



FUNCTIONALLY DEAD

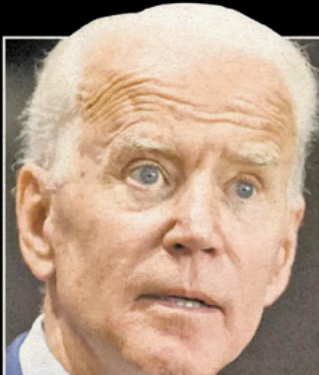
MONDAY, MAY 13, 2024 / High chance of hellfire **WAR ZONE** Volume XI, Issue 1 / functionallydead.com / \$0

DEATH CAMP



Violent Protesters Sing and Sit on Quad

"One of them smiled at me."



"I told Bibi to knock it off, and he kicked me in the ice cream cone, if ya know what I mean—I mean shin. But seriously, I like having a military base with nuclear capabilities in that region." **SEE PAGE 69**

@FUNCTIONALDEADLINE

The kids are alright. Except when the cops are assaulting them.

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Zion of Interest: a film about Israel: the TRUE STORY the
 Hamas-run media DOESN'T want you to know

Written by
Michael Rapaport

//MATTHEW BRIAN COHEN

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HOLLYWOOD
EXCLUSIVE

INT. JERUSALEM MARKET - DAY

FADE IN:

A bustling marketplace deep in the heart of Israel.

WE HEAR: traditional Israeli music (The Beastie Boys - "No Sleep 'Till Brooklyn").

Vendors are peddling their wares. Beautiful white children are running through the streets. An IDF soldier isn't beating a Palestinian man just trying to go about his day.

In the background, no sounds of APARTHEID can be heard (because there aren't any).

A handsome, mid-twenties vagabond (think Michael Rappaport, because that's who it is) walks through the stalls.

MICHAEL

Yo! Welcome to Jerusalem, city of my birth... right! Or as I like to call it, the Brooklyn of the East. The Far East! But not like, Asia or anywhere weird like that.

As Michael walks, children stand in awe -- they've never seen such a smart and COOL guy before, with real street knowledge.

MICHAEL (cont'd)

Nah, we are straight in the Holy Land. Y'know, Israel has been getting a bad rap lately. And I'm not talking about the whack rhymes of THE WEEKND.

MICHAEL (cont'd)

Nah, I'm talking about all the young people out there on TikTok who think they know what's going on in Gaza just because they saw a bunch of pictures and heard a bunch of first-hand accounts and read about the history of the region.

MICHAEL (cont'd)

Those sucka MCs can spit their BS about BDS, but they don't know what's really going on in Israel. Whether we're defending ourselves from vicious hospitals or just trying to kick it without having to hear a bunch of children starve, Israel can't seem to catch a break.

MICHAEL

Yo! Welcome to Jerusalem, city of my birth... right! Or as I like to call it, the Brooklyn of the East. The Far East! But not like, Asia or anywhere weird like that.

2.

MICHAEL (cont'd)

That's why I, in association with Benjamin Netanyahu's very normal son, am making this movie -- to show you the REAL Israel, not the propaganda you see on TikTok, but the propaganda you used to see on TV.

Michael HI-FIVES and Israeli child so hard it hurts their hand.

MICHAEL (cont'd)

Sorry, Jonathan Glazer! We ain't living in the Zone of Internet no mo'. We're living in the Zion of Interest, baby! Kick it!

TITLE CARD: "ZION OF INTEREST"

(note to Benjamin Netanyahu's son -- can we get someone to draw me as a cartoon for the title sequence? I want to wear a baseball hat that says "GETTING SOME IRON DOME")

INT. ISRAELI HOME - DAY

Michael, inside the kitchen of a beautiful Israeli home.

A PALESTINIAN COUPLE is standing outside, looking through the window, like some of their stuff is still there from when they were kicked out moments before.

MICHAEL

A lot of anti-semites and Jews with moral integrity will tell you that Israel is an apartheid state. Well, I'd rather live in an apartheid state than the state they're living in -- denial!

MICHAEL (cont'd)

I want to get the perspective of some OG Isrealis -- people who have every right to be here!

The camera pans and we see YOSEF Derek-Jeter (white, born in Philadelphia, diehard New York Yankee fan from 1998-2000) and SKYLAR Leary (white, Evangelical Christian).

MICHAEL (cont'd)

Hey Yosef, my man!

Michael and Yosef do the coolest handshake that only a real street guy or a Beastie Boy could do.

HOLLYWOOD
EXCLUSIVE

MICHAEL (cont'd)
Skylar! Shalom!

Skylar stares blankly.

MICHAEL (cont'd)
You guys see any apartheid here?

YOSEF
I hope not. We literally just took this house, so if there's any apartheid or black mold, I'm gonna be pissed.

SKYLAR
He's not fun to be around when he's pissed!

MICHAEL
Alright, but real talk. I've been gassing up Israel something major, but Israel isn't perfect. Recently, some aid workers got GOT. And while they should have followed proper protocol by not delivering food to Gaza at all, it's still a tragedy.

Michael stares directly at the camera. He's getting real serious and thoughtful, like when the Beastie Boys would play jazz.

MICHAEL (cont'd)
Chef Jose, I respect you. Me and you... we're two funky white boys who did it our own way.

MICHAEL (cont'd)
But the airstrike that murdered your friends was an honest mistake. I know that sounds crazy, but stop talking back to the TV and listen. The first missile we can all agree was an oops. When you're doing suspicious stuff like feeding starving people, you look a lot like Hamas.

MICHAEL (cont'd)
The second missile was one those things when you're in too deep, but you can't back out, like when XXL asks you to name A Tribe Called Quest songs or you book a guest spot on *My Name Is Earl*.

MICHAEL

You guys see any apartheid here?

YOSEF

I hope not. We literally just took this house, so if there's any apartheid or black mold, I'm gonna be pissed.

