

ACRIMONY



Online Dating Scams!

***Learn the
scams and
what to watch
out for***

Also in this Issue:

***The Call of Death by the Bean Si
Predictions and Prophecies
And Much Much More!***

**March 2004
\$3.00**

**Reporting on the Alternative, Gothic, and Paranormal Scenes
<http://www.Acrimony.org>**

Acrimony

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Editorial Page

What happened to the February issue?

We had a few problems in February. Everything that could go wrong, did. Writers missed deadlines and we just couldn't pull the issue together. To the faithful, I apologize.

Some good things have come out of it however. It is my opinion that this issue is our best yet. We've got some new members on the writing staff and re-arranged a few other positions. Jenny Slocum has taken over the advice column. Tom Scott will be featuring a different band each month. Pam Logue will be writing both fiction and factual pieces. I am also proud to announce the premiere of *Blood and Water*, a new original comic by Jennie Breeden specifically for Acrimony.

Acrimony continues to want your submitted work. It's easy, makes you a few (and I mean a few) bucks, and is something you can tell your grandchildren about when you're rocking in your rocking chair telling them how hip and cool you use to be.



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CT Thompson'.

CT Thompson
Editor-in-Chief
editor@acrimony.org



To the Editor...

I'm interested in alternative healing. I have some natural skills for massage, but I lean to the sensual. I haven't taken the certified course here in Utah which is 6 months to a year. I took a mini 6 week course learning the basic foundation of all, Swedish massage. And know I am far from being as technically correct or know as many modalities as a certified therapist. Yet the conversations I have had lately lead me to believe that everything isn't always taught in a conservative restrictive setting. I don't understand how anyone can give a man a massage and not realize that natural reactions occur. It seems out of harmony for someone to repress their natural reactions and even cruel to take care of all other areas except for the one that is part of our divine nature.

I have a friend who lives in another state who tells me of these wonderful individuals who are wise and give other modalities of healing. When I ask him where they learn these things, it is never in an edifice of financial education.

I still don't know why I'm writing you and rambling on. Perhaps seeking similar enlightenment wondering if I have a healer's touch, or if I'm only addicted to touching.

Sweet Dreams

You will make some man very happy one day.

To: President.

I am Government Official, United Arab Emirates country. I'm interested in your company products. Our Government have assigned me to contact a Company with there good products to supply for the new project.

I decided to contact your Company for the project. I will send to you the products which have to be supply in your Company when I hear from you. However, I will inform you when your knowledge is in need for the products to supply.

I wait for your urgent response in doing business with your Company. Contact me through this following email: ahmendsule@excite.com

Yours faithfully,
Ahmed Sule

Okay, this email actually came into LavaMarketing.com, but I just couldn't resist printing it. Any moron websurfer can surmise that Lava Marketing doesn't sell anything. It's this kind of nonsense that makes a person consider turning off his email - permanently.

Send your email and comments to editor@acrimony.org

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How to submit your work to Acrimony

Acrimony encourages and thrives on reader contribution. Acrimony will pay you \$10 for each article, \$5 for poetry, and \$5 for comic strips, satirical cartoons, or other artwork which is published. Space in Acrimony is severely limited and Acrimony cannot guarantee publication of all content submitted.

There are 3 steps to getting your work in Acrimony.

1. E-mail your content to editor@acrimony.org or mail it to Acrimony, P.O. Box 215, Ontonagon, MI 49953.
2. Include an email or written letter stating that you own all of the rights to the content and grant Acrimony the right to publish the work.
3. Payment for work published is handled through PayPal.com. Include in your correspondence your PayPal account name. If you do not have a PayPal account, you can sign up for free at <http://ad2.acrimony.org>

Online Dating Scams



by **CT Thompson**
ctthompson@acrimony.org

I get a lot spam. I administer 9 websites and have 11 email addresses. I've accepted spam as an evil that is necessary in order to enjoy the Internet. Every once in a while, a piece of spam clears my software filters, passes right through my mental filters, and is opened and read. The best spam is spam you don't know is spam. On November 9th of 2003 I was fooled.

Hello! My name is Kseniya. I like your profile and I think that I want to know you better. If you want to correspond with me too, my e-mail address is: kseniya_e@front.ru. If you send me at e-mail then I will send you my photos and more about me. Please write me on my email.

Best regards Kseniya.

I had to read the email a few times. Profile? I didn't have a profile. I was a little bit curious about the matter (and I always like looking at photos of women), so I replied.

The next day I received a reply from Kseniya, complete with attached photographs.

Hello Chuck. I am very happy, that you answered to me. I could not answer to you before because I arrived in the village to my grandmother. Today I come back to my town and was glad read your letter. I want tell to you some about myself. My name is - Kseniya. I am 27 years old.

I have been given birth December, 8 in Yoshkar-Ola city, and now I live in it town in Russia. Soon i will be 28 years old. I am single girl and before never be married. I do not have children but I love children very much.

I work in kindergarten, I am teacher, I bring up small children - preschool age. I like my work very much. I love all children and if it children don't my I love that children too..

I live all my life with mum. I don't remember my daddy. They have divorced with my mum, when I be 3 years old and I don't remember his. My Mum speaks that he has found other love and that he don't want have children and their marriage was not kept.

My father and his love drinks much alcoholic. They used alcoholic production constantly much. I don't see my father all it time after when i be 3 years old. But I am glad and very happy that I have such good mum. She has brought up me. We with mum lived together in rent apartment.

I have the grandmother - Anna Ivanovna, she lives in village, My friends speak, that I am kind and honest girl. My friends like in me my fidelity and my kind heart. I has made scanning my photo album and now I send some photos to you.

I have never been in America before, it is possible on a site there was what that a mistake, I do not know why that cannot see the structure even. I want tell more about my town. It is capital republic of Mari-El. My town location on approval 800-850 kilometers from the Moscow, and on approval 150 kilometers from Kazan city. Do you know about it city?

Tell me more about yourself and about your family??? Please send me your photos. I wait your answer.



One of the many photos I received from Kseniya

Right about now every internal alarm I had was going off. I went to Google to investigate. First I entered *Republic Mari-El*. I quickly found out Yoshkar-Ola was the capital city. Next I entered *Yoshkar-Ola Republic Mari-El* into Google. There it was, the fourth item returned: ***Yoshkar-Ola. Republic Mari-El, Russia: Online dating scams.***

As it turned out Mari-El was a hotspot for online dating scams. There are quite a few groups that operate in the area. Most are language students from the local university. They obtain photographs of young Russian women and then solicit western men and hopefully start up an online relationship. When the time is right, they start asking for money. In many instances the e-mail's don't even come from women.

Most scams take one of two forms. The first is a visitation scam. After the relationship is developed, the woman says she has a friend at a travel agency who can arrange for her to obtain a tourist visa. It will only cost \$200 dollars American. If you send the money to her via Western Union, she can get the visa and be with you in no time at all. However after the money has been sent, the woman usually disappears.

The second scam is similar. After the two have been talking via email for a while, the man receives and sobbing email. The woman's Internet connection is about to be shut off because she can't pay her \$150 phone bill. She can't imagine not corresponding with the man


everyday and pleads for his help. As in the first scenario, after the money is received, the woman usually disappears.

These activities are classified as fraud in Mari-El, however it is difficult to catch and prosecute these scammers. Many men never come forward. Of the few that do, it is difficult to track down the perpetrators as no real information about these women is ever received.

I found all of this fascinating. At first it surprised me that anyone would ever fall for this. But then I realized that there are many lonely people out there and these people might try things that might not seem so rational. This made me angry. It made me angry that these men were being taken advantage of. I decided to start up an online relationship with

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Kseniya. My goal was to obtain as much information about her as I could and then hand that information over to the appropriate authorities.

