Poney Named Princess,

again

*Knock Knock*

Who is their

:( A DEPRESSION :( 

Oh

§

Sigh .........

PSA: Handy Family Recognition Chart for the Holidays

Regretfully Corrected from the Original as Designed by Ms. Alice J. Ramsay, 1987

November 2014

Dear Reader,

We spent the summer in a slender universe. We were undisturbed by the corruptions of this world - no sickness, slander or invasion. I saw no lands lost, no disasters, no dashed meals or hopes. The lip of the ocean was pure as desire, and not one hole defrayed the ozone.

We lived in a white cottage with white walls. Sometimes music played from nowhere - it was always a Strauss waltz. American cheese was served on plain crackers. From time to time a crab would appear on the sand, and we would catch it, without misadventure. It was always the same crab, and very good to eat. Sometimes, there was a sound, almost like thunder, but we never felt the rain, so neglected it. The horizon was solid as a skyscraper, interminable, grey.

And, we were perfectly content, stuck to the ground rules.

We did our best not to stare at what crawled along the floor at our feet.

With Our Best Wishes
For Long Life and Madness,

Yr Editors

Grim & Shrewd
The bus pulled up, just in time to see you reeling back from the punch to your face. Can you remember the boy who dealt the blow? He had yellow hair that disappeared against the benign morning light. He had skinny wrists and freckles. You were a scant seven, which made him as good as thirty, even though looking back on it, he was eight, maybe. You can't really remember him, but you can remember the good riling anger in your hands, even after they both betrayed you, being small and silly weapons. He picked on you every day until you raised your tiny girl fists in improbable chutzpah. You remember the sound of your own wail, the blur of immediate tears, and how these seemed to shock and frighten him.

Then, the bus pulled up and it was over.

The bus driver didn't ask what was wrong even though you were sobbing among a crowd of hooligans who were doing their best to look industriously innocent. So you learned that though the driver yelled at you when stood up on the bus, he didn't care if you were actually hurt. You learned you couldn't hope for justice. Bus rules were set out by its cruelest inmates, your wanton peers.

From six to seventeen, a bus ride the only thing you could count on, lumbering journeys over clumsy, backtracking routes. Forty-five minutes of a special kind of public school despair that expelled you in a smelly huff at its end, disoriented and sea-sick. There were mornings so cold and wet that you never managed to wipe the drops off the miserable windows. There were hours long hot boredom, of vinyl and teen sweat, until the sun reached so far it finally extended into summer, freedom.

It wasn't all bad. The mean girls of junior high eventually became your friends because there was no one else around. The junior high boys who would play with you (acne or not) as long as you could recite key battle scenes from *Star Wars*. But, then, there were the mean girls of high school who started spontaneously torturing you, telling everyone how you wet your bed every night, smiled hun-

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**Do you POOP?**

Please excuse the somewhat personal nature of this Advertisement, but the information we are about to share below is extremely important for both you and your digestive health.

You may not think that you’re constipated, but in reality, it is **VERY** likely that you **ARE**

Fortunately, this can be corrected rather quickly:

If you wish to stop future mailings, please click here.

Perhaps you are not trying hard enough.

Click harder.

HARDER.

Failure may indicate lack of regularity. Please consult your manual for more detailed instructions.

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**True Fact, #99**

Everything matters, but nothing is permanent.

Kat Tuesday
Exhale —

It’s 5 AM, and I write these thoughts and memories as I lie in the sand in a Bedouin camp in the Wadi Rum desert in Jordan. I watched shooting stars all night, and now I watch the first rays of morning peak over the horizon. This is the desert that Lawrence of Arabia was filmed in, and today, I too will cross the desert and travel to Aqaba. The guns are still pointed out to sea, but that is not where the attack comes from. It comes from inside, from across the desert. Nourished on small oases of anger, frustration, regret, self-pity, self-delusion, and fear — they will raze and plunder the city yet.

Play it as it lays. We tell ourselves stories to live, to love, to fuck, to forget, to explain, and, most importantly, to remember.

METEORITE AL SAYS: DON’T HESITATE, LEARN YOUR PREPOSITIONS WITH ALACRITY

if it at you the moment you lumbered onto the bus. There was the high school boy who rubbed his ass against you in walk-by assault, and swung his pants off as the bus pulled away, a semaphore’s last hurrah.

These rowdy denizens were responsible for your eventual descent into homicidal mania on the bus. Crippled by nausea and boredom, the best thing to do was to close your eyes and make the bus ram into a truck, or a building, or just fall over. As soon as you escape – your hidden pluck means you are always the first out of the wreckage – the rest of the bus explodes. Your enemies are crushed by toothy metal, screaming and melting with a vengeance, while you save a few worthy peers, who collapse into your arms, sobbing their thanks hysterically, pissing themselves with fervent appreciation. This is the picture that goes on the front of the newspapers. “Hero Student Saves Incontinent Peers from Wreckage”!

If you were lucky, you might get a few satisfying iterations of the dream in, before the bus lurched to your stop. You clambered into your backpack and got the hell out of Dodge. You could flick it off as it disappeared, but the bus didn’t care, and rumbled off like someone else’s bad dream. In the godly light of a midwestern September, the remaindered exhaust melted into clean air. You kicked up the dry grass on the way home. There was something in the fridge to help you lick your existential wounds, and the worst thing

True Fact #26a
The covers of this book are too far apart.

