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Thank you, Ms. May!

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Fowl Play

By Walter Brown

Along came March, the month of the great Wood-chipper Convention! Wood-chipper-makers from across the world annually came to Fitchburg to demonstrate their cutting-edge inventions. By a fluke in probability, the Wood-chipper Convention had landed on National Doctors' Day. In Dora's eyes, there was no better day to hit the park!

Dora and her pet bird Ronald Parsons began their play. Ronald flew to his favorite tree and Dora tried to tag him. However, they hadn't anticipated a third event that day: the yearly Projectile Festival. Although this festival was the least popular of the three,

it made up for its lack of attendance with its abundance of noise. Without any warning, a projectile monkey shattered Mr. Parson's tree. The wood-chipper below devoured both bark and beak.

“My bird just went through your wood-chipper!”

The wood-chipper's designer smiled at the crowd he was demonstrating to. “And it didn't clog, did it?” The crowd clapped. Several members of the audience called for an encore. When the designer declined, the crowd milled off.

Dora cried out, “You shredded my bird!”

The designer turned off the machine. “Sorry about that. If I were in your shoes, I'd surely suspect *fowl* play!” He started

cracking up, but then recomposed himself. “But in all seriousness, I have a friend who might be able to help. Hatch, could you come over here?”

A man in a trench coat wandered over. He briefly examined the pile of wood.

“Hatch, think you can help the bird in that?”

“No. Why?” A realization dawned upon Hatch. “Oh! You thought I was a medical doctor! I got my doctorate in poetry. Want me to say a few words? What’s his name?”

“Ronald. Ronald Parsons.” Dora started crying again.

Hatch tipped his hat. “R. P., R. I. P.” With that, Hatch sauntered away.



Head of a Centaur
by Gabrielle LeBlanc

To Be Enslaved By Love

by Stephenie Mae Baldassarre

Love thy neighbors as thyself. Let those words engrave unto your hearts and souls. Humans torture, curse, and banish Love from their hearts and replace it with hatred for people they feel unworthy of their Love. No one must do so. Anyone who does so knows not of Love. See to it that Love returns to this world. All of this hate hath made Love become hidden. Love, I beg thee, just return home to our hearts. Stop. Take in the beauty around thee and let hate remove itself from thou hearts. Give us another chance to nurture you and let you enslave us to each other. Humans are all connected and made for each other. All of us are different in the same ways and the same in different ways. Let Love enslave us all.

Let Love lock thou chains upon thee and may these chains never release. Enslave us all! Till hatred ceases to exist! All humans are beautiful. Let no one tell you any different. Let Love make this known to all. Let Love be the peace that draws us together as humans. Let the hate subside and be silenced forevermore. No more bigotry. Never again shall there be hurt. Discrimination removed and equality in its place. Love, I beg thee, enslave our peoples! Till suicidal thoughts subside and hate can no longer be promoted. To divide humans from each other is to separate us from the little pieces of who we are that we see in everyone else. Unite these people of all kinds no matter gender, sexuality, or ethnic group. Let Love chain us all together. Set aside the differences of our views and opinions. Let Love enslave us all! Enslave us all. Enslave us all.

Cheese Club

by Jacob Brown

“In my opinion, feta is the best type of cheese...”

Why, why did I respond to the poster!?!

“...It has excellent texture, and a taste with a kick...”

The after school cheese club had seemed like such a cool idea! Now I was sitting around a table talking about cheese with some losers!

“...Well, anyway, that’s my favorite cheese and the reason why. Who is next?”

Perhaps, I could slip under the table and escape!

“Hi, my favorite type of cheese is Bob, and my name is Bleu. Heh heh. Umm, anyway, I like the cheese be-

cause...actually, I don't like that cheese. I just wanted to make a joke, and my name isn't really Bob..."

Gah! I must escape soon! I will go under the table, then run the last meter to the door!

"...My name is really Chuck, and I like Cheddar! Ha ha! Oh, come on, that was comedy gold! Hey! Hey! Ok, ok, geez, I'm sitting down. You don't deserve to hear the one about Rick and Ricotta."

Must escape!