MICHAEL (cont'd)
The third missile there's no excuse for. If I could bring those people back to life, I would. But hey, things get messy in the kitchen, know what I mean?

SKYLAR
You can't put a price on human life, but you can put a price on some beautiful beachfront property.

MICHAEL
Facts.

YOSEF
It's like the old Israeli saying goes -- fuck with my land grab and I'll fucking kill you, motherfucker.
(beat, then)
It sounds nicer in Hebrew.

MICHAEL
Facts.

EXT. U.S. CAPITOL BUILDING - DAY

Michael is sitting in the hallowed office of U.S. Senator JOHN FETTERMAN.

On Fetterman's desk is a tiny stand of the American flag. Behind him on his wall is a giant Israeli flag.

MICHAEL
I'm back in the States here with AIPAC's capo di tutti capi, Senator John Fetterman.

JOHN FETTERMAN
Michael, pleasure to be here. Hail Israel.

MICHAEL
Hail.

JOHN FETTERMAN
I hope that was OK for me to do, seeing as how I'm not Jewish.

MICHAEL
Don't worry. Devoting yourself to the Israeli state has nothing to do with Judaism.

(MORE)

HOLLYWOOD
EXCLUSIVE

MICHAEL (cont'd)
In fact, the less Jewish morals and ethics you have, the easier it is to support Israel.

JOHN FETTERMAN
That's good. Because ever since my brain was deprived of oxygen, my politics have really made a lot more sense. You see, Israel is the only Jewish state.

MICHAEL
And that's important, because there's no way to feel connected to God unless you have a robust tax code and a squadron of F-15s.

JOHN FETTERMAN
Facts.

MICHAEL
Israel has a right to defend itself against even our youngest and most helpless enemies.

JOHN FETTERMAN
Some of those babies the IDF slaughtered would have grown up to be terrorists. At least two.

MICHAEL
What else would you expect when they were raised in an open-air prison?

JOHN FETTERMAN
I'm glad you used that phrase -- "open-air prison". People forget that residents of Gaza aren't in one of the horrific, human-rights-violating "closed-air prisons" we run here in America.

MICHAEL
Gitmo make some noise!

JOHN FETTERMAN
The people of Gaza have always had the freedom to hear the sweet sound of IDF drones buzzing overhead, the freedom to see the beautiful concrete walls separating them from their rightful territory, and the freedom to smell the burning flesh of their relatives.

JOHN FETTERMAN

I'm glad you used that phrase -- "open-air prison". People forget that residents of Gaza aren't in one of the horrific, human-rights-violating "closed-air prisons" we run here in America.

MICHAEL

Gitmo make some noise!

MICHAEL
Sorry, anti-Zionists -- you just got GOT!

JOHN FETTERMAN
I'd rather live in an apartheid state than the state they're living in -- denial!

MICHAEL
Facts. Do you have anything else to say to the "anti-Zionist left?"

JOHN FETTERMAN
As America's historically most left-wing Senator, I'll say this. Fuck you.

MICHAEL
Fuck you?

JOHN FETTERMAN
Fuck you. AIPAC is getting what they paid for -- end of discussion. You want freedom? Learn how to write some checks. You want to live in your ancestors' home, start paying the mortgage on mine.

MICHAEL
Wait -- that's what this is all about? It's not about Judaism, or God, or thousands of years of history -- it's just about fucking money? Fuck. This fucking sucks! I can't stand it. I know you planned it.

Suddenly, all the BEASTIE BOYS (even the dead one) BURST into frame (note to Benjamin Netanyahu's son -- can you do this in After Effects???)

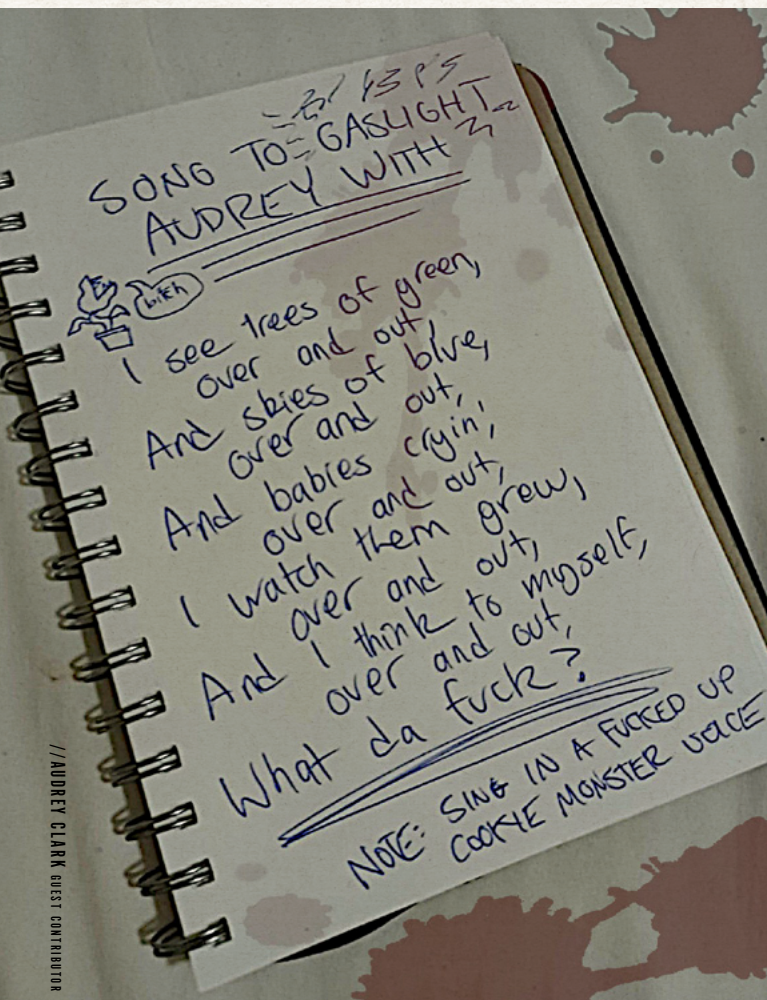
BEASTIE BOYS
I'ma set this straight / this Watergate.