Over the next month I received a total of 21 e-mail's from Kseniya. The first few detailed how hard life was in Russia. It was impossible to find a suitable man as all Russian men drink too much vodka. Work was hard to find and it was too cold. She dreamed of some day walking along sandy shores.

This was stage one - introductions. They play on the typical Russian stereotypes. There are no jobs. Russian men are horrible husbands. They drink too much and are full of infidelity. They need someone to save them.

In her sixth letter her tone changed.

I cannot precisely describe the feelings and that occurs to me. But I know, that your letters have changed my life. My life became rhythmical and real. Your letters give my heart very high warmly and bring pleasure.

When I go in internet-cafe and I see your letters, in my heart rhythmical pulse starts to make the way in increasing frequency. And when I see your mail, I became very happy. I read your letters and I present that that you describe. I

really am glad and smile, I am happy to read your letters.

I cannot understand what feeling with me, but I know precisely that something has changed in my soul on the best, I nevertheless do not know that is, but I shall try, understand it feelings. I hope soon to receive from you news.

The con was evolving. We were in stage two - profession of love. Her next four e-mail's detailed how much she cared for me. How much I had changed her life. How she couldn't wait to be with me and show her love for me.

In her eleventh e-mail we entered stage three - asking for money.

I today went to Travel agency wanted to start to make out the international passport and the visa. I have written the application on reception of the passport and the visa. Travel agency has given to me the sum of money which I should pay. This sum makes 280 dollars, 120 dollars on the passport, 100 dollars on the visa, and 60 dollars for the given services of Travel agency. But I do not have such sum. I had only 1500 roubles. I thought that this money will suffice me on official registration of papers. I never had to be

engaged in registration of such documents and I did not know anything.

I need in your moral, financial support, the help. In agency to me have told that the passport and the visa can be issued during two weeks, the more likely I would have money resources, the faster I could start to legalize papers. I want to arrive as soon as possible to you too. I think that we should be in time you to meet about New Year. I shall try to do the utmost and impossible, to be with you beside my loved.

I shall wait from you for the letter with impatience.

Yours Kseniya.

There it was. In a little over 2 weeks and just 11 e-mail's this Russian women had fallen in love with me and wanted to abandon everything she knew in her native country. She sought to come here and live the rest of her life in bliss with me. How lucky I was to have happened across such a woman.

I had to wonder once again why anyone would send money to someone they had never met or even talked to.

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Over the next week I tried to get as much information as I could about Kseniya. She gave me an address, but I was unable to confirm it. I tried to get a phone number but she claimed not to have one. She wanted the money via Western Union. I told her this was impossible. Any money I was to send had to be sent via bank transfer. (I was hoping to get an account number that could be traced) She claimed not to have a bank account and told me she could not receive money in this manner.

Then our relationship ended abruptly. She accidentally sent me an email intended for someone else.

Hello my Bryon. I have received from you the letter. You have asked me provide for me exactly what I will need in order to process the transaction. I to you allowed the data which are necessary for you that you could make a remittance. Also you me have asked will be enough 600 dollars???? I think, that will suffice 600 dollars to me on charges of registration. The international passport, the visa and to travel to Moscow.

Kseniya realized what she had done immediately. She attempted to explain the situation.

Hello again my Chuck!!!!!!!

I have just sent you the letter, was going to leave

from internet-cafe. Suddenly I have noticed that instead of your name Chuck has been written Bryon. At me heart has stood, breath when I have seen it has stopped. I do not know as it could take place, I badly understand in a computer. I have asked the manager internet-cafe why it has taken place?????

The manager to me has told, that it could happen that up to me other girl corresponded. To whom she wrote the letter, this name appeared in my letter. I do not know that now you to me tell????? I very much regret about happened. It fortuity!!!!!!! I think that you should understand me. I shall wait from you the letter.

Yours Kseniya.

She actually wanted me to believe that she stepped away from her cafe computer and another girl stepped in and mischievously changed the names. I couldn't stand it any longer. This woman took me for a real fool. My good intentions went out the window and I tore her the new asshole she needed. I didn't get any more e-mail's from Kseniya.

For men who are looking for romance abroad, there are several hundred reputable international dating companies out there. I should point out, there are just as many dishonest ones. Be sure to carefully research any company you are

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thinking of doing business.

Even if a company is reputable, dishonest girls can still occupy their member lists. Here are a couple of things to keep in mind:

No woman is going to fall in love with you via e-mail after a week.

Think hard before sending money to someone you have never met.

One or two pictures isn't too uncommon. Is she sending you many more? (Kseniya sent me 9 in total) If a woman can't even afford a phone how can she afford a digital camera and/or scanner?

How sluttie-looking are the pictures? Warning alarms should be going off if they're too provocative.

Beware of sending money via Western Union. Once it's sent, you can never get it back.

You can verify a woman's address by sending her flowers. If a florist can't find her house then it doesn't exist. Invest \$30 or \$40 and save yourself a lot more in the long run.



Pictures like this one are sure to be from a scammer

As with all things in life, use prudence and caution when in unfamiliar territory. Keep spam in the trash and remember not all international women want to move to the USA.



For a comprehensive listing of known online dating scammers visit:

www.womenrussia.com/blacklist.htm

The Universal Life Church



by **Dan Shaurette**
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"Every day, people are straying away from the church and going back to God."

- Lenny Bruce

Hello there, I'm a religious zealot. No, really. I mean, I may not carry my propaganda with me, and I certainly will not thump you with anything, but I don't mind a little pulpit action now and then.

What religion do I preach? None in particular, actually. I just enjoy the subject, and I love seeing people either squirm away from the subject, or join in with enthusiasm. If I preach anything, it's tolerance. I love learning about not only the different religions people practice, but also how people actually practice their religions.

America is a funny country. It is one of few nations that does not have an officially recognized or

sanctioned religion. This has a lot of great perks; of which my favorite is there's no such crime as "heresy". Think about it. Isn't it liberating to know that you cannot be hanged or burned at the stake.. at least not by the government? I know it helps me sleep at night.

Not only that, we work really hard to keep it that way. There's always some argument going on about the "separation of Church and State" or "the establishment clause". This all boils down to what the Constitution of the United States has to say on the subject. Well, actually, the first Amendment of the Constitution. See the framers of the Constitution took a few things for granted, believing we had certain inalienable rights. They eventually decided to write ten of those rights down, calling them the Bill of Rights, and added them to the Constitution in 1791.

In any case, the First Amendment says the following: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

Now if you ask me, truly, the First Amendment says all of the really important stuff that governs the

freedoms we all enjoy. I can worship whomever I want, or no one at all if I should choose. I can say whatever I want, and write whatever I want, criticizing or praising anybody I choose. I can hang out with a bunch of my close personal friends who share my beliefs. Finally, I can register my complaints about anything to the government, when other people, including the government, try to mess with my rights. What a country.

What blows my mind, though, is the fact that it isn't the free speech part, or the petition of grievances part that comes first. It's the free exercise of religion. This was a pretty revolutionary idea at the time, literally. Sometimes, it still seems to be a radical concept to this day. This brings me to my whole zealot status I mentioned.

I love religion. All of 'em. Old, new, reformed or orthodox. Pick a god, any god. They're pretty cool by me (and the goddesses too). Wow. Love 'em. Problem was, I use to think they were all mutually exclusive. This belief of mine coming from my upbringing, as I'm sure is similar to yours, especially if you belonged to one of The Big Three religions; Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. The First Commandment says, "You shall have no other gods before Me."