"My name...is...darn...it's... give me a sec..."

Only two more people, then I escape!

"Tony, that's it. And my favorite type of...cheese is.....is....Queso Guayanés , from... that place with the boats...it starts with a V..."

I am next. I didn't research cheese! If I give a bad answer, all these people will give me funny looks in the hallways! “

“...Venezuela, that's it. Umm... I forget why I like that cheese...Can you come back to me?”

My turn! Uh oh! Panic! Panic! Ok, stand up slowly, stall for time. Survey the room. Gah! I cannot remember any kind of cheese! “Umm, SMOKE BOMB! Woosh! So long fools!” Ok, jump! Yes! Now I am on the table! Run! Run! I am to the door! Break it down! YES! I am through! “So long, suckers! Ha ha ha!”

The room was filled with an awkward silence.

“Cheese, anyone?”



Self Portrait
Owen Castonguay

Aurora Complex: Omega
by FyreByrd

“It began in the sixth year of the war,” droned the teacher. The students shifted in their seats, murmuring to one another. The teacher ignored the side conversations. Speaking a little louder, he continued, “What is thought to be one of the greatest achievements in Biological Engineering ever accomplished...” Pausing and looking up, Mr. Smith clapped once for attention. “Now, does anyone know what this pinnacle of technological achievement is?”

“No, Mr. Smith,” the class chorused.

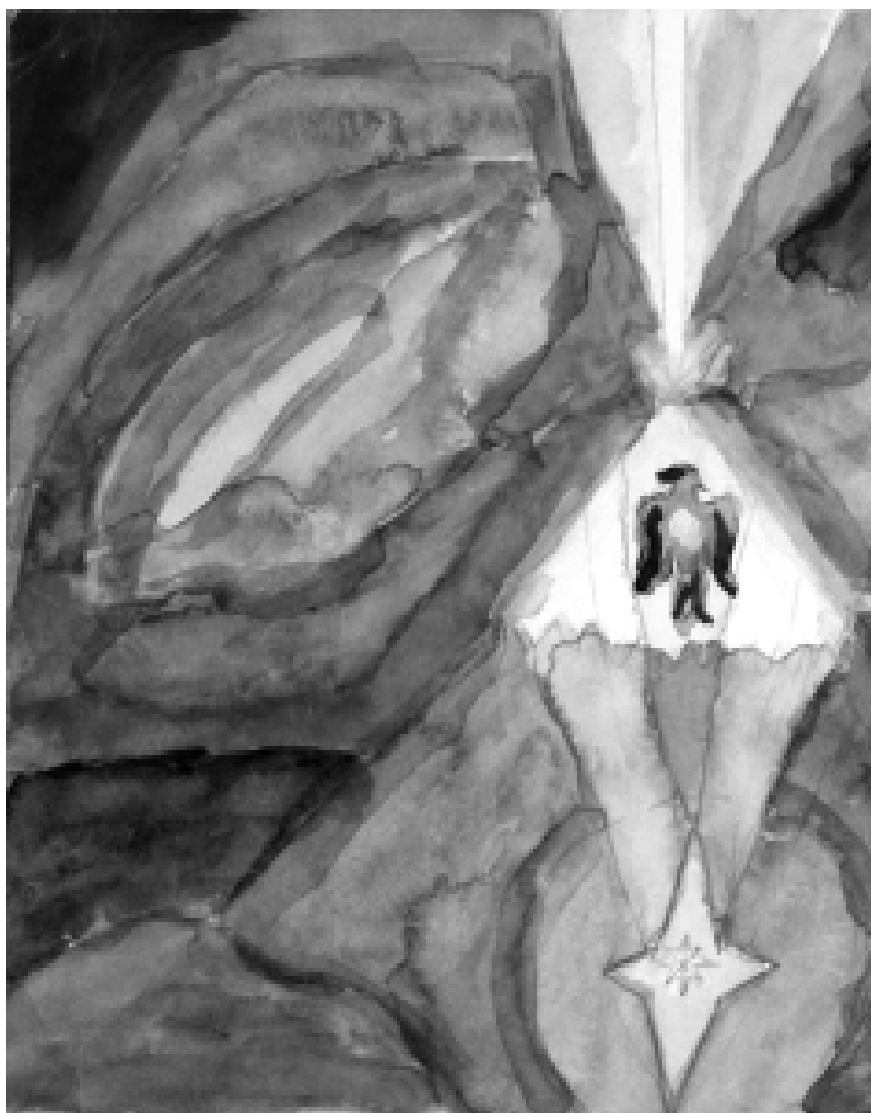
“But, I’m sure you’ll tell us,” muttered someone in back.

