

International Edition



Nº. 67

Latter 2023

P U B L I C
ILLUMINATION
m a g a z i n e

\$2.50



Number Sixty-seven Latter 2023
 Published at: Casa Sorci, 06044 Castel Ritaldi (PG),
 Italy. E-mail: casasorci@tiscali.it
 © 2022 by Public Illumination Magazine
 Editor: Zagreus Bowery
 Staff: Miss Davenport, Mister Cologne
 Printing: Mr. Gibbon & Family
 Thanks to: Web Continuum
Online Archive: www.mondorondo.com/pim

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Public Illumination Magazine requires your contributions for its pages! Send words (max 275, prose preferred) and pictures on next issue's theme (with obligatory pseudonym) to the editor (by airmail or e-mail), *quickly!*

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And More Eventually.

DEATH

Death continues to be our nation's number one killer.

IRRESOLVEABLE

Why did the chicken cross the road?

What is a wuzzle?

Is Elvis really dead?

Was the Paleolithic before or after the Neolithic?

Why didn't I think of this before?

Who shaves the barber?

If Pinocchio says his nose will grow, will it grow?

Where's the bathroom?

Why can't you sneeze with your eyes open?

What is this strange smell?

If you succeed at failing is it a success or a failure?

What if it rains?

Where did I put my keys?

How did Tarzan shave?
Why is bird shit black on a white car and white on a black car?

If a vampire bites a zombie, does the zombie become a vampire or does the vampire become a zombie?

What is this PIM about anyways?

Of course, the butler did it.

Tuesday

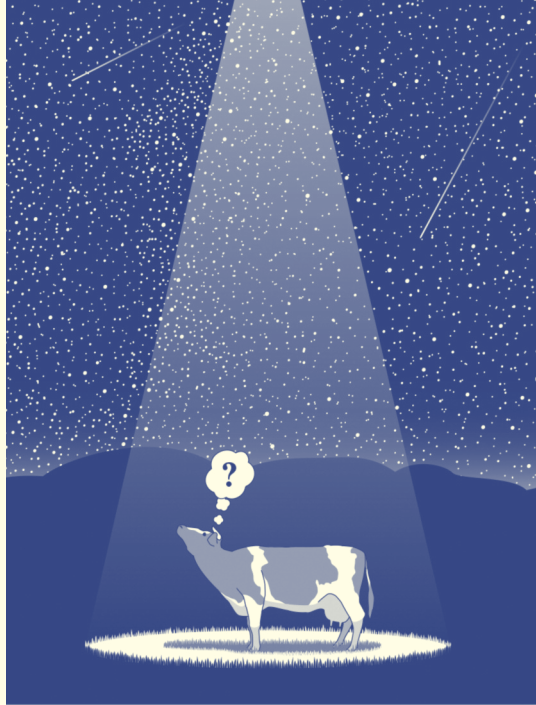
I dream I'm a detective – but there's no clues.

WHEN

When the clues are moved to a different room they solve a different mystery.

THE SIXTIES

In the 1960s over half of the US population was eaten by hippies.



È CERTO PERCHÉ È IMPOSSIBILE

Cuckoo: Monster of Depravity

This morning I really did hear the first cuckoo of Spring on a warm May morning at breakfast in the garden in Norfolk. This beautiful sound has a dark twist to it. The cuckoo is considered a *master of deception*. It's a nice image, a creature that is a bit of a magician but there is a certain cloak and dagger cruelty in amongst it that spoils the fun. Its behaviour was once referred to as a '*monstrous outrage*' for what it does to its fellow feathered creatures and what their chicks do to their foster parents and siblings. Mother cuckoos watch a nest of a nesting bird, often smaller than itself. When they fly off for food the cuckoo rushes in and

kicks out one egg and lays her replacement one, then vanishes. The nesting bird comes back and incubates the cuckoo egg with the others. Then when it hatches it instinctively makes room for itself by pushing the other eggs over the side. The foster mother continues to feed the murderous giant chick until it leaves the nest. (No one yet knows how this untrained new cuckoo works out how to fly back to the same nesting places in Africa where its neglectful real mother hangs out, but it does get there). Cuckoos are secretive. It used to be believed they could transform into hawks, because they can look like sparrowhawks when flying. It should be said that the familiar sound is from the male bird. But as a fledgling, he is just as bad as the mother in her monstrous behaviour.



Wheel

Early on, "Wheel of Fortune," the game show created in 1975, had a segment in which players are shown either being hauled away to prison or lowered one by one into unmarked graves.

SALEM CITY

What started as a legitimate effort by the people of Salem City to root out those that used magic or supernatural powers to harm others quickly deteriorated into a witch hunt.