Again, amazing how the biggies are listed first to get the most attention. My point being, in my youth I took this to mean that all other religions were false. As I grew

older, and perhaps more cynical, I realized this is a statement of jealousy. More over, it acknowledges other gods exist; this one just wants to be praised first. Well more power to Him, I say.

So I started wondering, are there churches, or other religions, out there that broadly embrace all religions, or at least as many as they can list. The answer, it seems, is a big fat YES! The biggest, or at least, the most readily available and accessible, is the Universal Life Church.

You may or may not have heard of this church before. What you may have heard may also be positive or negative about it. I'm all for listing the good and bad sides of everything, because I personally want to know all sides of an issue and want to help everyone make their own decision. Free exercise. Gotta love it.

The Universal Life Church, or ULC, was started in 1959 by Kirby Hensley in Modesto, California. The ULC is a non-denominational and interfaith church. Its goal was and still is to legally ordain anyone as a minister of the ULC regardless of sex, race, age, creed, or religious belief. That's right, no matter what your personal religious beliefs are. The idea being that not only do you not have to shed your beliefs and ties to your current church, but you could legally preach and administer your beliefs.

The practical purpose of this is to legally ordain a person to be able to perform marriage



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ceremonies. For anyone, no matter his or her beliefs. This ordination is legal in all 50 states because an organized church has decreed it. Many county and state governments have regulations that require the minister to be 18 or older, or that they be licensed in that state. However some states do not.

Arizona, for example, states that "any licensed or ordained clergy" must perform the ceremony. Put simply, if you are ordained by the ULC, that is good enough for them. Nevada on the other hand, which is famous for its weddings, has stricter rules. A minister wishing to perform a marriage must have a congregation or church established in the state of Nevada, and they have a complex set of forms to file in advance. This should not be considered a setback of course, because as an ordained member of the ULC clergy, you can set up your own congregation.

In fact, as a ULC minister, you can officiate one wedding ceremony or make it your business. You can minister at funerals, baptisms, and house blessings, whatever. You can form your own church, hear confessions, offer counseling, grant absolution, and even ordain others.

They only ask that you promote the freedom of religion and that as a minister you "do that which is right." So long as you believe it is right, it is not illegal, and does not infringe another's rights, then you can do what you will. Essentially they follow a legal version of the Golden

Rule.

So what's the catch, right? How much does an ordination cost and what do you have to do to get one? Time was, when the church started, it was a mail order organization, and they did ask a small fee for the Certificate of Ordination. Now, thanks to the internet, anyone can get online, visit www.ulc.org, fill out a form, and become ordained for free. The credentials pop-up on screen with your name, you print them out, and voilà you are an ordained minister of the Universal Life Church.

Heh, it can't really be that easy, I thought. Fact is this is both the blessing and the damnation of the ULC. It is just that easy. There is no formal indoctrination, no schooling, no anointing, and no swearing allegiance to uphold an ancient dogma, which has served as the instrument of persecution.. ahem, I mean, no oaths. And no nice red uniforms, oh damn. Sorry.

Since it is an automatic process, it is therefore quite easy to take advantage of the ordination process. People have been ordained as a practical joke, using false, profane, or silly names; people have ordained their pets, dead people, famous people, fictional characters, etc. The ULC lost credibility in the past because of this, but has instituted controls in filing their ordination requests. Legal names must be used in order to be valid, and people actually go through each request and only record those that are not suspicious.

Even though these processes are in place, and the ordinations are legal, there are still those who deride the church and its members. Granted, the idea of going online to become a priest so you can perform a marriage ceremony is humorous. It makes for great comedy material. For example, on the NBC show Friends, when Chandler and Monica were engaged, Joey went online and got ordained so he could be the one to marry his best friends. While this is funny, I personally also think it is very sweet. The fact that this is legal, and most people don't believe it is, is what makes it funny to me.

The idea appealed to me back in October of 2001. Sorry, I just had to stop and realize that was over two years ago. So much has happened since then. For me, I did it, believe it or not, in response to the September 11 attacks. I personally suffered a crisis of Faith, as I think many people in this country did. A holy war brought about the deaths of many innocent people on American soil. Things like this happened all the time in other countries. But now it was personal.

Until that day, I considered myself unofficially to be an apathetic agnostic. But even I had the question cross my mind, "How could God let this happen?" This question either shored up or decimated the faith of many people. At first, I wobbled unsteadily upon the picket fence I had until then balanced effortlessly along.

After the attack, I saw and heard things that made me feel the gamut of negative emotions. Horror, Fear, Anger, Sadness, and Confusion in the beginning as my TV witnessed the destruction in NY and DC. Then I had begun to feel Pride, Charity and Love again as I watched the bravery and humbleness of those at Ground Zero, NY. Then I watched the negative sides of my fellow Americans emerge -- Hate, Intolerance, Pain, Ignorance, and Prejudice. To hear stories of violence and persecution against Arabian or Muslim Americans disgusted me beyond words.

Then, when I honestly thought things couldn't have seemed worse, Jerry Falwell came onto the scene. At a time of our darkest hour, when what we needed to see was the light at the end of a tunnel somewhere, his words caused a cave in. He said, "The pagans and the abortionists and the feminists and the gays and the lesbians... the ACLU, People for the American Way, all of them who have tried to secularize America, I point the finger in their face and say, 'You helped this happen'."

To put it politely, I snapped. I wanted to do something, anything, to affirm my personal belief that in this country, people had the right to say and believe anything they liked. I found the ULC online, became ordained, and decided to form my own "church".

I created a website where anyone could come if they chose, to speak their minds, share their ideas

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and ideals, their hopes, dreams, and prayers. Where all gods and goddesses could be worshipped, discussed, and analyzed. A place where questions about rituals, beliefs, doctrines could be answered. I don't have all the answers, so the more people who visit and communicate, the better. It's my personal effort to snub the Religious Reich.. er, Right, and proof that I finally shed my apathy.

I do believe in the Divine. Those internal and external forces that elude our five senses that make us fail to prove their existence. But proof does not deny faith as far as I'm concerned, neither does lack of proof. I agree and disagree with the tenets of many religions, so I do not consider myself a follower of any particular path. But the path I am on is one of enlightenment. Enlightenment is not a destination, but a journey.

A "minister" is not the same as a "preacher". Many times the terms are interchanged, and sometimes people may take what I do as preaching. I call it "rambling". I'm espousing my own beliefs. You may share them or not. I am not hurt if you choose not to agree with my points of view. In contrast, the goal of a preacher is to encourage you to do more than share their beliefs. They tell you what is right and wrong, and what the consequences of your choices are. I am an advisor, or counselor, by my nature. I am happy to give advice and help to those who ask me for it. But I do not tell people that they have to do what I say.

The Universal Life Church granted me the opportunity to be recognized for what I have been all my life: a Minister. Ordained and recorded by their Registry in Modesto, California. Born and raised in Phoenix, Arizona. Chartered by the Divine on a special quest: Life.

In my mind, the ULC represents the great alternative religion. It has stood up to even the playing field for everyone. This is what ultimately upsets the established religions that have made their churches into exclusive clubs. Or perhaps, more accurately, have turned the Afterlife into the Ultimate exclusive club. We all pay the same admission fee to get there.

Pick one, pick none, pick all of the above. If you like, take a peek at my website, www.AquariusChurch.org, the Aquarius Church of Enlightenment. I'll end this with one of my favorite quotes by Thomas Jefferson.

"Difference of opinion is advantageous in religion. The several sects perform the office of a Censor morum over each other. Is uniformity attainable? Millions of innocent men, women, and children, since the introduction of Christianity, have been burnt, tortured, fined, imprisoned; yet we have not advanced one inch towards uniformity. What has been the effect of coercion? To make one half the world fools, and the other half hypocrites. To support roguery and error all over the earth."