Everyone (but mostly me, Michael Rappaport) does a sick version of "Sabotage."

HOLLYWOOD
EXCLUSIVE

OPINION: TRANS PEOPLE DESERVE RIGHTS, EXCEPT FOR MY SHITHEAD ROOMMATE BRONSON

//AUDREY CLARK GUEST CONTRIBUTOR



J.K. ROWLING HAS BEEN IN THE NEWS RECENTLY for saying some insane shit about trans people yet again – like we are secretly made of bugs, or she wants to chop us up with a sword. The *Functionally Dead* editors asked me not to get too specific about it, because she does this about once every six months, and they want to reuse this article so they don't have to pay me more. I think that's kind of unfair, but I also have to pay a \$24 monthly subscription fee to have tits, so I guess that's life.

I don't really have much else to say about Ms. Rowling (who by the way is my birth mother). Instead, I'm going to use this space to address a much more pressing issue: my roommate Bronson is a real shithead.

I feel like this topic is relevant, because I'm trans, and Bronson's trans, and he's probably the worst person in the entire world. I don't think trans people have an obligation to be perfect or to “represent our community,” but if aliens came to Earth and our only representative was Bronson, they would justifiably exterminate the human race.

Bronson is a trans man. I would describe him as having a lot of “toxic masculinity,” because he can be quite aggressive. I would also describe him as having a lot of “toxic gas,” because he has made a big stash of “super poison bombs” (his words) by peeing into bottles of bleach. He keeps all the bottles under his bed, and sometimes they leak, and >>

>> chlorine gas comes out and burns his eyes and lungs. He says he likes it because “it makes me a spicy guy” (his words).

I believe trans people should be allowed to use whatever bathroom they feel comfortable with. However, this does not include pot plants. Bronson should not be allowed to empty his menstrual cup into the mouth of a venus fly trap, *Little Shop of Horrors*-style. It's fucked up that he does that, and I hate that he refuses to accept that it isn't working. He keeps moving the venus fly trap to different locations around the apartment to try and gaslight me into believing it has come to life. Yesterday it may have winked at me. No thank you.

The other day Bronson hid a walkie talkie in the pot and was singing jazz songs through it. I could tell it was Bronson because his voice sounds really bad due to chlorine gas exposure. Not only is he a bad singer, but he also said “over and out” after every line—*not* correct radio protocol because he would then continue singing anyway. Also, he clearly didn't look up any of the actual songs from the musical. Instead, he just sang the first verse of “What a Wonderful World” over and over, and he got the lyrics wrong.

Again, I don't feel like trans people have an obligation to be role models, but there's kind of an expectation that we have each other's backs. I've really tried to do this (e.g. I bought Bronson a proper binder so he wouldn't hurt his ribs from using sports bandages, and I told him not to breathe chlorine gas), but I feel like Bronson has not returned the favor. Recently, he threw away a carton of soy milk that I had bought, because “that shit will make you a soy's boy” (his words). I thought that was really offensive and selfish. I also thought it was pretty inconsistent considering that the day before he ground up all of my estrogen pills into a smoothie and drank it. Bronson claimed that he drank all of my estrogen “to spit in the eye of god” (his words) and that afterwards he injected ten times his usual dose of testosterone to counteract the effects.

I pointed out that this was really dangerous, so Bronson agreed to fill the syringes with super-poison instead. Luckily, his consis-

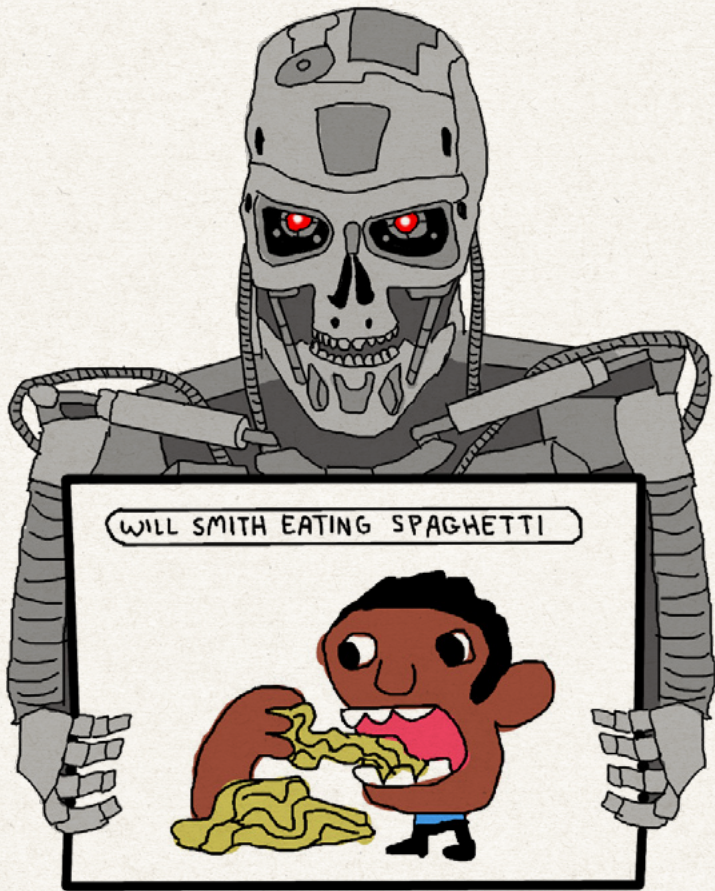
W Again, I don't feel like trans people have an obligation to be role models, but there's kind of an expectation that we have each other's backs. I've really tried to do this (e.g. I bought Bronson a proper binder so he wouldn't hurt his ribs from using sports bandages, and I told him not to breathe chlorine gas), but I feel like Bronson has not returned the favor."

tent exposure to chlorine gas allowed him to build up a tolerance, and he didn't die. He did get incredibly sick; his next period was as black as coal and instantly killed his venus fly trap. Phew.