Brie chewed her pencil; she knew better than to voice her thoughts in class. This kid obviously did not.

“Is that so, Mr. Mathews,” the teacher drawled. “Well then, perhaps you would like to write a four page essay on why it is important to listen to the teacher?”

Tim Mathews, Class Clown, cringed and shook his head.

She tried not to grin: Tim had gotten two four-page essays, three two-page essays, one 5-page essay and a 4 minute office detention. All this week, and it was still Monday. He held the record for both the longest and shortest office detentions. One three-day detention (for spray-painting the girls’ bathroom pink) and one detention that had been exactly two seconds (before the principal had thrown him out, literally). Despite this, or maybe because of it, almost everybody liked Tim, even the teachers. He was fun to hang around and always tried his hardest. He had an 82% chance of being the





The Seat of the Heavens
by Fyrebyrd

most popular kid in the school, mused Brie.

She turned her attention back to the teacher, who was, as usual, looking for volunteers. “Come, someone must have a guess, anyone, anyone? Hey, Sabriena Eldreant, how about you take a gander at it.” Old language that only 23% of the population even understands at this date. Brie blinked in annoyance and held her tongue as she stood. “The Omega Project, sir?”

“Exactly right, Sabriena. What did this project aim to do?”

“To wipe out the aliens, sir.”

Several students shifted in their seats. Brie ignored them; the probability that she could take them all in a fist fight was 99.9%.

“Good. And what were the names of the units produced by it?”

“Aurora Complex Units, Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Delta, Zeta, and Epsi-

lon.” There was also the Omega, she thought, but she didn’t say that. The teacher seemed pleased by her answer. Now he would ignore her for the rest of class.

“Now, class,” Mr. Smith smiled, “can anyone tell me who the best known member of Aurora complex is?”

“Alpha,” the entire class yelled at once.

Brie decided now would be a good time to doodle.

“Yes, Aurora Alpha, the prototype for all of the Aurora Units. Responsible for single-handedly winning half of all major battles for the Nation. Defeater of the mightiest generals, scourge of the alien race. The perfect killing machine.”

“Not bad for a prototype,” cracked Tim.

Only you, Tim, thought Brie.

“What about Omega?” chimed a sophomore in back. “I thought she would have known, cause ya’ know they did name the project after her.”

It took all of Brie’s restraint not to say, “Well, Omega was never officially put into the field during the war, and later, she vanished! Thanks for asking.”

“Omega never made it to the battlefield, you idiot,” replied a senior. Brie sighed inwardly. It was going to be a long class.

* * *

Brie pounded up the steps and threw open the door. “Mom, I’m home,” she announced before falling onto the couch.

“How was school today?” Her mom smiled from the desk that she used for work and Brie used for

homework.

“Today in history we talked about the Aurora Complex. I think we’ll be doing a unit on them.”

“There’s an easy A. That reminds me, you have a mission tonight.”

“I DO!” Brie almost cheered. Doing what she was made for made her feel alive. She rushed through her homework and then stopped and giggled.

Her mother looked up from her works. “What is it. Brie?”

“What you said earlier about this being an easy A.”

“Yes?”

“It’s not as if I’ll be learning anything useful. After all, I am the Omega.”

What's His Face
by Walter Brown

Tom and Jed, like all teenagers who steal motor vehicles, were on a quest to collect used-furniture on the curb. Tom, the driver, fell into telling stories about characters from his early childhood. Unfortunately, he stank with names.

“Err...What’s-his-face...we used to go to school with him. Then he decided to go and work for some mattress company.”