- Thomas Jefferson



Featured Band

Gothic Music and Cheesesteaks

Carfax Abbey tears up the Philly Local Music Scene...

by **Tom Scott**

necromancer@acrimony.org
<http://www.UndeadRadio.com>

The Philadelphia Music Scene is always alive. This month I'll report on an up-and-coming new Dark/Gothic band called ***Carfax Abbey***.

Now you may not think their work is gothic, but let me tell you... listen to the words and it'll scare the pants off of you! Blending hateful chords, powerful electronic effects and dark lyrics, Carfax Abbey is my favorite Gothic local band to date.

Carfax Abbey won at the Origivation 2003 Orgy Awards, taking home Best Bassist, Best Male Performer, and Best Live Performance. They also cleaned up at the Philly Music Awards, bringing home Most Creative Performance, Best Guitar Player, and Best Bass Player. Placing well in many other categories, the band is looking ahead to bigger and greater things, and might

just be one of the greatest local bands in the area.



Carfax Abbey

Recently, they've played Y-100's Feztival 2003 along with AFI, Audioslave, CKY, and Beck, among others. The Feztival is one of Rock's biggest events in Philadelphia. Y-100, a Philadelphia FM Rock/Alternative station, selects the best up-and-coming Local stars in Philadelphia, and this year it was Carfax Abbey opening the show with some of their powerful songs.

As shown on their Web Site, "Impossible to simply label as any one style, Carfax Abbey is best described as an *Intense Audio-Visual Assault!*"

So far, these cults of twisted fiends have released four full-length CD's, a Demo CD and countless other un-published tracks under their own independent label.

They also made a song on the CD "Music from the Succubus Club", which is provided as a soundtrack to the awesome game "Vampire: The Masquerade" by White Wolf Studios, also makers of the Hunter series of games.

Carfax Abbey is definitely a band to watch in the upcoming years, and I'm sure we'll see quite a few appearances by them in the national Rock/Gothic scene in due time.



Coming in the Spring of 2004 you can listen to Carfax Abbey on the Undead Broadcasting Network, the radio station for Indie music

<http://www.undeadradio.com>



Acrimony's astrology expert, Michael Ramses, is now offering free Tarot readings via his website.

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If you like his free services try one of his more indepth Tarot readings or personal Natal Charts.

<http://www.MichaelRamses.com>



The Call of Death by the Bean Si

A short Black Humour/Irish Folklore story



by **Pam Logue**
pam@acrimony.org

The darkness cast her soft downward veil shrouding Podraig O' Mulligan as he lay, so quiet, so perfectly still... So dead looking...

Careful not to tip over any of the burning candles, or slip on the Holy Water Father Francis had scattered, Connor a wee man of stature stretched to peer into the hard wood crib. He had never seen this man so quiet, and how different he appeared. It was as if he was wearing the mask of Jesus himself! Hadn't he heard his Granny Tilly say that he used to wear such a scowl on his face that he would scare the pigs away, never mind the Devil himself! And now for heavens sake what was going to happen since he looked as serene as the Lord himself!! The entire village of Clougher always said that

Podraig O' Mulligan would find some way to cheat himself through the Pearly Gates, and now it looked like his Grandfather was going to live right up to the sentiment of the entire village!

Bless his Grandmother's soul; she must think of his death as an invitation to freedom. Connor shivered. His thoughts were suddenly disturbed as a cold wind blew the shutter loose on the window and belled the antique lace curtains inwards. Podraig let out a deep barren guttural whinge as he cried out for the White Lady to send the coach. "Bejesus!" thought Connor, the old man had screamed just like his wallet had run dry! For goodness sake what would the Bean Si be doing coming anyway to this tight old turf farmer, as surely she had far better and more considerate folk to cry for!

Thinking he sensed his Grandmother's presence, Connor looked over his shoulder for her. She was not there. He remembered her Alzheimer's and thought that she may have already forgotten the old man was dying. Perhaps she was gone checking the bank account balance to see if Podraig would be leaving enough money to pay for the

wake! Connor felt jubilant at the thought of a Guinness paid for by the old man himself, but that idea quickly turned into a good tight grimace at the thought of anything being paid out of his meagre inheritance! Connor wondered if there would indeed be enough Nuns in Ireland to pray for forgiveness for Podraig as the expense of sending his grandfather's soul out of purgatory was going to cost more money than what the Devil himself could conjure up.

Noticing the candles had lost their flame, Connor walked over to light a taper from the radiant turf fire. His Grandmother always adored the aroma of the paltered peat's as the smoke wafted and dribbled throughout the nooks and crannies of the cottage. It did nothing for

Connor. He returned the veil of soft light around Podraig's deathbed. In Connor's mind formed a master plan to send his dear old Granny off packing to the peat bogs when he took control of the farm!

Connor turned abruptly to the window as an almighty bolt of lightning sizzled across the sky. The wind chimes danced violently outside. The moaning wind appeared to Connor to be increasing in fever and intensity. The wind howled faster into cries of wanton despair. Connor swung around in the crib's direction as Podraig chanted over and over again, "The Lady of Sorrow walks, the Lady of Sorrow walks." His eyes glazed over into a death like trance.

A crack of riveting thunder brought Connor's attention back to

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the window again. Another fiery lighting bolt illuminated the old Churchyard that was home to the village's dead. Connor grasped his breath in sharply, quickly blessing himself, and prayed the Trinity. In sharp contrast to the black night the Bean Si emerged. Clinging to her was a long grey-white cloak of a cobweb nature. Her tall, thin body floated silently as her cloak drug along the gravestones she passed. Her silver-grey hair streamed to the ground. Her face was of the palest white pearl. She had eyes filled with red from centuries of crying.

Briefly Connor admired the passion the Bean Si portrayed. She was a Lady of Death whose voice blended in with the wails of the mourners, she herself weeping as she came to take the soul of their beloved. Conner then realized that he was bolted to the floor with fear. The undead spirit woman moved closer to the cottage.

As if in a rage the window shutters slammed open in the wind and the flames in the fire kindled high. Flickering shadows of darkness and light danced around the walls of Podraigs bedroom. The candle flames died as the room temperature suddenly plummeted. The Bean Si floated in wildly, illuminated by a brilliant flash of lightning. Her hands and arms were outstretched, her very presence containing the power of nature. She beckoned to Podraig, that he start his final journey on the death coach.

Podraig sat up rigidly and let

out a blood-curdling scream. He extended his own arms as if to embrace her, and finally death.

Connor, still glued to the floor and shaking with fright, wished it were all over. Not that he was any expert, but he was forgetting how to say the Trinity. His fingers were shaking so much he had already slipped his grip on the rosary beads. He soothed himself with the thought that very shortly he would be a man rich with all the power as the Laird of Clougher. Connor suddenly grasped his chest as the excitement and fear riveted through his body, moaning as the pain made him delirious. In his brief moment of clarity he was even more shocked to see Father Francis beside him, kissing the sacred cloth of the Trinity and going through the ritual of the administering of Last Rites to him!! "Father... Father... It's Podraig she's a calling for... Not me, not me!" Connor screamed inside himself, trying to have the words heard but to no avail.

It was too late, Connor looked into the eyes of the solitary fairy woman and heard the keen wail of the Bean Si that pierced the night. Its notes rising and falling like the waves of the sea. Connor knew the call in his Celtic beliefs to be an announcement of a mortal's death. This was his own death; he grimaced, as he crossed himself. Now his eyes met with peace, as the Lady of Sorrow smiled on him with a love he had never known. She reached out and took his soul to travel to his ancient Celtic family of the earth.