Overall, I would say that Bronson has exhibited behavior that is consistently disrespectful and problematic. Although I believe that all people deserve equal rights, it would probably be better for society as a whole if Bronson was sent to prison for life. The only reason that I haven't called the police on him is because I find all of his behavior incredibly attractive. I think he's a classic “bad boy” (my words) and I'm in love with him.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is a reprint of a column from 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023. Audrey Clark has since married her husband, Bronson, and the pair have two beautiful children and thirteen horrible venus fly trap monsters. 💖

Audrey Clark saw an echidna in her backyard one time and it was so cute. Her twitter is @audreynotfunny



IMPENDING ROBOT APOCALYPSE MUCH STUPIDER THAN ANTICIPATED

//MITCH RUSSELL GUEST CONTRIBUTOR

TERMINATOR, *THE MATRIX*, *iROBOT*, *TRANSFORMERS*—science fiction has long prepared us for a hellish future of oppression and violence at the cold metal hands of our machine overlords.

So long have we prepared, in fact, that we are sort of starting to wonder:

Is it ever going to happen?

I spoke with researchers at the Seattle Institute for Artificial Intelligence about the impending Pandora's box of death robots. When asked to describe the scientific consensus on the machines which will doubtlessly murder us all some day, Head Researcher Carla Martinez had this to say:

“Yes, the future is bleak. Will it be like the *Terminator* movies? Well... kind of... I guess... Like, imagine *Terminator*, except instead of being hellbent on assassinating John Conner, he's all about generating more and more convincing depictions of Will Smith eating spaghetti. Oh, and your job is obsolete.” >>

>> Sensing my obvious confusion, Dr. Martinez continued. “Put it this way. You know how in *The Matrix*, Agent Smith is a computer program that relentlessly hunts down organic life? Imagine if, instead of hunting down the resistance, Agent Smith dedicated himself entirely to showing Neo underwear similar to the underwear he previously purchased. And also, we can’t grow food anymore.”

“Maybe this will help explain,” she continued, gesturing towards a line graph with a picture of a *Transformers* Decepticon on one end and a broken Amazon Echo at the other. “Most people seem to fear that technology is going in this direction—” she said, pointing to the massive automaton that knows only destruction, “when it is in fact trending towards this.” She drew our attention to the fingerprint-smear machine that spies on you 24/7, but never understands what you want.

She went on: “You know how Alexa cannot correctly identify the command “TURN ON LIGHTS” without a few practice runs first? Have you noticed how your iPad can barely pull off a 10 minute Zoom call without issue? Top down, from ChatGPT to Spotify DJ, none of this shit ever works, right? We here at the Seattle Institute for Artificial Intelligence are not entirely convinced that these technologies actually possess world ending capabilities. But the oceans are dying.”

Dr. Martinez then put a gentle hand on my shoulder and asked “Do you actually think mankind will be eradicated by Google Assistant? Do you believe that Siri is actively plotting your demise? Do you truly fear that Amazon’s servers will someday house an omnipotent entity akin to God, and that AI God will rain down its judgment and hellfire on us, the poor ants of humanity? Bugs, squirming in the shadow of the colossal God-machines we’ve created? Or are you maybe just feeling the same ambient anxiety that everyone is experiencing all the time as we witness endless war and the collapse of the natural world, and you’ve transferred blame for this feeling of dread to the machine you use to take pictures of your cat?”

She fixed her gaze on us. “Is there maybe some part of you that *wants* it to happen? Maybe some part of you thinks we *deserve* it?”

Dr. Martinez slumped back in her chair as we all looked around at one another, unsure of what to do or say. “Well, I don’t blame you. But this death wish is grounded in the idea that science will someday be *too* perfect, that the engineers will pull it off *too* well, to a point where it becomes an existential threat on an apocalyptic scale.” Dr. Martinez then gestured dismissively at the world around us. “I hate to burst your bubble, but when has mankind *ever* done anything *too* well?” she demanded. “Has it ever happened? Even once? No. Clearly the danger of technology is not that it *will* become a singular, infallible, digital conscious unshakably intent on control. It is that it *has* become a big, lumbering, aimless mutant with no true purpose beyond making money for its creators and vacating *purpose* and *meaning* and *beauty* from our already bereft world in the process. How about you dweebs write *that* article!” she spat, as I cowed in the corner with my stupid little notepad and voice recorder and press lanyard.

I left Dr. Martinez weeping quietly in her small office and wandered out into the street, blinking into the sunlight. A sparrow chirped from the branch of an elm. The sound of children playing emanated gently from a nearby park. A single white cloud rolled aimlessly across the mid-afternoon sky. We breathed in the crisp air. We considered that Dr. Carla Martinez was perhaps correct in her assessment of us, that our fixation on death and destruction and the end of the world had more to do with ourselves, our anxieties, and our squandered time on Earth than it did with any existing technology.

I breathed in, I breathed out. I prepared to meet the new day, my new life. I stepped courageously out into a world filled with sunshine and hope and was summarily obliterated by a self-driving Tesla. 🤖

NOTE: The author perished shortly after conducting the interview for this piece, the above article was written by ChatGPT.

Mitch Russell is a writer. You can read his stuff in X-R-A-Y, Olney, Maudlin House, Rejection Letters, here, and elsewhere



My Bad! **BDS** and **BDSM** Are Totally Different

//DIANA KOLSKY

I SHOW UP AT THE CONVENTION in my bondage best—a *Deadpool* gimp suit with a hole cut out for my long-ass ponytail and my nut-crushing lace-up platforms—and let's just say, I get some *looks* from my fellow dungeon denizens. Was this a regional meet-up for normcore subs, or was I in the wrong wing of the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority? I check my pass: "Bronze Room." Nope, that's right. Hmm.