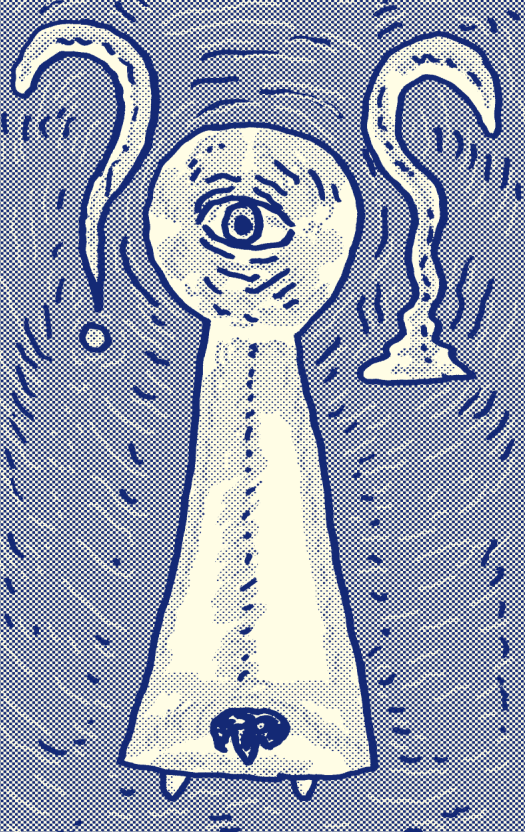
CHUCK TENNIS'S SPORTS HOTLINE

Chuck Tennis reporting here from the Alhambra Racetrack in Spain where a mystery has occurred at the 2023 Alhambra Derby, the race which crowns the world champion racehorse. This year's leading contenders included Lady Lib from the USA, Volupta from Spain, Silky Strut from China and Boris Dancer from Russia. It was quite a race, Lady Lib led at the turn, followed by Boris Dancer, Silky Stut with Volupta last. But in the final turn Volupta turned it on, raced to the lead and crossed the finish line by a nose ahead of Silky Strut with Lady Lib finishing third and Boris Dancer last.

The mystery began when the Governor of Alhambra walked onto the track to place the garland around Volupta's neck. The Gov-

ernor raised the garland above Volupta's head and gently lowered it into place. Suddenly he reached out and grabbed Volupta's mane, pulled her close and gave her a big full kiss on the lips. Volupta shook her head and stomped her feet and whinnied. The crowd was shocked and outraged that Volupta had been taken advantage of by a man and called out for the Governor to resign. The Governor defended himself, saying that he was, in truth, a hippophiliac, a true lover of horses, and that all his actions were prompted by an all-consuming joy that a beautiful horse from his own country had won the race. Horse racing fans all over the world are pondering the mystery of why the Governor kissed the horse. Many fans think the Governor committed sexual abuse; others say he acted out of pure joy. What do you think?





Dead letters

I tried to find my best friend from elementary school—the internet seems to make that so easy. I found an office address for her and wrote a long heart-felt letter to this woman I hadn't seen in over fifty years. I waited anxiously to find out how she would respond and after some months the letter was returned: Addressee unknown. And yet, she hadn't changed her fairly unique name, had followed the profession of her father, seemed to be well-regarded. I wondered if she'd somehow short-circuited the mail herself. I remembered that we had created a coven in sixth grade with another friend: we had a witch's spell book and concocted love potions for the unmarried teachers we deemed might be searching for romance.

We wrote letters to each other although we lived nearby and invented endless geographical expansions of our addresses: the town, the city, the state, the country, the continent, the planet, the galaxy—the postal workers were irritated at our irreverence. Perhaps a ghostly cabal of resurrected postmen was preventing our long-awaited reunion in spite?

MYSTERIES SOLVED

Why were you born?
Because your parents
Slept with each other.

Why do you suffer?
Because you are
imperfect
And vulnerable.

Why do you die?
Read the answer
To the 2nd question.

THRILLING

MYSTERY

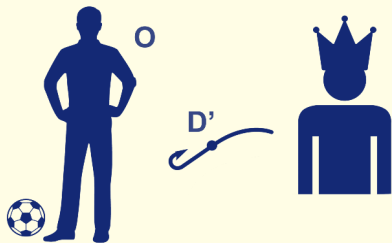
MAGAZINE



GEORGE'S GLASS GRAV
FREDERICK C. DAVIS

REBUS

(7 1'5)



EZ Street Interviews Augustus Velveteen

It was my pleasure to talk with Augustus Velveteen, artist, film maker, photographer, publisher, poet, author. His story is one of great potential but modest accomplishment. It is also a story of one of the greatest mysteries of all – the human ego.