Podraig was jubilant! He had cheated death herself! But Podraig felt a calling from his soul, awakening his life to new meaning and possibilities. Maybe the call of the Bean Si would change his future. Connor's death was his rebirth, bringing new meaning to his own life until the end of his days.

A Celtic Blessing for Death

I pray that you will have the blessing of being consoled and sure about your own death.

May you know in your soul that there is no need to be afraid.

When your time comes, may you be given every blessing and shelter that you need.

May there be a beautiful welcome for you in the home that you are going to.

You are not going somewhere strange. You are going back to the home that you never left.

May you have a wonderful urgency to live your life to the full.

May you live compassionately and creatively and transfigure everything that is negative within you and about you.

When you come to die may it be after a long life.

May you be peaceful and happy and in the presence of those who really care for you.

May your going be sheltered and your welcome assured.

May your soul smile in the embrace of your anam cara (soul friend).

---The End---



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Predictions and Prophecies



by **Dan Shaurette**
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“Save yourself, serve yourself. World serves its own needs, listen to your heart bleed. Tell me with the rapture and the reverent in the right - right. You vitriolic, patriotic, slam, fight, bright light, feeling pretty psyched.”

- REM, Its the End of the World As We Know It (And I Feel Fine)

There is an axiom that states, “Those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it.” No, this is not an epithet on the values of studying for your social studies finals. It’s a famous quote, made by too many to cite an author, but it is generally accepted as a universal fact. Shaurette’s Corollary is “The only thing we have learned from history is that we have learned *nothing* from history.”

However, is this truly because we are not learning from our mistakes, or could it be possible that we find the future so frightening that we seek comfort in repeating past accomplishments?

Cycles make sense to humans. One needs only to think about the sun, or perhaps a clock, to see this in action. A clock is nothing more than a way to measure the solar cycle; an attempt to reproduce a natural cycle.

Humans also perceive events in a linear fashion. Everything that has a beginning has an end. We like to therefore string these two philosophies together and we get: Everything which has a beginning, has an inevitable end, but which starts again, renewing the cycle. We can see this in the lunar cycle for example.

In his book, *The Myth of the Eternal Return*, Mircea Eliade makes the claim that archaic man chose to continue to repeat those acts perpetrated by those that came before him. It is this repetition that is the essence of religious rituals. The ritual act symbolizes the act that came before, in the hopes of making it happen again.

This desire to cause repetition is not limited to ritual, but appears in the desire to predict the future. Again, since we are cursed with seeing things linearly, if ritual failed

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to make things repeat, we resort to presuming it will repeat itself at some point. We know things repeat; we may just not live long enough to see it happen.

So early man learned how to observe other cycles in order pinpoint reoccurrences of special events. The most common method was to observe the stars. Astronomy led naturally to using astrology to predict or give advice the future, or determine the nature of things.

Finding patterns in groups of stars, or constellations, that look like animals, famous heroes, and deities, allowed us to apply their characteristics to them, and in turn back to us when the constellations appeared in special places. These rules of their positions are followed by many cultures and still help guide people on a daily basis. But astronomy led to the creation of complex calendar systems as well.

Many early forms of calendars were very much like what we use almanacs for today. We know that certain seasons yield certain crops, and bring certain weather phenomena. We use statistics in our modern almanacs to say that our previous high and low temperature recorded on specific days form a range of expected temperatures.

Following trends, like El Niño, allow us to predict when we might deviate from expected averages. Our most sophisticated modern meteorological sciences still derive from knowing past patterns and applying

them to future weather predictions.

Ancient calendars were very similar, but the trends they often followed were associated with the progression of the heavenly bodies. Even before the development of the simplest of telescopes, constellations and planetary orbits were known and tracked with amazing precision.

One of the most sophisticated calendrical systems was devised by the Mayan civilization of South America. The Maya lived in the areas around Southern Mexico as early as the third century A.D., but apparently disappeared around the 12th century. The Mayan language was still spoken by their descendants when the Spanish Conquistador's found them, but they did not know much about their ancestors' legacy.

It wasn't until the 18th century that the temples, pyramids, and stelae monuments were discovered, covered in Mayan hieroglyphs. These hieroglyphs were eventually decoded which helped explain the system of three separate calendars that the Maya used.

The most complex of these was also one of the most accurate ever devised in calculating a solar year. It is known as the Long Count, which is a measurement of time that includes five different numbers. (Compare this to our system of *yyyy/mm/dd*, which is only three numbers.) These five cycles measured the days up to the largest cycle, which is a span of time of 1,872,000 days, or roughly 5125 years. The current

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cycle began on 13.0.0.0, which correlates to Aug. 13, 3114 B.C. of our calendar.

This cycle will return to the same position on December 21, 2012. This date has now become one of the most specific, ominous dates of prophecy. The fact that it lands on a winter solstice is a matter of debate, that being of course if it was an intentional ending date or not.

What is claimed about this last day of the "Grand Cycle" is that it is the *last date* on the Mayan Calendar. Portending this to be a predicted Final Day of the Earth; the idea being the Mayans did not foresee the need to calculate beyond this date. This is only true if you do not understand that as a *cycle* it will continue from the beginning to count off *another* Grand Cycle on Dec. 22, 2012, which will usher in another 5125 years.

Other would be prophets are scrambling to search their sources for anything that matches this date. For example, astronomically speaking, the earth's procession through the galaxy which reach a unique point, aligning it with the center of the galaxy.

Again, such an amazing coincidence begs the question, could the Mayans have known this, calculating their Grand Cycle to end on his date, bringing us to the endpoint of our cycle around the galaxy? This we may never know. Based on evidence uncovered about the astronomical data they did calculate, regarding eclipses, comets, etc., it seems possible. Does it really mean anything, though? Is the Age of Man going to come to an end, or will a New Age dawn that day?

Of course many others are finding this sign to be quite potent and

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are interpreting old predictions to meet this date, including finding ways of stretching Revelations 11's visions of Armageddon to 2012. Those same prophecies would suggest the antichrist would come to power in 2004... this year... *an election year*, by an amazing coincidence. *Or is it?*

Another feature of humanity's fascination with repetition is that when we find repetition out of context, where we normally wouldn't expect it, we believe this must imply some meaning. Whenever statistics would tell us that that something should not happen, or where chaos is the ruling factor, to find a pattern often deems study as a divine message.

Probably the most fascinating example of this is the phenomenon that is known as the Bible Code, or the Torah Code. This is a wonderful application of new technology against an old source to find new meanings. Thanks to the power of mathematical probability, we can find a phrase describing modern events in a document that we know is quite old. The document that was used first was the Hebrew Torah, also known as the first five books of the Old Testament.

The technique is known as Equidistant Letter Skipping, or ELS, which allows us to search for words or phrases very much like a word search puzzle from a newspaper. But instead of looking for the word to be spelled out exactly, a method of skipping the same number of letters is used to find the words we want.

This implies perhaps that these phrases are *encoded* in the Torah. This encoding technique is known as "steganography", which is the hiding of a message within an otherwise normal picture or document.

The most famous case of a Bible Code perhaps is the one that predicted that Princess Diana would die in a car accident in France in 1997 (Jewish year 5757). Keywords that were found in the now famous matrix are Lady, Diana, Spencer, Princess, Wales, chauffer, photographer, tunnel, Paris, France, etc. It is quite remarkable and would seem statistically impossible for all of these terms to be randomly scattered so closely together, in a 3000 year old Hebrew text. *Holy cryptography, Batman!*

One of the wonderful flexibilities, and therefore faults, of the Bible Code is the fact that Hebrew spelling is very flexible because of the inconsistent uses of vowels. A great website which illustrates this is: <http://cs.anu.edu.au/~bdm/dilugim/abulafia.html>. The website discusses an example of one of the modern rabbis whose names was found in a Bible Code, Rabbi Haim Abulafia (1660-1744 A.D.).

