

Friday, December 7, 2012

Goofy And Eleanor beware, You're Time Is Short

Today, I hit my 50 lbs lost mark.

I'm slightly over halfway to my ultimate goal, but that also means that Goofy And Eleanor are officially on notice that they are not long for this world, for I will be rid of them.

Posted by Sideshow in Personal Entry at 15:37

Wednesday, December 21, 2011

RB&P, Ringing In The New Year, and Little Men

A Couple of Notes. There will be a new RB&P soon. It will be a bit of a recap, why BYU's schedule really did suck, a Bowl Preview, and a bit of a season recap. However due to the purchase of a new home, I haven't been able to do it the last couple weeks.

Speaking of the new house, Sabrina and I were wondering what the general feeling was about a party to ring in the New Year on December 31st at the new place? What say ye?

Also I'm relatively sure that everyone has seen it by now, but just in case, the countdown to the return to the Shire has begun with an official trailer.

Posted by Sideshow in Personal Entry at 09:26

Monday, December 19, 2011

Rocking out

Thank you Aerosmith for providing me a best hits album (Oh Yeah). It combines all of the really awesome stuff of Aerosmith in to 2 very portable CD's. I have listened to mine many many times and thoroughly enjoyed it. You have saved me from not having to listen to some of your less popular songs. And I appreciate that, because it means I can just focus on the great stuff.

On a secondary note...

Thank you Metallica for NOT providing me with a best hits album. Your tireless efforts to constantly rock out have not gone unnoticed on me. Thank you for not simply repackaging all of your awesome songs in an effort to just make a bit more money. Your last album (Death Magnetic) was spectacular. Thank you for always rocking!

I am clearly a very conflicted soul.

Posted by Radar in Personal Entry at 04:00

Monday, August 29. 2011

What I really want to say is...

Did you read the email that I just sent you? Because if you had then it would answer the question you just sent me. Yes, the email that you just replied to, asking me that incredibly stupid question, has the answer.

Did you try to use your brain at all to reason through this problem? Or did you just throw your hands in the air and declare: "I am too stupid for the internet!"?

I didn't make you sign that contract. Did you read the contract that YOU signed? Or did you just assume that I would grant all your wishes because that's what you want? I wasn't aware that I was wearing a blue dress and carrying a magic wand. Do I look like your Fairy Godmother?

Posted by Radar in Personal Entry at 09:24

Thursday, April 21, 2011

I am ridiculously proud of this dog

So I am posting this! Joey please do not consider this a personal threat of any kind. I will never order my dog to attack you. The attack doll I keep in my basement with your face taped to the front is just a tragic, tragic coincidence.

Posted by Daboo in Personal Entry at 09:12

Sunday, March 20. 2011

A Parasite

Sabrina Has One. Will take until November-ish to recover.

Posted by Sideshow in Personal Entry at 18:30

Tuesday, February 8, 2011

Lookie What My Wife Did

Not long after we first started dating, I began to work on my wife to get her to start reading Fantasy and S/F - she hadn't been much of a fan until then. However, I didn't get a whole lot of traction until they started working on the movies for "The Lord of the Rings", when she finally read "The Hobbit" and LotR. This is all just a preface to say - check out her interpretation of Smaug!

Posted by Ancient of Days in Personal Entry at 17:06

Wednesday, January 5, 2011

Let's Talk Start-Ups

I recently had a conversation with Radar about Mr. Ancient of Days and thought it resulted in an interesting idea.

Radar:

yeah, I would be curious to know which of the [ideas] he is referring to, since I know they have had several

The Mad Giggler:

I'm not sure

we didn't go into details on the project

we talked about I-N-S mostly

things we liked, things we didn't

Radar:

hopefully I was one of the likes.

[. . .]

it would be interesting to know what everyone thought were the good points about INS, from a strictly analytical perspective (minus the emotion)

The Mad Giggler:

yes, yes it would

So here's your chance to give feedback (as objectively as possible) on what you liked about I-N-S. Also if you have something you didn't like but have a possible solution for preventing or fixing that, I am interested in hearing that. My one concern is that this not turn into an attack post on You-Know-Who. Things I liked about inter-net-solutions:

Guru Labs - There was a real culture of people trying to learn and share new technologies.