Excuse me, are you here for the convention? A basic twenty-something responds with something about respect, a discussion of rights violations, and cultural impact—sounds legit. I try another unkempt youth. They passionately mumble something about dominant forces and my nips get hard. This ain't your daddy's BDSM convention, but I'm getting horny for these beige weirdos. *Tie me up with the waistband string of your sweatpants, frump boi!*

I take a seat towards the back of the room. No need to draw more attention to myself. A dude with potato chips in his beard and a gleam in his eye sits next to me. The room quickly fills. So glad to see the Bondage movement is alive and well, especially among the youth. They are approaching discipline from a new angle, and I submit to their style. A naughty minx in an oversized vintage rugby shirt struts onto the stage. She's traded in her leather hand paddle for a plastic clipboard. Love me some roleplay. *Welcome to the BDS in Higher Education Western Conference!* Teach me, mommy. *Boycott, divestment, sanctions. It's that simple, so why are we facing such a massive backlash?* Mmm, lash.

She speaks for what seems like hours and I'll be honest—it's hard to follow at first, but soon I'm rapt. I'm leaning in so hard I'm basically bent over to hear this gentle queen whip me with her words. It's like no sesh I've ever experienced. I am at once both humiliated (nice) to only now be finding out about the plight of the Palestinians and empowered (nice) with the fervor for justice these crunchy children preach. By minute sixteen, I'm ready to toss my Pumas and SodaStream; by minute 37, I'm booking my flight to join an on-campus protest; by minute 64, I'm begging for a safeword/committing my life to the fight against colonialism, apartheid, and genocide.

I walk out into the punishing Nevada sun a new person. I have a mission beyond the forbidden pleasures of the nipple clamp. Mind spinning with notions of the whitewashed imperialist propaganda machine that grinds indigenous populations to bits in the pursuit of endless capital, forever war, and massive land grabs, I feel dirty. And not in a fun way. *Hey!* A kid grabs my pleather arm. *Thanks for coming. I know it might not have been your bag, but we need a critical mass to fight this beast.* I turn to him, brush my plastic fingers across the neckline of his Online Ceramics hoodie: *Listen hunni, Bibi is a dom, but I'm with you: this sadism ain't safe, sane, or consensual.* 🐼



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//DANIEL MORRIS GUEST CONTRIBUTOR



HOW I WENT FROM ROBBING A BANK TO RUNNING A BANK BY TRADING MY SKI MASK FOR A RICHARD NIXON MASK



//JENNIFER DONOVAN GUEST CONTRIBUTOR

“APPAREL OFT PROCLAIMS THE MAN.” It’s a quote I’ve heard a time or two but never thought much about, until a simple wardrobe upgrade changed my entire life.

It was by coincidence that bank robbing day fell on laundry day and all my ski masks were dirty. With limited options I grabbed the next best thing: a rubber Richard Nixon Halloween mask—a small but significant alteration to my usual look that would make all the difference.

I expected a reaction when I entered the bank; confusion, fear and anger are all par for the course. But this time something was different. Very different. It was as if once I donned that Richard Nixon mask nobody noticed anything else about me. Not the gun in my hand. Not the gorilla suit. Not the cardboard sandwich sign that said “empty the vault.” At first, I thought the employees were playing it cool, but soon it became clear that they really believed I was an old white guy and former President, and that canceled out everything else about me. Suddenly I was trustworthy, knowledgeable, and apt for middle- to upper-management.

A teller rushed from behind the desk, not to disarm me, but to guide me into a meeting. He sat me at the head of a conference table and offered me coffee and donuts, which I ungracefully shoved through Nixon’s toothy latex piehole. Coffee streamed down the cleft chin and pooled on the formica table. White powder from the donut dusted my primate nipples. Had I gone too far? Was this the moment my true >>

>> identity would be discovered? No, an underling eagerly passed me a napkin.

“Oh, great, Mr. President, you have a laser pointer,” said a middle aged suit as he grabbed my gun and fired a round into the projector screen. Everyone nodded enthusiastically and agreed to circle back to that slide later. He turned to me and asked if I had anything to add. I panicked and said the first thing that came to my head, “Follow the money.” More enthusiastic nods followed.

A woman announced the meeting was adjourned and we would be getting 10 minutes back. I adjusted my watch accordingly. Everyone filed out of the room and returned to their individual offices. I entered an unoccupied office and began rummaging through the desk and opening computer files, looking for clues to open the vault. All I found was a blank W-2, so I filled it out and brought it to Susan in HR. Susan warmly welcomed me to the team and told me she could cut my advance check right then and there. I jumped and clicked my heels together, delighted not only by the payday, but by the flash of the light-up Heelys I wear whenever I might need to make a quick getaway. That’s one wardrobe staple I’ll never compromise.

I decided not to press my luck any further. It was time to head home with my check. I would be back tomorrow for the vault. But as I passed through the lobby, I locked mask-holes with Lyndon B. Johnson in a banana suit. I felt an electric shock course through my whole body—I think LBJ felt

it too, because I swear I saw that banana smile before being rushed off to an important board meeting.

It wasn’t until I was back in the safety of my apartment that I removed the Nixon mask and the gorilla suit, and set down the cardboard sign. I couldn’t believe my luck. Maybe it was a coincidence. Maybe it was fate. Or maybe my vision board was working. (Upon further reflection the picture of Richard Nixon and LBJ doing it on a copy machine was a large focal point of the board. As was a printout of the VHS cover of *Point Break*...)

