safety lock.

Your son appears at the sliding glass door waving and yelling, "Policeman! Policeman!" The dog is close behind him. Upon seeing the officer, your dog barks excitedly (Policeman! Policeman!) She jumps up, throwing herself against the glass. Her paw hits the latch and pulls it down. Click. The door is unlocked.

You are free.

It's 10:45 AM. Someday, perhaps a year or two from now, when you have moved out of this house, out of this neighborhood, this might make a good story but right now you have some peeing to do.

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by **Lori Wescott**

Lori Wescott is an RN turned trophy wife and humor writer residing in Nolensville, TN. In 2009 she was named as a finalist on HumorPress.com's America's Funniest Humor Writing Contest. Most of her spare time is spent taking care of her son, stopping only to heal the occasional leper. She doubts anyone will read her bio so she also went to Harvard and Princeton where she graduated with a doctorate in "all things really smart."
<http://www.ori-palooza.blogspot.com/>

"I moved all my stuff into the guest bathroom," Brantley (husband) mentioned in passing. "Excuse me?" I asked. "What's the meaning of this?"

"You take up too much room. I want my own space."

Our master bathroom houses a double sink with a large vanity and from time to time, my things may, sort of, somewhat, encroach (slightly) onto his side of the counter. So what? It's part of being married.

"This is absolutely unacceptable. We're approaching our seven year itch. You can't bathroom divorce me. I'm already under a time crunch to decide whether or not we're compatible. How can I do that if we aren't even using the same bathroom?"

"It's not that big a deal."

"It's a very big deal! Today you stop sharing a bathroom with me, and the next thing you know you're clad in a tight Ed Hardy t-shirt and neglecting your eight kids. Damn it, I will not be your Kate Gosselin!"

"Stop being dramatic. You're just mad because you won't be able to use my razor and mooch my shave gel."

Busted. He had me. No one replenishes toiletries the way that man does. He's a fiend when it comes to bathroom stock. By the time the bar of soap gets a little too small to handle, it's whisked away and magically replaced by a shiny new one. He has a constant bathroom inventory going and I wasn't ready to take on that kind of responsibility. I tried the guilt route.

"I really miss you. It's just not the same. I feel like we don't see each other as much. It's like we're out of sync."

"When we shared a bathroom I would go in and close the door, come out about ten minutes later and you would gripe at me for not striking a match. Do you miss that?"

I thought hard. "Umm, yes."

"Too bad."

I could tell he was enjoying this. It was time to give in and stroke the ego. "Ok, yes. Fine. I miss your bathroom management. Without you my bathroom has no system. My biggest fear is that, without your leadership, it will fall."

Gloating, he agrees under the condition that I move all of his stuff back into our bathroom. I reluctantly oblige.

I realize that I reduced myself to shameful groveling, a condition I abhor, but I had ultimately won the war. I knew this for certain the next morning when, upon entering the shower, I discovered shampoo on the left, conditioner on the right, clean towels on the rack and a brand new bar of soap. I was so gleeful that upon exiting the shower I almost forgot to passively aggressively leave everything in disarray. With the soap on the floor, the conditioner on the left and shave gel squirted on the glass, the world was as it should be. Finally, things were back to normal.



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The Economy Is Kicking My Ass

by Jayne Martin

Jayne Martin is an unapologetic bleeding-heart liberal who loves good horses, good friends, and good wine. A TV-writer in a former life, her credits include "Big Spender" for Animal Planet, "A Child Too Many," "Cradle of Conspiracy," and "Deceived By Trust" for Lifetime. Jayne started her blog, [injaynesworld.blogspot.com](http://www.injaynesworld.blogspot.com), in August of '09 where she writes on everything from politics to private parts. Pull up a chair. You'll want to stay awhile.
<http://www.injaynesworld.blogspot.com/>

The "Time For Service" light has been on in my car now for three months. Any time, I expect to see the "Hey – I Need A Little Attention Here," light, followed closely by an angry, flashing "I Told You So."

My car is not the only area of my life suffering from neglect. I've taken to wearing hats whenever I leave the house so as not to expose the two inches of gray roots seeping from my scalp. As luck would have it, I live in a rural area where cowboy hats are considered accept-

able attire everywhere. Sometimes I throw on a baseball cap just to change things up a bit. I do have to say I'm happy to see that torn jeans are considered high fashion at the moment because that's pretty much the condition of all of mine and I fully expect to be mistaken for Cameron Diaz any day now.

Fortunately, I've never required an abundance of food. We have chickens on the farm where I live and they provide a steady supply of eggs. There's a veggie garden, too, and several fruit trees. What we don't grow here is easily pilfered from the lands of surrounding farmers, but except for the occasional splurge on a jar of Bacon Bits, meat is a thing of the past.

Being single has some financial advantages in these lean times. Nobody on Facebook cares if I shave my legs, so I save on razors. Also, the bushes growing on my limbs keep me warm in the winter when I can't afford heat, and I've discovered that underarm hairs can be plucked.