There is a photograph of a synagogue of Rabbi Abulafia in Tiberias, which is in Palestine. On different signs on the building dedicated to him, his name is spelled four completely different ways in Hebrew. Amazingly, the version of his name that was found in the Torah as a Bible Code was a fifth unique version, and

yet is still just as legal as the others. Simply put, you try to find the one that fits into your search, and keep hacking away until you find a match.

One of the proponents of the Bible Code, author Michael Drosnin, believes that he found not only a great mystery, but perhaps even a “signature” of God by finding these secret codes. He challenged his detractors in a 1997 Newsweek article to find the predictions of the assassination of a prime minister in “Moby Dick”. Well, the challenge was taken up and quite a few “predictions” were found.

First and foremost was the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, which if nothing else satisfied the challenge. But other predictions were found, including Martin Luther King, Jr., and John F. Kennedy (including the phrase “shot in the head” by a “concealed assassin”). The moral of this story is, either the word of God is in every printed book... *or*, you can find a pattern in any finite random collection.

So what does all of this mean? Can the future be predicted? Well, yes but specific requests will be met with specific answers. Statistically, anything is possible if you know the odds. Statistics can be used to

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Reading ELS is like solving a Word search puzzle, except all of the letters are in Hebrew. To demonstrate the task, I created a puzzle with the same phrases found in the famous "Lady Di" ELS. I marked some words found horizontally and diagonally. There are others if you are up to the challenge.

T D P N I D H H A W A L R L R E I B S A
 S E T R R E G D I R B P 5 S / 5 A P P E D
 C H A O S I N D E I E 7 S / E E R E W O T
 R T L Y I F R C I K 5 E / L N O E D E I C
 G 5 M T R F N N T 7 C / C I Y D V R D F S
 E C A A A E D H E N / I E A - N - A - I - D U T T
 R U W Y P L T N I / H S L R D D R C I O G
 E O E S H A U R / E T T E U W N R I T E N
 E D A E E R P / V A Y H I E A C A P L S Y
 P W C D N L A T T P G A F L P L S N R A
 T R D P A O I N A P I R F L F I E T T A
 R W N I N S O R D R N D U R I F I U K L
 A A O S T E G A N O G R A P H Y 5 G O P
 G L C I E O C L R P M N H E T D L S R A
 I E C D T C 9 L I H C N C A C U O R R E
 C S N O I T C I D E R P Y R A U R B E F
 D Y H D H C A P A C R I M O N Y T E Y A
 F P E A B - O - Y - F - R - I - E - N - D L E I N A D L
 H N V S I T L E L E N N U T A T O R A H
 T T P P N A C - R - A - S - H I T W - R - E - C - K L D

Prove any truth. With examples provided by history, we can find anything we want. Hindsight is 20/20.

Are we living in the End Times? Perhaps. If you presume that all of the predictions that came before now failed because they were misinterpreted, then the chances increase for this being The End.

But even still, is the End of The World As We Know It a bad thing? I don't mean to sound melodramatic or morbid. I prefer to believe in the cycle of all things, and I think that once the Interesting Times that we live in now come to an end, life on earth will still go on.

Whether the penitent will be raptured leaving the sinners behind is the case, or we kill off most of our population in another massive bloody war, we will go on. Maybe those who do will start anew, making the world a better place. This is the dawning of the Age of Aquarius after all. One cycle ends and another begins.

“When the moon is in the Seventh House, and Jupiter aligns with Mars, then peace will guide the planets, and love will steer the stars.”

- The Fifth Dimension, Aquarius



Calendar

March 1st Kalends of March, Matronalia, Granny March, Renewal of the Vestal fire

Today is the Roman festival of Matronalia, for the goddess Juno Lucina - a day for women.

This is Granny March day in some parts of Eastern Europe. If a woman works on Granny March's day, the old witch will be angered and send storms to damage the crops.

On this day in ancient Rome, the sacred fire in the temple of Vesta was renewed by the Vestal virgins.

March 2nd Ceadda, Holy Wells day, Mother March, Prophecy by Crows

This days is sacred to Ceadda, a celtic god of healing springs and holy wells. Symbolized by the Crann Bethadh (Tree of Life).

This day is sacred to Mother March, the goddess who protects women who have created life.

On this day in Scottish celtic traditions, the behavior of crows should be regarded as prophetic.

March 3rd Aegir, Gods of the Moon

This is the day of Aegir, a Teutonic god of the sea. His wife Ran likes to sink ships and then care for the sailors she has drowned.

This day is sacred to lunar deities. The healing power of pyramids is strong today.

March 4th Anthesteria, Rhiannon

On this day in ancient Greece, the three-day festival of Anthesteria began to honor the goddess Hecate. Hecate controls dark forces of the underworld.

Today is the annual feast of Rhiannon or Rigantona in Ireland and Wales. Rhiannon is also associated with the mare-goddess Epona.

March 5th Navigium Isis

Today is the festival of Isis, the goddess of the sail. Isis protects boats, shipping, and is a guide on the final voyage of life. The traditional veneration of Isis requires that flowers be floated down a river and boats are to be blessed with incense.

March 6th Mars, Eriu

Today is the festival of Mars, god of war and agriculture. He was father of the Roman people when Roman household gods were venerated. In several old traditions, today is considered to be the most perilous day of the month.

Today is an observance for the Irish De Danann goddess Eriu, from whose name comes Eire, the name of Ireland.

March 7th Nones of March, Junoalia

Today is the festival of the Roman goddess Juno

March 8th Welsh Witches Day

March 11th Herakles

Today honors the Greek Herakles, or Hercules. Hercules was struck mad by Hera for all the trouble he caused and was eventually poisoned. He was brought to Olympus and finally married Hebe.

March 13th Burgsonndeg

On this day, the festival of Burgsonndeg is traditionally celebrated in Luxembourg. Bonfires are lit to celebrate the rebirth of the sun and the approach of spring.

March 14th The runic half-month of Beorc begins, Veturius Mamurius, Uazit

This is the half-month for the goddess of birch trees, for rebirth. It's also a festival for the art of making armor.

Today is sacred to the Egyptian goddess Uazit, the Lady of the Night.

March 15th Ides of March, Rhea, Cybele and Attis

Today is the festival of river nymphs. It's also the holy day of Rhea, the Greek goddess of the earth and tamer of wild beasts.

The Greek and Roman festivals in honor of Cybele, the mother of the gods and her lover Attis begins today. Worshippers of Cybele have traditionally enjoyed great sexual license on this day. This is followed by nine days of fasting and abstinence.

March 16th Dionysus and Bacchus

Today is the first of a two day festival for Bacchus and Dionysus - the gods of wine, grapes, fertility, vegetation, and drama. Traditionally on this day, prisoners are to be set free and the possessions of debtors may not be seized.

March 17th Trefuilnid Treochar, Celtic tree month of Nuin ends,

Dionysus and Bacchus

Today is the feast for the Irish divinity assimilated into St. Patrick and the second day of the Roman festival of wine.

Today is the festival of Astarte, or Ashtoreth, the queen of Heaven and goddess of both war and fertility.

Today is the Roman festival of Liberalia, for the freedom of women.

March 18th Sheelah's Day, Celtic tree month of Fearn begins

Today is the Irish festival of Sheela-na-gig, the goddess of fertility.