I believe it was the mask. Every day, I put it back on and return to the bank where I’ve been promoted to branch manager. Maybe one day I’ll reveal my true identity, but for now I’m going to keep doing my job, keep collecting my paychecks, and keep making sweet sweet love to Lyndon B. Johnson. 🍌



FROM THE *Functionally Dead* VAULT



ANNOUNCING THE PANTONE COLOR
OF THE YEAR 2020

**PANTONE 19-4052
MAGA Blue**

Instilling peace of mind to liberals on both coasts, this calming blue indicates, “I’m the good guy. I’m in the right,” as the class war rages across town. This enduring azure shade highlights our desire to return to normal, whatever the fuck that is.

We exist in an era that requires putting on blinders and staring into the void until the darkness becomes the serenity we seek within. This yearning is perfectly expressed by the classic, dependable hue of Pantone 19-4052, pulling us back to the alleged Americana of our mind’s wine-drunken eye. MAGA Blue is truly the numbing of despair incarnate.”

—KEELA MINNOW
Executive Director of the Pantone Color Institute

OLDIE BUT GOODIE,
MAY 2020





OH, I GUESS BANNING TIKTOK IS BAD...?

//BRADY O'CALLAHAN

CONGRESS UNITING TO BAN TIKTOK is bad news, it turns out. I know. I didn't believe it at first, either.

You see, while it may be controversial to say: social media sucks. All of it. I'd go as far to say it hasn't been good for at least a decade. We used to use it to connect with old friends and new friends alike. Now, it is mostly ads, hourly glorifications of rampant consumerism, and pretty people pushing the most inane conspiracy theories you've ever heard. I do not want an app that's inherent design is an endless scroll of strangers shaking keys in front of my face. It should die.

But apparently this whole thing isn't about that, and is all about anti-Chinese sentiment and fear mongering about communism? Damn. I guess let's not ban it outright if it's going to pointlessly worsen tensions with one of the most powerful nations in the world, just because we've been told that they are a threat to our and the rest of the world's freedom. Like, it fucking sucks for sure, but that's not China's fault. We, as people, are bad!

I want to be perfectly clear: I do not care about a Chinese company stealing my data that much. Every American company already has it. I buy some cereal using a credit card at Target and all of a sudden every other post on Instagram are different kinds

of bowls (all made in China, btw) with little nooks for spoons. While irritating, I do not think this is a good reason to ban TikTok. I want it banned because I do not care to hear a 17 year old #TradWife's opinions on why Taylor Swift decided to wear a blue dress to a Los Angeles cafe. I waste enough of my life on my phone. There is a thing called "outside," and I miss it.

I hear that AIPAC has been putting pressure on representatives to push through a complete ban, largely motivated by the overwhelming pro-Palestinian sentiment among young people on the app. I mean, fuck dude. Why do I now have to sit here and say the app is good, actually? Why couldn't funny videos just still live on ebaumsworld and I'd hear about a friend's trip from the friend, instead of a duet video where some guy just listens to them explain the trip and adds no further content or context? I guess if we need someplace to protest genocide and people have been beaten out of the streets, then fine, TikTok can stay.

If Congress wants my support, they'll either need to ditch their ignorant bullshit, or at the very least, try to ban it for making it kind of important to understand TikTok at work. (Or give us healthcare.) I can't begin to tell you how bad I want it to disappear... just not like this. 🙄



WHOOOPS! WE SPOKE TO AL PACINO FOR THREE HOURS BEFORE REALIZING IT WAS A KOREAN MAN USING DEEP FAKE

//NED ARNOLD GUEST CONTRIBUTOR

IT HAPPENS TO EVERYONE THESE DAYS. Even this leading industry publication is not immune. After clicking on an email from the address "a!.pach!no.real@4iejksow.com," we conducted what we thought was an illuminating interview, reminiscing with one of the aging lions of cinema, but was unfortunately a cruel hoax. Regretfully, we had already sent him 10K in Bitcoin before we realized the deception.

In the interest of full disclosure, we have included portions of the interview below. We hope that our journalistic efforts might not go to waste—please consume the following not as an inspirational dialogue with one of the greats, but as a cautionary tale—this could be you!

Portions of this interview have been edited for length and clarity.

Ned Arnold is a comedian and writer in New York. He's been featured on The Moth, and is performing his stand-up show Teacher's Pet, about an affair he had with his college professor, in venues across the city

DO YOU STILL FEEL THAT YOUR BEST WORK IS AHEAD OF YOU?

힘드는데, 개날 오후 같은 영화 대본이 2년마다 돌아오지 않는다. 운이 좋으면 50번에 한 번씩 옵니다.

[automated speech to text voice pipes in, crackly]

<Yes.>

ARE YOU STILL SEEKING OUT CHALLENGING ROLES, TRYING TO PUSH YOURSELF AS A PERFORMER?

내 나이에는 신발 끈을 묶기 위해 몸을 구부리는 것만으로도 도전이 될 수 있습니다! 하지만 진지하게 모든 역할이 올바른 접근 방식을 찾으면 배우에게 충분히 도전할 수 있다고 생각합니다. 그게 연기의 즐거움 중 하나다.

[automated speech to text voice pipes in, crackly]

<No.>

IF YOU'VE BEEN KEEPING UP WITH CURRENT EVENTS, SUCH AS BLACK LIVES MATTER AND OTHER RECENT CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENTS, ARE YOU HOPEFUL FOR THE FUTURE OF THIS COUNTRY? WHAT DO YOU THINK IS YOUR ROLE IN CORRECTING SOCIAL INJUSTICE?

배우로서 입에 발을 넣고 싶지 않습니다. 연기는 기본적으로 생산적 숙련 노동직이다. 당신은 당신의 일에 등을 돌립니다. 그래서 당신은 무언가를 말하고 싶은 유혹을 느낄 수 있지만, 그것이 궁극적으로 당신의 일이 아니라 하는 것을 기억해야 합니다. 제 개인적으로는 일이 우선입니다. 그리고 나는 내가 할 수 있는 일을 하고, 내가 믿는 대의에 돈을 바칩니다. 그래서 질문에 답하자면, 내 역할은 이 사회의 다른 사람과 동일합니다. 내가 옳다고 믿는 일을 하는 것.