Jed, who was fully enthralled by Tom’s tale, suddenly broke free, spotting something on the curb. “Hey, is that a free mattress on the side of the road?”

Indeed it was.

Tom let his eyes stray from the road. “Oh man! That thing’s awesome! Imagine how much it will sell for on the flea market!”

“Quick! Let’s nab it before anyone else sees!” Jed opened his door and leaned out as Tom brought the car to a halt. The two hastily began pulling the mattress along.

“Hey! Stop dragging it on the asphalt!”

Inside the UMC, the Unnamed Mattress Company, it was quality control day. Experts in the field would hop out of windows onto the mattresses in question, in order to ensure that they had the proper padding. One of these experts leapt from the thirteenth story of the building and landed on the blacktop just uncovered by the pair.

Tom suddenly dropped his end of the mattress. “Oh my goodness! It’s what’s-his-face!”

What’s-his-face, horribly mangled, rose as though unharmed. “Hi Tom! Hi Jed! How’s it going?”

Tom and Jed screamed in horror. They ran away and mutually swore never to move strange mattresses again. Their shared odd experience was incredibly unpleasant. As anyone who it’s happened to knows, it’s hard to talk to someone who you can’t remember the name of.



Self Portrait
by Diego Cruz

New Job

By Jacob Brown

I hate my new job. I hated my old job too, but my new job is worse. I used to have to entertain children one day a year. I know that doesn't sound terrible, but believe me, it was. In my new job, I work all the time! I have to deal with old people, young people, and people with receding hairlines. I have to visit them, even on weekends! But get this, they are completely ungrateful! All they do is moan, and say it isn't their time. At my old job, people didn't like my personality either. Those jerks complained to my boss, and now I am in the worst job ever!

As I am griping to myself, I come up on my third victim. He was an intelligent-looking man wearing glasses and a plaid suit. His smart-boy

look was ruined by the fact that he had failed to dodge the piano.

I waved my brand-new scythe and said, “Come with me.”

He looked up from where he was lying under the piano that had ended his life. He considered me for a moment, and then said in a voice befitting someone who was forced to live among chimpanzees*, “Why would I come with you?”

“Ummmm...” I considered this; usually people were relieved when I came to take them to the afterlife. “So that I can take you to a better place.”

Even chimpanzees would have known to dodge a piano that was about to end their banana-filled lives.*

*** That is sadly inaccurate; not all chimpanzees get to have banana-filled lives.*

“Hmph, I don’t believe in an afterlife.”

This was annoying. I had someone due to die in Russia in two minutes. Plus, it would be very awkward, if after I went through all the trouble of killing him, the victim didn’t have the decency to fall down. With quick thinking I tried to remedy the situation. “Look, Haley’s Comet!”

He still didn’t turn around, so I hit the ghost full in the face with the butt of my scythe.

Holding his nose, he began to run circles around the piano. I chased him yelling, “It is your time! Come back here and die properly!”

I miss being the Easter Bunny.



Portrait
by Paige Roy

Horoscope

by
Oscar Wilde

Taurus (April 20-May 20):
The world is a stage, but the
play is badly cast.

Gemini (May 21 -June 20):
Always forgive your enemies -
nothing annoys them so much.
Nothing is so aggravating than
calmness.

Cancer (June 21-July 22): In
all matters of opinion, our ad-
versaries are insane.

Leo (July 23-August 22):
Consistency is the last refuge
of the unimaginative.

Virgo (August 23-September 22): The only thing to do with good advice is to pass it on. It is never of any use to oneself.

Libra (September 23-October 22): It is what you read when you don't have to that determines what you will be when you can't help it.

Scorpio (October 23-November 21): Ridicule is the tribute paid to the genius by the mediocrities.

Sagittarius (November 22-December 21): Society exists only as a mental concept; in the real world there are only individuals.

Capricorn (December 22-January 19): Experience is simply the name we give our mistakes.

Aquarius (January 20-February 18): Selfishness is not living as one wishes to live, it is asking others to live as one wishes to live.

Pisces (February 19-March 20): Some cause happiness wherever they go; others whenever they go.

Aries (March 21-April 19): It is absurd to divide people into good and bad. People are either charming or tedious.