Open Workspace - Everyone worked closely together so there was lots of communication and for the most part, everyone was on the same page. The marketing guy wasn't out trying to sell a product that was completely different from what the programmers were doing.

Licensing - We didn't pirate software. We mostly used open-source technology, but when we needed something proprietary, we paid for it.

Code Review and Testing - We had a good system of code review and quality assurance in place (with one notable exception.)

Sense of Humor - We tried to build a product with a sense of humor (especially reflected in the help files.)

Calendaring - I liked our wall of deadlines - it's unfortunate that we were unrealistic and failed to adjust when things didn't go as planned. I'm not sure we need something with as much nitty gritty as we had, but I think a big "progress bar" somewhere in the office space can be motivating.

If I think of something else, I'll add it in the comments.

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 09:30

Thursday, December 23, 2010

Dear Dumb@55

Do you have a death wish? Are you trying to die? Is that really the most efficient way to kill yourself? Because I can think of several less painful and immediate options. Running across an unlit road in dark clothing is a sure fire way to get killed, but man is that going to hurt.

Exactly how stupid are you? I have always been a fan of the Darwin Awards, but perhaps you wanted to take it to the next level. I am fine with that. I welcome the chance to have your stupidity genes removed from the population so that you can't pass them on. But don't use me to do it. Exactly how lazy are you anyway that you would choose to make someone else do your dirty work? Looter.

I hope you had the crap scared out of you, because it took nearly a day for me to just unclench.

Sincerely,
The guy who nearly killed you

PS. Merry Christmas you idiot

Posted by Radar in Personal Entry at 21:19

Friday, December 3. 2010

Brashen

Last spring after some discussion, Daboo gave our old labrador-mix mutt (some of you knew and hated Ford) back to her mom and we adopted a German Shepherd puppy. We named him Brashen (after the character in the Liveship Traders by Robin Hobb) and we call him Brash.

I'd always loved German Shepherds and admired their intelligence and versatility. When I was a kid, I learned that they've been trained as guide dogs for the blind; since then, I've learned they are also used to sniff out narcotics, apprehend individuals in cooperation with law enforcement officials, and of course for sheep herding. They are also my favorite looking dog. I have posted some images of him as a puppy here on Winged Wolves.

Daboo was willing to get a German Shepherd on the condition that she be able to train him to do something useful. She did some poking around and found a club here in Utah that does Schutzhund training (Wasatch Hundesport). She joined the club and quite enjoys spending her Saturdays out doing tracking, obedience, and bite work.

Somehow I also got roped into helping out by programming a website for the club. I can't take credit for much of the design, but I built a database onto the existing site and cleaned up some css issues.

If you would like to be chased around by a 70 pound dog, let me know, I'd be happy to help!

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 08:31

Thursday, December 2, 2010

Happy Peter Nash Day

All hail our shiny-domed tv overlord! May his golden smile bless us always and grant us longer lives!

Long Live Peter Nash!

Remember whenever you forget to celebrate Peter Nash day, Joey kills a kitten! Entries from last year

How it all started

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 06:43

Thursday, July 8, 2010

Considering recent events

All of us who write on this blog are familiar with the Harry Potter series. While not all love it, I do want to briefly paraphrase something from it. Dumbledore said at one time that aid will always be given to Hogwarts when it is most needed or called for (or something along those lines). I would like to reiterate to all of you that I, like Dumbledore, will always give whatever aid I can to those of my friends who need it. All you have to do is ask.