Like most animal lovers, my dog's needs come before mine. If Dixie has a hang nail I rush her to the vet. I, on the other hand, have to be scraped off the front of a truck before I'll see a doctor. Not that I don't have insurance. I do. But if I use it, they'll raise my rates. Which seems reasonable. Those executive-owned mansions don't come cheap.

I will never be able to retire. I feel sorry for all those who worked hard their whole lives and scrimped to save for their golden years only to have lost those savings in the market downturn. Now they're just like me, only I never saved a dime. Life as a freelance writer rarely offered such an opportunity, plus I squandered a lot of it, too. I do have a job, so I'm ahead of many in that respect, but work has slowed recently while, conversely, the monthly bills only seem to know one direction -- up. Funny how that works. To those who say "money can't buy happiness," I say if you have money and you're not happy, you're just not trying.



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Attack of the 50-Foot Woman

by Anna Lefler

Anna Lefler is an award-winning writer and humorist whose work has appeared online at TheBigJewel, MyPHEME and HumorPress. Her essays on modern motherhood have been nationally syndicated and she spoke on the topic of comedy-writing at BlogHer's 2009 national conference, where she will appear again in 2010. Anna has performed original standup comedy in Los Angeles clubs including the Hollywood Improv and the Comedy Store. She can be found on her humor blog - Life Just Keeps Getting Weirder.

Does This Store Make Me Look Fat?

Steve Martin had a stand-up bit in which he'd tell the

audience he was going to do his impression of the Incredible Shrinking Man. He'd ask the audience to close their eyes for a moment, and when they opened them, he'd have raised the microphone several feet.

This is the opposite of my experience at Whole Foods.

Do you have Whole Foods in your town? They can be identified by their Euro-woody exterior, heaps of local weeklies toppling in the doorway, and parking lots clogged with honking Land Rovers, their drivers flipping each other off while wearing organic cotton t-shirts printed with sayings like "Practice Random Acts of Kindness" and "Namaste."

[Note: Whole Foods is not to be confused with Trader Joe's - the rebel grocery sibling whose share of the industry involves lulling customers into thinking they've spent the afternoon buying carob-coated pumpkin seeds and miniature quiches in a cross between an Army PX and Disneyland's Pirates of the Caribbean ride.]

I live in a volatile bubble on the time-space continuum, equal distance from three (count 'em) three Whole Foods stores and buffeted by the unique socio-political vibrations of each. Each store has its individual quirks: the hair-raising U-turn across an onslaught of cross-traffic required to enter the Brentwood parking lot, the glacial pace of the elevator in the Wilshire store, and the thicket of tropical orchids (one of which I swear fired a poisonous dart into the back of my neck) that one must hack through to enter the store on Montana Avenue.

Fine.

However.

The matter with which I take issue is one that pertains to each of these stores, nay (that's right, I said "nay") every Whole Foods store I ever entered.
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Whole Foods stores are too friggin' SMALL.

Yes, SMALL. As in bite-sized. As in Lilliputian. As in I should be able to fit down an aisle sideways without my shoulder blades emptying the shelf behind me and my nipples wiping out the shelf in front of me.

I'll admit, at 5'9" I'm not petite. I get that. I have to say, however, that I never worry about banging my forehead on a ceiling-mounted security camera when I'm in Albertson's.

No, it's only in Whole Foods that I feel like I've morphed into a water buffalo upon passing through the automatic glass door.

Oh, sure, they try to fake you out with those little weirdo shopping carts that aren't built to human scale. You have to bend at the waist to reach the handle and if you arrange things just right they'll hold a grape and a box of Tic Tacs.

Then there's the tricky packaging, designed to make you think you're in a normal-sized store. Should I buy 20 grains of rice, or splurge and get the economy-sized box of 50?

Why am I there, you ask? Well, honestly, I forget. I walk out in a grump with my bags (which upon returning to full-scale land, I discover are the size of paper lunch sacks), swearing that I'm never going back and rubbing my ankles, raw from being sideswiped by the exotic olive barge.

Then, six months later or so, I am desperate for some fresh idea for dinner and I figure it can't be as bad as I remember, right? I was probably just having a bad day.

Which is what happened yesterday when I found myself mooing and swishing my leathery tail down the produce aisle, my cloven hooves cracking the distressed wood floors with each step and my horns spearing bundles of aura-balancing soy candles with

every toss of my head.

Come on, I thought later as my family struggled to survive the evening on a roasted chicken the size of my fist and asparagus spears my husband initially brushed away as grass clippings. Who was I kidding? I'm a child of the suburbs, where the parking is above-ground, TP comes in 48-roll packs and the grocery store is roomy enough to cut doughnuts in a Delta '88 without riffling a single page of The National Enquirer.

I've learned my lesson. From now on, I'm livin' LARGE.

By the way, as long as you're here, could you help me load that pallet of Pop-Tarts onto my forklift?

Thanks.