March 19th Athena, Minerva, Eyvind Kinnrifi, Goddess month of Moura ends, Nemetona

Today is the Lesser Panathenaea - the festival of the Greek goddess Athena for war, wisdom, industry, art, justice, and skill. Today is also the Quinquatrus, the festival for the birth of the Roman goddess Minerva, the patroness of medicine, weaving, sewing, painting, teaching, dyeing, spinning, and wisdom.

Today is an observance for Nemetona, the Celtic goddess of the sacred grove.

March 20th Old Vernal Equinox, Alban Eilir, Ostara, fifth station of the year, Iduna, Goddess month of Columbina begins

The spring equinox is celebrated on this day in some traditions.

Iduna is a Norse goddess who bears the apples of life, which keep the gods young.

March 21st Vernal Equinox, Festival of the Trees, Alban Eilir, Ostara, Rites of Eostre, Green Goddess, Tea and Tephi

The sun is directly over the equator today and spring commences. The observances for the birth of spring include lighting bonfires at sunrise and decorating eggs.

Ostara, or Eostre, is a goddess who protects small children. She is known to entertain them by hatching rabbits out of chicken's eggs. This observance became the more commonly celebrated festival of Easter.

Alban Eilir is a Druidic festival. It means Light of the Earth. Irish tradition has it that on this day the city of Tara was founded by two princesses: Tea and Tephi.

March 22nd Cult of Attis

Today in ancient Rome, the Cult of Attis, the lover of the goddess Cybele, carried fallen pine trees through the streets to mourn his demise.

March 23rd Mars and Saturn, Dance of the Salii, Summer Finding, Cocidius Vernostonus

The Dance of the Salii was performed by Roman priests today in

honor of Mars and Saturn. This observance drove the spirits of winter from the city and encouraged the growth of crops.

Today is the Norse festival of the ascendancy of light over darkness.

March 24th Britannia, Heimdall

Today is sacred to the guardian goddess Albion, also called Prytania and Britannia. It's also the day of the Norse god Heimdall, the guardian of light and the Bifrost bridge, which links heaven and earth.

March 25th Mars and Neria, Lady day, Return of the Goddess, Hilaria

Today was the festival of Hilaria in Rome, to celebrate the ascendancy of the goddess Cybele over death.

March 26th Mabon ap modron

Today is an observance for the Celtic god Mabon ap modron, the deity for youth.

March 27th Liberalia

Today is the Roman festival of Liberalia, to honor Liber-Pater, the wine god. It was traditionally a day for coming of age.

March 28th Birth of Artemis, Sacrifice at the Tombs, Ishtar

Today is the birthday of the goddess Artemis, in her aspect as the goddess of the moon. Round cakes are baked, symbolizing the full moon, and decorated with candles. This tradition gave rise to the more common practice of celebrating the birthdays of mortals with cakes and candles.

Today is a Roman festival acknowledging ancestors.

Today is the festival of Ishtar, the Babylonian goddess of love, fertility, and war.

March 30th Janus and Concordia, Runic half-month of Ehwaz begins

Today is the Roman festival of Janus and Concordia, patrons of beginnings, doors and passages of peace and harmony.

The rune Ehwaz, the horse, signifies partnership between humans and nature.

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Ask Jenny!



by **Jenny Slocum**
lilwhip@acrimony.org

Dear Jenny,

It's time for our family vacation, however my wife and I cannot agree where to go. I want to take our three children to Orlando and make the Disney World loop, whereas my wife wants to go to England. Both vacations will cost about the same so money is not a factor. We just can't agree where to go. Can you help?

Mouse, or not to Mouse...

Dear Mouse,

Have you ever thought of separate vacations? Let her take the kids to Disney and you hit England. Take in Big Ben, the museums, and have a pint! Seriously, go to Europe. How many chances will you have to get out of the U.S. and catch a little something called culture? Anyone can do Disney. EVERYone does

Disney. Why, I am not sure. Maybe if Mickey had fangs and chased the children. Now THAT is entertainment!

Dear Jenny,

How can I buy a big screen TV without my girlfriend throwing a hissy fit?

Big Screen or Bust(s)

Dear Big Screen or Bust(s),

Methinks you need a new girlfriend, not a new TV! Seriously, how can anyone have a fit in a bad way over getting a kick-ass big screen?? Think of it like having your own theater in your living room. And just WAIT till you do play station on it! Wait till you see porn on it!! And besides, I am sure this will not be her only hissy fit in life, so you might as well get a cool TV out of the deal!

Dear Jenny,

Was that really Janet Jackson's breast hanging out at the end of the Super Bowl half time show?

Boooooooooooooob

Dear Boob-boy,

Technically, yes. As in she paid for them, and possession IS nine-tenths of the law. Or so I hear. Then again, look at her brother. If she had the same plastic surgeon, who knows WHAT that might have been! Left over cheekbone or something equally weird? Gee, know you have ME wondering. Or maybe Janet IS Michael!?!?! Who knows with those zany Jackson's!

Dear Jenny,

Who's gonna win the Stanley Cup?

Wannabe a Cup Holder

Dear Cup Holder,

Who is this Stanley, and why is his cup up for bids? And what are we talking about here? A beer stein? Chalice? How much alcohol will this cup hold? Hey, if people are going to try and win it, they need to know these things. Moving on..

Dear Jenny,

My neighbor wants to become a goth, and he asks me what is goth about. I gave him my opinion



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based on what I have studied in different goth sites, but none of them are sure. What is goth really about?

Quoth the Neighbor, nevermore

Dear Neighbor,

Well Goth (and this is only one girl's opinion) is based on music and was birthed out of British Punk itself in the late-1970's. When art school students attracted to the freedom of the Punk aesthetic began to start their own bands, they fused the skeletal structure of the music with the theatrics of glitter rock (David Bowie,) and a twisted spirituality. What resulted was a dark minimalist sound which came to be known as Post-punk. The "birth" of Goth is often traced back to the first Bauhaus single "Bela Lugosi's Dead". Almost immediately Goths were visibly identifiable: Punks dressed predominately in black with extravagant make-up schemes, versed in literature and art with an interest in the extremes of emotion. When it's said that Goths are drawn to the dark side of life, what is meant is that mystery, irony, emotion, and beauty are what captures our attention. The concepts of antiquity, mortality, and religion we find alluring, hence the fixation with cemeteries, crucifixes, and ankhs. All divine! Usually intellectual, (and there are sadly some exceptions, like within any culture) goth's enjoy reading philosophy, various religious texts, and more poetry and prose than you can shake a dead cat at. Any true goth can tell you about these things, or read you prose they themselves penned. Yes

we dye our hair, wear black. But we do not become an Anne Rice novel like a lot of people think. (Although boys DO look sexy in frock coats!) Check out my favorite "goth guy" Voltaire at <http://www.voltaire.net> He has some top ten lists on "being goth" that are really rather witty, and makes a good point. And check out the webpage <http://www.undernetvampires.com> for further information and some darn nice goth's! I mean, VICIOUS! Vicious Goth's... Yeah.



Jenny's column is run exclusively in Acrimony. Email your question to her at lilwhip@acrimony.org

Vampyr Chat

*Where
Vampires
chat on the
Internet*



<http://www.UndernetVampires.com>

Horoscopes

by Michael Ramses



ARIES (March 21 - April 19): Spring is your time of year. As this season draws closer you'll feel more in touch with those around you. Make sure to take time out and reflect. Now is when you should be thinking about where you stand and where you want to go. Be sure to trust your initial instincts, they'll be right.



TAURUS (April 20 - May 20): What once seemed to be an impossible obstacle now seems more passable. Things don't really seem so bad now do they? Family draws closer and there is no need to be concerned about finances. Just be careful that you aren't too hasty - always look vigilantly at all of your choices. Sometimes the first thing to come to mind is not the correct course of action.