Posted by Radar in Personal Entry at 07:32

Wednesday, July 7, 2010

Cloning and Mormonism

I just read *The New York Regional Mormon Singles Halloween Dance: A Memoir* and it is hilarious and a little sad. I was really worried it would bash Mormons too much but it was too honest for that. No hate here, no prejudice, just honest reality. I liked it a lot. As someone who has actually thought about my faith and grappled with its major questions and problems, but have still chosen to be Mormon, I can really relate to her. But at one point of the book a guy the author dated asks her about cloning. It really throws her and she doesn't have a good answer, except that it's not possible to clone a real thinking person. I can see why she thought this but she is wrong. I wrote a response to her: what I would like to tell her in person. It is below the fold. What I'd like to say to Elna Baker. First off, cloning doesn't go against any of your Mormon religious principles. In Genesis it says that God created the world, but the Hebrew word is actually better translated as "organized" the world. Thus God took matter that already existed and sculpted it together into the world as it is. God is not a magician - He did not say "Abracadabra" and POOF! the world appeared. He is a scientist. He is a genius. He organized the world and everything in it using scientific principles. As we delve deeper into physics, astronomy, biology, and other sciences, we merely discover what He always knew. The human body is merely an extension of this. The name of our first father, Adam, literally means "earth." Out of the same components that God used to make the world, He organized our bodies. And when we die, we will "return to dust" -- our bodies will break down into those components once again.

We have, in the pursuit of science, discovered how an egg and sperm interact to begin building a new body. We have developed this knowledge to the point where we can "clone," or faithfully reproduce an organism. Basically, we are learning how to organize a body with available materials. As in all things, we are children groping after the perfect knowledge of our Father, and as time goes by we collectively learn more and more as generations pass. However, this does not mean that we are anywhere near God's level of knowledge and genius. We are like a toddler with a plastic hammer, emulating a parent who can with his own hands build a mansion. This is both naive and wonderful of us, and an indictment of our vast and fabulous eternal potential. Does it make us able to author life? No.

Cloning already exists. Any set of identical twins are genetically the same, just as a clone is genetically identical to its "parent." We have learned, in our childish (but wonderfully inspired) endeavors, to reproduce an organism near-perfectly. However, we can not, and never will, grant the breath of life to that organism. We can build the body out of clay, but we can not usher souls into it. This is a divine power which is too powerful to be given into the hands of inexperienced and naive children. Only God can breathe life into clay. With a set of identical twins, they may look alike, but each body contains a very different soul. Ask any parent who has raised a child--that child's personality and spirit came pre-formed. A preschooler will naturally be shy or gregarious, studious or active, and nothing that the parent tries will change this. I recognize in my four-year old son many traits that I possess myself, and yet he is undoubtedly his own, separate, and firmly formed person. He was born that way. The spirit that God ushered into that little skinny, blonde body is completely unique.

If cloning does progress to humankind, and if a fully formed human is cloned, it doesn't break any rules of religion. We are merely fumbling around with God's building blocks. We create the body out of clay. Will God fill it with a soul? I don't know. I can tell you this: if He does not, that body will not live and breathe and walk around and talk. If He does, then one of God's spirit children has been assigned to that body, just as we all are assigned to a body, and it will live and breathe and laugh and love just like the rest of us. There is nothing we can do to influence this process. If God chooses to put a soul into a cloned body, He will have a great reason to do so. Just because the creation of that body was influenced by His clumsy children doesn't mean that it's not a suitable vessel for one of His precious children.

Cloning may seem like a scary concept, but in truth it is just one of the ways that humans, working together, have tried to elevate our state closer to that of God. Whether or not those who desire to clone a human reach their ultimate goal, God is completely in charge of what follows.

Posted by Daboo in Personal Entry at 13:40

Thursday, June 10, 2010

News From the Giggler Family

Just letting everyone know that the girls went back to their birth mother yesterday at 8:00 am. It's kind of sad knowing that we'll never see them again, but I think that we gave them a good experience and I do think their BM deserved to get them back and I'm glad I helped out with that. We'll be taking a year off foster care so the boys have some much-needed stability. Overall it was a great experience for all of us and I'm glad we did it, but I am pretty exhausted and looking forward to a bit of a slower pace.

Posted by Daboo in Personal Entry at 16:35

Tuesday, June 8, 2010

News From the Elbow Family

We've had a new arrival at our house. Her name is Madeleine, but we usually call her Madi (or Squeak, since she squeaks rather than crying most of the time). There's a picture of her below the fold.