EZ Street: It is an honor and a pleasure to meet you Augustus.

Augustus: Sure, whatever. I'm busy, so let's make this quick.

EZ Street: I'm curious about what makes a man of your ambition tick.

Augustus: What a stupid question.

EZ Street: Well, technically that wasn't a question.

Augustus: The fuck you

say. You think I'm an idiot?
EZ Street: Never.

Augustus: Any other questions?

EZ Street: I've heard it said you're a genius.

Augustus: You heard right.

EZ Street: What makes you think you're a genius? I mean you have a successful studio designing and fabricating personal coats of arms, very artistic and deeply social and political, and you've self-published your poetry, and have some films you made for your Youtube channel, but if everyone with a fairly successful art business is a genius, then what about real geniuses like Miles Davis or Picasso?

Augustus: Are you fucking kidding me? You come into my world and question my genius? You lowlife motherfucker. You're lucky I don't rearrange your face. No...

He stands up. He a great bear of a man, and he looms over me. His neck is stretched taut from anger and rage and his eyes glint at the prospect of violence.

Augustus: ... that's exactly what I'm going to do.

EZ Street: I'm sorry, Augustus. I'm completely out of line. I have no right to question your genius or, for that matter, anything about you at all. You stand head and shoulders above the masses of like-minded sheep who go about their days munching on the scraps of shit that society gives them. Augustus shoulders relax, and his tightened fists drop to his side. He sits back down.

EZ Street: You're different. You're a visionary, a creator, a man of many talents. You're an un-common man. A complex and maybe even difficult man, but genuine and genuinely frightening in your deepness. Your depth has no shallows. You're astounding, and outstanding. I beg your forgiveness.

Augustus: (smiling for the first time) No problem. And what you just said about me, I like. You're alright, Street. Are we done?

EZ Street: Do you want to be done?

Augustus: That's a stupid question. Now get the fuck out of here.

Solved

My wife got home from work and our youngest son ran over to her and yanked her sleeve.

"Hey, Mommy, I saw Daddy on TV this afternoon," he shouted.

She had no idea what he was talking about, but she patted him on the head and told him to calm down.

I had left the house early and headed over to our local police precinct to pay a fine for accidentally adding some styrofoam trays to our bag of recyclables. When I entered the station building, the desk sergeant looked up at me from his newspaper and broke into laughter.

"Yo, Joel Rifkin just wandered onto the premises!" he yelled into the rooms behind him. "He's probably looking for victim eighteen to fucking add to his total!"

A couple of uniformed cops charged into the room howling with glee.

"What can we do for ya, Joel-boy," the desk sergeant chortled.

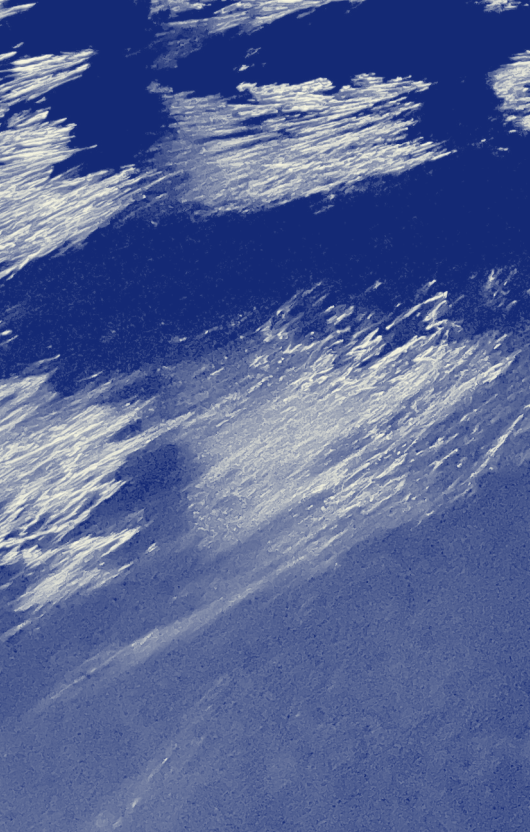
When I got home that evening I told my wife what had occurred. We made a point of watching the news and the mystery got solved. I do look a lot like the serial killer. I shivered and turned away from the screen. She couldn't hide a smile, but so it goes.

WHAT ARE THEY DOING

Those two men in the molten pool of sun under a dense green ring of trees dipped in gold stand like a pair of statuesque attendants poised at some sacred door.

They think they're walking their dogs.