— Ambrose Bierce
Desiccated, I lay stretched out, shivering. After some hours and having exhausted all my curses, I knelt and prayed. In the distance were the hills. There was only a hint of light at the top of them. I was in a twilight valley by an old lodge. The Indians had been evicted from this supreme land and presumably the moose too. Always crimes and displacements. My mind was too dry to think, but a low song came eventually from my mouth. Then the moose elder came.

He was tall and long as two men and his antlers were as wide. He did not speak or emit any sound. I prostrated before him for hours. When my head rose, I saw that I was now on a dusty plain. Thousands of supplicants all knelt in a line. There was a narrow trough between us and the elder, a muddy dried out creek with just enough water for the elder to take a small drink. I was grateful for the company of all the supplicants, but I closed my eyes so I would not see them. I prayed again in earnest.

The preamble of the prayer was apology for the entire human atrocity - exploitation, pillage, pollution and indifference. It felt important to me, maybe not a bad start. However, everything was already known and written. It was not new to the elder. After a few moments, the freezing got more intense. The plain was gone, and I was back in the valley. The elder was still with me, but fading. My eyes slid open. I saw the moose starting to turn to rock and everything was fading gray, tending towards invisibility, cracking, turning to dust.

Then I prayed to be lifted of my own malcontent. I brought a spyglass wherever I went. Ever I been a critic, there was a jealousies rot close to the core and it infected the lens. Now I cast the lens down the hill. I saw it break against rocks and deposit itself in a crook of a cave. Its metal and glass pieces glinting in the sun for someone to find. Then the elder became vivant again. I could feel his hot breath stinking breathe blessing me. With a gruff chortle and nod, he turned to walk again. I rose no longer in the dream world, but in a winter lodge filled with light.

Another job, another hustle, the site of another crisis heterotopia. Stuck outside their homes, people are vulnerable — trapped public until they pay the locksmith's ransom.

If you want to make money as a locksmith then take no prisoners, drill and replace every lock you see. Sure, you could stick in a tension wrench and a pick and put on a little show till the lock clicks free, but you make a lot more money destroying locks and selling new ones.

Hustle hustle hard hard. Like a lot of work done in the public eye, it requires an element of performance. For example:

“I might not be able to pick this door knob. It's a Defiant, and they have spool pins! They can be very difficult. I don't want to waste your time, it's late, and you've been waiting a while already. I can just drill the lock open instead, it will only take a minute or two, and I’ll give you a good deal on the new lock. I don't want to be out in the rain any more than you do!” But deceptive performance was never my style. Drilling locks is accepting defeat.

Getting to know someone is not unlike picking a lock. You feel them out, their ambitions, expectations, and desires. You question them about their experiences, guess at their dreams. You can tiptoe through the tulips slowly feeling them out, learning their eccentricities. Or you can go for shock and awe, push all their buttons at once, throw the spaghetti at the wall and see what sticks. You can rake over their buttons, trying to get them to open for you.

Or you can give up and just drill them and replace them.

Me? I love tiptoeing through the tulips. There's a redemptive grace in the dance. Unlike the senses, grace has to be earned and cultivated. The only thing babies do gracefully is sleep. And suckle.
After she recovered, my girlfriend and I planned a trip to the southwest.

But everything was wrong. We both felt it.

Then, she asked me the “hypothetical” every person in a serious relationship dreads: “How would you feel if I started seeing other people?” I told her that it would change everything, but of course, everything had already changed.

The day after we got back, I came back home from work late. She told me nonchalantly that she’d slept with someone that she’d been seeing for a while. Perhaps I could have mended things if I’d been older, wiser, or more experienced. But I don’t get mad, I get sad. So I gave up the apartment. I quit my life. I quit locksmithing. I hit the road and flew across the Atlantic.

In Paris, the other shoe dropped. She emailed me and told me she was pregnant, that she didn’t know who the father was, but thought it was mine. She told me she’d already called Planned Parenthood and scheduled an appointment for an abortion.

I wonder, sometimes, if things would have been different if I’d been in Chicago then. But I wasn’t. I tried to convince her to keep the child. I loved her, and I knew even then that abortions leave scars that never heal. After all, the first book we bonded over was Play it as it Lays. Didion.

I rushed back to the States. I took her to the abortion; I looked at the ultrasound with her; I drove her home afterward. Perhaps the worst place in the world for a man is sitting in Planned Parenthood, not knowing if it’s your child that is being aborted. She got sick on the way back, from the anesthetic. I tried looking for a bag in my car, and gave her my angle grinder carrier in to throw up in.
Recipe Corner: Epiphany

1 finger Gin          1 finger St. Germain liquor
1 fig leaf            1 cup Chopin Waltz B minor
1 unwanted sexual advance 1 death*

Toss the liquors back with the practiced smoothness of a widowed aunt. Remember: even a look can ruin a relationship. In the Waltz, you are dancing a few steps behind yourself, a few years ago. You seem very happy. The light is pale and quiet.

Garnish with leaf and advance.

*beware of using your own death - side effects unpredictable

— G.K. Chesterton

"Men may keep a sort of level of good but no man has ever been able to keep on one level of evil."

True Fact # 453

Ennui Kat Tuesday