GEMINI (May 21 - June 20): You need to be careful that you do not overindulge this month. If you have an addictive personality, this will be doubly true. There will be many challenges for you. You can get through this period if you stay away from excess. On a positive note, you'll see benefits in areas you once ignored. Take advantage!



CANCER (June 21 - July 22): February was very drab but March offers much more promise. Long-term projects are starting to come together. There are many options in the area of romance. It doesn't matter if you're looking to start something new or build upon a relationship already developed - either option has wonderful potential. February took a heavy toll on finances, but things are shaping up. Bills are getting paid and you'll be sitting in a better position.



LEO (July 23 - Aug. 22): Don't let friends drag you down. You need to spread your wings and ruffle your feathers. You'll be feeling a little more independent than usual. This may cause you to make a life changing decision. Use caution if you do. You don't want to do something that you'll regret later. Change can be beneficial, but hasty change can be

disastrous.



VIRGO (Aug. 23 - Sept. 22): You sure seem to be smiling a lot lately. Over-exuberance can be refreshing from time to time, but be wary not to get caught up in the moment. Nothing ends a joyful streak faster than lying in graves dug too quickly. Friends will come to you for help and it would be good for you to lend some of your excess energy to them. If

you're thinking about a new business venture - reconsider for the time being.



LIBRA (Sept. 23 - Oct. 22): Sometimes when we step back and reflect upon what we have done, we don't feel so good about ourselves. You've done a number of things over the past year and there is a temptation to look back and regret.

This is wasted energy. Learn from your mistakes and move on. People need you at present and your mind needs to be in the here and now.



SCORPIO (Oct. 23 - Nov. 21): Pressures that have been upon you start to ease. Thank god! You were starting to worry a lot and it wasn't doing anyone any good. Planning for the future is always beneficial, but sometimes you have a tendency to over-analyze. Romance will heat up if you let

it.



SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 - Dec. 21): You need to be careful not to fall into any pits this month. What is a pit? It's something you'll step into unaware, and then have a hell of a time getting out of! Look where you are going, see the road ahead.

Your actions have consequence and it's easier to make right choices than wrong ones and deal with the aftereffects.



CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 - Jan. 19): If you feel like you've been in a lull, now is the time to get out of it. March is a good month for Capricorn. You can change any aspect of your life that you are unhappy with. It's okay to make change. In fact, it's often necessary. Many people resist the urge to change and that's not good. Don't worry about money or resources - they'll show up when needed.



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 - Feb. 18): If you can stop being silly you just might get something done. Close your eyes that are seeing things so flippantly lately and reopen them with your serious goggles on. It's time to buckle down. It's time to take care of your responsibilities. If you're not careful, you'll lose a lot this month - respect, a relationship, and even finances.



PISCES (Feb. 19 - March 20): Look to a friendly Cancer or Scorpio for advice this month. They are the ones that will understand you best, being fellow water signs. If you think you can do it alone, you're mistaken. Well, that isn't totally true. You can do it alone. It's just likely that you won't do it right! However, don't look to this Cancer or Scorpio to fill a romantic hole in your heart. That isn't what they're here for at the moment. Heal yourself first. Be happy with yourself. Then you can look for comfort in others.



Michael Ramses has been a horoscope writer for over 12 years. His speciality is personal natal charts. Look for his column right here in Acrimony each month.

<http://www.MichaelRamses.com>

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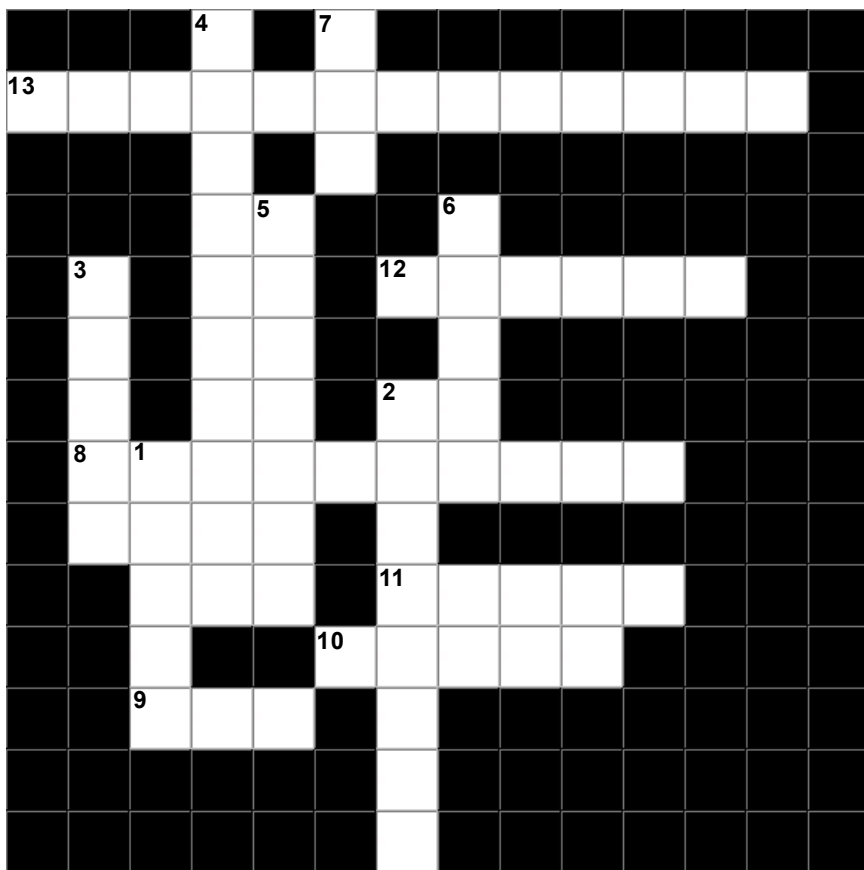
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Gothic Crossword



Down

1. Minor nature goddess usually depicted as a beautiful maiden
2. A syncretistic Caribbean religion
3. Ancient order of Celtic origin
4. Founder of the Church of Satan (2 words)
5. Horned mythical animal
6. Vocal meditation
7. Elizabethan scientist who discovered enochian magic

Across

8. To call upon, summon
9. A curse
10. Messiah
11. Stargate's Jaffa shol'va
12. Spiritual power point
13. A Sweet Transvestite

Blood and Water



by Jennie Breeden
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<http://www.thedevilsphanties.com>

Brain Teaser

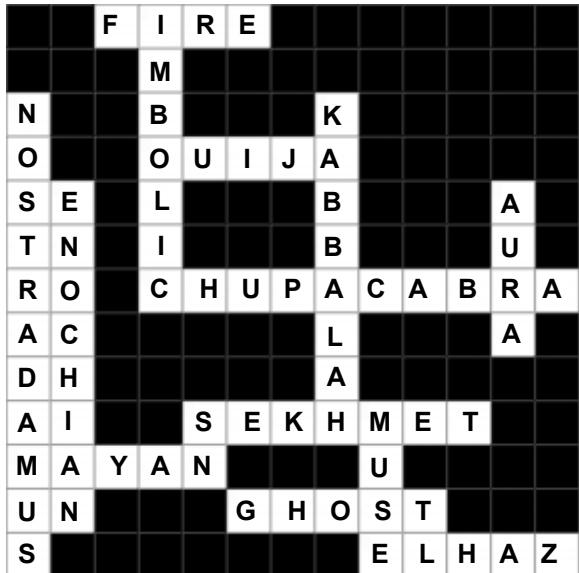
Violet, indigo, blue and green, yellow, orange and red; these are the colors you have seen after the storm has fled.

What am I?

January Brain Teaser

An Armchair

January Crossword



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