THE PERFUMED GARDEN

There was a mystery in the garden, they told me. Which garden? I asked them.

The one next door, they said.

So, what was the mystery? I asked.

They didn't know, nobody knew, but you could smell it.

What could you smell? I asked.

They didn't know, they said, it was a mystery.

Doctor, Doctor?

Playing Doctor: I was a normal child. Like the other children I played doctor. For me it was Doctor Mengele, Doctor X, Doctor Kevorkian...

Remember that myologist is urologist.

My gynecologist says that I am crazy.

I think my doctor likes me.

Whenever I go to his office, he tells me to bend down, and then he sticks his finger up my ass.

While having an attack of seasonal allergies at the home of husband and wife friends, an orthopedic surgeon and a general practitioner respectively, the wife said, "I think we need to have a discussion about Singulair for your allergies." I responded, "What does a cell phone plan have to do with allergies?"

When my neurologist mentioned that the slipped disc in my cervical column was probably due to a childhood trauma, I asked, "How could the loss of my teddy bear as a kid cause a slipped disc?"

When my neurologist diagnosed the slipped disc in my cervical column and prescribed physical therapy, I asked if I could stand on my head. He said that in his 30 years of practice, he never had anyone ask him that question. He said that if it doesn't hurt, go ahead.

FOUND! DUCHAMP'S BICYCLE

Found in the Zuideramstelkanaal, Amsterdam, 200 meters from my home in 2021. Magnet fishers pulled this trophy out of the murky canal after a rainstorm and laid it out on the very bridge from which they had cast their line to which a super-magnet was attached. Magnet fishing is a hobby for many Dutch people. Some astonishing treasure gets dredged up: downed warplane motor parts, a metal prosthetic leg, bullet casings, bent coins, but nothing ever so amazing as this. The bicycle eventually caught the attention of a passing local art appraiser. His research determined that the bike had once been artist Marcel Duchamp's. Some say he'd bicycled all the way from Paris to Amsterdam in 1902, where, upon his

arrival, in a fit of exhaustion, he left it unattended while ordering a paper cone of patates frites at a local stand. Upon his return, his bike had disappeared. Duchamp graciously rejected the notion that it had been stolen, believing the Dutch to be good people. He was sure it was one of his Dutch Dadaist comrades playing a joke on him. Maybe legendary prankster Jean de Mug-Koole. In any case, his hosts felt responsible and offered him the time of his life in some Redlight Zeedijk bars. In a journal entry from that time, Duchamp described the loss as a blessing (*C'était une bénédiction des plus profonds*). And so, 120 years later, the young magnet fishers were eventually coaxed into donating the rusty wreck to the Stedelijk Museum. But, how it ended up on the bottom of an Amsterdam canal will never be fully understood.



MYSTERY BIRD

As I roll along a side street on my bike,
I see what looks like a large bird,
standing on the pavement with its wings spread
at a span of five or six feet.

This bird could be a raptor ready for takeoff.

I roll closer and see that the wings are actually the legs of a warning sign face down on the street, having been kicked over by a drunk person, or knocked over by a swerving car.

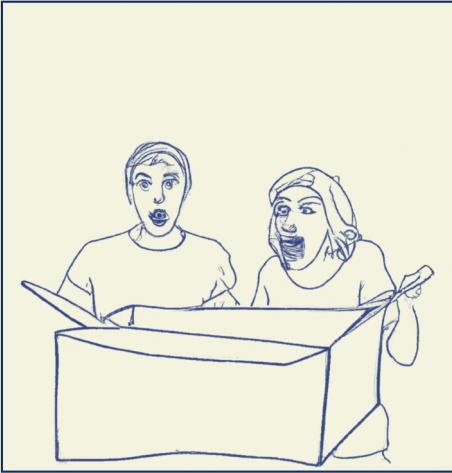
It is the kind of sign that would say, "WORK AREA" on its orange-painted face if it were standing upright, but it has been toppled next to a crater in the middle of my path

20 All Time Greatest

1. The origin of the universe
2. The existence of God
3. The nature of consciousness
4. The purpose of life
5. The meaning of death
6. The existence of extraterrestrial life
7. The nature of time
8. The nature of reality
9. The nature of free will
10. The nature of the human mind
11. The Loch Ness Monster
12. The Bermuda Triangle
13. Stonehenge
14. The Nazca Lines
15. The Great Pyramid of Giza
16. The Moai statues of Easter Island
17. The Dead Sea Scrolls
18. The Voynich Manuscript
19. The Amelia Earhart disappearance
20. The Zodiac Killer



coming soon:



next issue's theme:

NOTHING