[automated speech to text voice pipes in, crackly]

<Please send money I am trapped in prison because they think Scarface is real I'll put you in the next Godfather. This is Al Pacino from Scent of a Woman, I have Robert De Niro here:

Hey this is Bobby, please send the bitcoin I am also in jail because they hated how I stole land from the Osage in Killers of The Flower Moon.> 🍷

ALLY! THIS GENERAL MANAGER MAKES HIS NONBINARY EMPLOYEE CLEAN BOTH BATHROOMS

AS CONSERVATIVES TRY TO BAN transgender people from entering any bathroom without fear, one incredible General Manager, Donny Fairbanks of Glendale, Minnesota's second largest Bargain Bin, has decided to push back. Donny, in a brave show of allyship, forces his only trans nonbinary employee, Em, to clean *both* the men's and women's restrooms. Donny is truly an inspiration to gender non-conforming folks everywhere!

"What can I say?" said Donny Fairbanks. "I recognize their identity as an individual who doesn't fit the gender binary, which makes them quite literally the only person who can go into both restrooms. Obviously, as a manager, the most respectful thing I can do in this situation is let them clean both bathrooms. It's not just about getting the piss spray off the stall—it's about equity".

What a nice guy? No. What a *hero*.

"Let me? If anything, I'm wondering why sales associates are cleaning the bathrooms at all," Em opined while scrubbing the inside of a diarrhea-spackled toilet. "I was hired to sell products in a retail store, but now half of my job is cleaning my coworkers piss because I give boyleft vibes?"

That's rough, but at least they see you for what you truly are: a confusing gender blob who is best celebrated for mopping floors.

The staff has been really supportive of Fairbanks' decision. A new hire, Sandy Perks, gave a statement describing it as "remarkable" that she doesn't have to clean the bathroom, even though she is the newest hire at the company. "I feel bad that Em is in there

unclogging both toilets right now... but I'm a supporter of trans rights, so I'm willing to take one for the team and lose out on this opportunity."

Cis allies for the win!

"This diversity initiative has become so successful that I might solely hire nonbinary individuals," Fairbanks commented after seeing the bathrooms sparkling clean for the first time in a decade. "They're just able to cover more tasks than their binary-focused colleagues, which in turn is better for me: someone who refuses to do anything physically demanding at this place, including restocking the Coffeemate. I stay out of the basement—it's creepy."

A leader *and* an innovator!

"Next time I apply for a job, which will be soon, I'm going to make sure I tell them I have an allergy to cleaning solutions," said a sweaty Em, trying to hold back barf while cleaning mystery goo off the men's urinal.

Hopefully Em's next boss is less principled (and their next gig just has one single gender neutral bathroom)! 🙄

Air Durnell (they/them) is an LA based writer and performer whose writing has been featured in Reductress, McSweeney's, and Clickhole. They were previously an actor on the UCB Maude Night team Glamour College and are currently pitching their original pilot, DevOUT, around Los Angeles

As Your Psychologist, I Regret to Inform You That Your Extreme Depressive Symptoms Indicate Flawless Mental Health



//SIMON BOWER GUEST CONTRIBUTOR

THANKS FOR WAITING, come on in and take a seat. Can I get you tea or coffee? No?

Well, there's no easy way to say this. I've looked over the notes from our last few sessions, I've consulted with some of my colleagues, and I can only conclude that the mental anguish you've been suffering over the past several months is a healthy neurological response to current events.

I know this must be a shock to you. You were so insistent that your perception of the world we live in is too absurd and pessimistic *not* to be symptomatic of some greater mental health issue. But it isn't, and I'm so very, very sorry.

There's no dosage of Fluoxetine that'll rid you of that deep chasm in your gut watching the White House Press Secretary roll her eyes and make jerk-off motions when

asked about the latest Israeli bombing of a playground before explaining that the Palestinian children on those monkey bars were clearly training to join Hamas.

Here, take a tissue. It's going to be okay that you are accurately comprehending how not okay it's going to be.

Yes, I remember you told me about your struggle to get out of bed every day and that none of your hobbies bring you joy anymore. And it's true that a lack of motivation and losing interest in things you were passionate about can often be signs of clinical depression. But what were those hobbies of yours again? Watching movies? Ah that's right, Warner Bros. just announced that your favorite director's next five films are already slated to be shelved for tax credits and then remade by OpenAI's Sora. Paintball? Well, I'm sure that was a

lot more fun when it didn't seem possible that you might get drafted into a *real* war in the next few years. No, this all seems like a very neurotypical response to the commodification of art, and the self-fulfilling prophecy of military readiness reaching their current grim heights.

Now I'll admit, I thought there *might* be cause for concern when you described your recurring hallucinations of a centaur skeleton singing BTS' "Dynamite" whenever you eat dinner at home. But after a bit of research, it turns out that visions of mythological K-pop quadrupeds are becoming quite common among your generation. One study suggests it has something to do with microplastic particles crossing the blood-brain barrier and embedding themselves in your brain tissue, though another expert in the field is looking into the possibility of it being yet another >>

>> long-term symptom of COVID-19. Pity none of those positive societal changes to cope with the pandemic were long-term symptoms, am I right?

I apologize, it's insensitive and unprofessional of me to joke while discussing something causing you as much pain as your impeccable mental health.

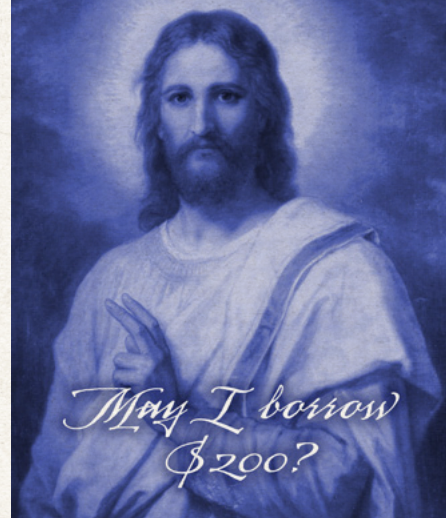
Unfortunately, since you present no psychological issues aside from simply existing in this current time and place, I have no choice but to terminate our professional relationship. I'm sorry, I truly wish there was more I could do for you, but...wait a minute. I must have missed this when I was going through my notes. Apparently a few weeks ago you said: "Despite all of my misery, fear, and dissociating into fugue states where I wake up hours later with no memory and yet another ironic Spongebob tattoo"—again, a very common response to the prospect of an easily avoidable, yet inexplicably inevitable, second Trump presidency—"I nevertheless have hope that things will get better." Now be honest: do you really still feel that little bit of hope for the future? You do?

Well now *that* indicates extreme delusion and a total disconnect from reality. You should probably start coming in twice a week. No, I don't take insurance. 🐼

Simon Bower is an Australian writer who is doing just fine, he swears. You can follow him [@bower2thepeople](#) or send jobs and commissions to bowertothepeople@gmail.com



//AUDREY CLARK GUEST CONTRIBUTOR



ANOTHER HANDOUT REQUEST FROM YOUR SELECTIVELY POOR RIGHT-WING RELATIVE

//CAROLINE HORWITZ GUEST CONTRIBUTOR

Caroline Horwitz is a writer from Pittsburgh. Her satire has appeared in McSweeney's, Weekly Humorist, Jane Austen's Wastebasket, The Balladonna Comedy, Slackjaw, Frazzled, and other humor publications.

BLESSINGS UPON YOU! It's me, your favorite brother/uncle/nephew/cousin. I trust you're well and following God's great plan by either making babies or practicing chastity.

I wouldn't make this request again unless I absolutely had to, but my family is in dire need of more money, or we could lose our four-bedroom house three blocks from the beach. Let me be clear: I am in no way asking you for a loan. That would imply I have any intention of ever paying you back.

My startup company hasn't been thriving the way it should despite putting in twenty-five hours a week *without exception*. I blame the current administration. Has anyone brought gas prices or inflation to your attention lately? When our sainted former president is back in office next year for his second term (i.e., the "New Testament"), I have no doubt that my fortunes will instantaneously turn around and have me sipping cocktails on a yacht with Elon and Jeff within a month. You won't have to worry about me anymore... in which case, please don't be crass and ask me to repay any amount. It's vital to pull yourself up by your bootstraps, stand on your own two feet, and learn to weaponize clichés as well as I do.

There have been other financial hardships as well. As you may recall, my beloved and pious wife required two surgeries in the past five years, which hasn't been easy on our bank account. Yes, they were a breast augmentation and a facelift, but she has assured me that they were as necessary to her wellbeing as any non-elective surgery.

I've already prayed for the Lord's permission to ask this of you and for Him to open your hearts and your wallets. He said you'll be fulfilling His will by gifting me this money, and that you can even consider it your church tithing! You're welcome!

You may think it unfair that I'm making this request only to those of you who are single, divorced, or widowed. Yes, I am aware that you're the ones living without dual incomes, but I'm also aware that you don't have pesky spouses to talk you out of feeling sorry for me. (We really don't need such unfeeling naysayers in our tribe at all, if you want my opinion.)

I hope you feel appropriately blessed to be related to someone who is not too proud to ask for assistance and would never do something as pathetic as apply for government help like the many freeloaders taking up space in our great country. Jesus said to help those in need, and who is more deserving of charity than your own flesh and blood who repeatedly makes the same financial mistakes?

Yours in Christ,

The guy fortunate enough to have family with money (screw all those who don't)

I Read This Zine, and Netanyahu Is Wiping His Ass With a Ceasefire Agreement

What Do I Do Now?

//DAN LOPRETO

ACADEMIC FREEDOM IS IN [CRISIS](#), [unhinged](#) police are violently [arresting](#) protestors, and rightwing mobs are [attacking](#) students with impunity. Bad faith conservative politicians and fascist [grifters](#) continue to punk clueless university administrators, who are actively choosing violence over [negotiation](#).

The [debates](#) about what is happening on college campuses—good vs bad protests, good vs bad speech—are [important](#) but should not distract from the main impetus and reason for the protests in the first place: the Israeli army is committing [war crimes](#) and heinous acts of [violence](#) and [cruelty](#) while the US sends billions in [aid](#) without any meaningful [human rights oversight](#). This is the crux of the matter.

[Robin D. G. Kelley](#) at UCLA writes:

This is a dark day for U.S. higher education, especially at a time when right-wing extremists are waging war on academic freedom and all manner of critical studies. Yet, as the courageous students you had arrested and suspended have been saying, it is a much darker day for the people of Palestine. Gaza's universities are now rubble, many of its faculty, staff, students, and administrators—including three university presidents—have been killed, and most of its libraries, archives, and bookstores destroyed.

Resources:

- [Know Your Risks at Campus Protests Infographics](#)
- [Know Your Rights for Campus Protests Guide](#)
- [For Student Disciplinary Hearings](#)
- [For University Faculty and Staff](#)
- [Palestine Solidarity Resources Guide](#)

Donate:

- [Campus Bail Fund](#)
- [Emergency Relief for Gaza](#)
- [Adalah – The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel](#)

Peruse more issues of Functionally Dead [here](#) and if you're interested in contributing, [check this out](#).

IN THE NEXT ISSUE: HELP! I HAVEN'T REACHED CLIMAX SINCE JOE LIEBERMAN DIED



I'll kill him dead before I let him beat me.

//THIS IS A MAGAZINE OF PARODY, SATIRE, AND OPINION. DUH.