Posted by Johnny Elbows in Personal Entry at 13:52

Monday, June 7, 2010

Things to do in Utah

So as some of you may or may not be aware, my In-Laws have recently moved to Salt Lake From Oregon.

My mother in law is starting to be a bit bored just hanging around the house. Unfortunately her mobility is somewhat limited.

So I'm opening the question to you guys for some ideas. What are some things that she could go see/view, even if it's just from the car. She can walk, just not up or down stairs, and if she were to leave the car, restrooms would need to be somewhat easily accessible.

Any thoughts would be appreciated.

Posted by Sideshow in Personal Entry at 11:39

Friday, May 14, 2010

Paramore

So, most of you probably know that I've been caught being unfaithful. . .to my favorite band. At some point I started listening to Paramore more than U2. This put me in a difficult position when I had to choose to go with friends to see U2 or go by myself to see Paramore. With some hesitation I opted to see the U2 360 Claw Monster tour. Then, on Mother's Day, I was informed that my mother-in-law would very much like to see Paramore (the next night) and would I be interested. Of course I was interested. I know I'm not cool, so what do I care if all those kids 10+ years younger than me think I'm weird for going to a concert with my mother-in-law. There were still a few upper-bowl tickets available, so Monday night "ladybug" and I drove out to Sideshow's neck of the woods and attended an extremely fun show.

The opening band was Fun. You can stream their latest album here or download a free mp3 from Amazon here. Ladybug compared their lead singer to Mick Jagger, and I'll admit he had some really good stage presence.

The second band was Relient K. You may remember their single "Must Have Done Something Right" from a few years back. I didn't feel that their live show was very impressive.

Paramore was, of course, awesome. Hayley is an incredible performer. She has more energy than a nuclear reactor - which is probably why I could barely speak after scream-singing for two hours straight. They played the following songs from their catalog (all of which are excellent):

Looking Up
Playing God
Pressure
For a Pessimist, I'm Pretty Optimistic
Brighter
Turn it off
The Only Exception
Whoa
crushcrushcrush
Let the Flames Begin
Ignorance
Where the Lines Overlap
Careful
Brick by Boring Brick

Encore:
Decode
Misery Business

I was especially happy about "Brighter." They dedicated it to their fans who owned their first album "All We Know is Falling" and I'd tweeted a request for it when they came to town last year. The crowd was almost completely into the show. Right before the final chorus of "Whoa" the band paused while Hayley cajoled everyone to stand up. Personally I was flabbergasted that anyone would sit through a rock concert, but there you go. At the end of "Brick by Boring Brick" the crowd was so revved up that my ears started ringing. For a half-house at the E Center, that was really, really loud. Like TCU vs Utah in 2008 loud.

Here are some pixelated pictures I took from my phone:

This is "fun" onstage.

This is a shot of the crowd as the roadies are getting things ready for Paramore.

Paramore coming onstage

The stage being taken down after the show.

Blog Export: Annals of the Homestarmy, <http://www.thehomestarmy.com/s9y/>

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 14:30

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

Objectivism and Christianity, Part One

Bumped to continue discussion. Original post date: 2010-04-11 09:28

[I am posting this here because Radar had mentioned that he would be interested in reading it. It's not complete, and the writing still needs to be polished, so please have some patience with it -- AoD.]

“You’ll come back,” said Hugh Akston, “because yours is an error of knowledge, not a moral failure, not an act of surrender to evil, but only the last act of being victim to your own virtue.”
Rand, Ayn. Atlas Shrugged. New York: Penguin Putnam, 1999. Print.

From time to time, I have a conversation where someone asks me to justify how I can claim to be both a Christian and an Objectivist – the speaker believing these to be views in opposition. I’ll start off by saying that I’m no philosopher. I have no formal education beyond the 11th Grade at a sub-standard high school, and everything I know of Objectivism comes from Ayn Rand’s volumes Atlas Shrugged, The Fountainhead, For the New Intellectual, The Virtue of Selfishness, and Introduction to Objectivist Epistemology. However, the first time I ever read Atlas Shrugged, I was astounded that someone had captured so well so many of the things I already knew to be true.

Additionally, I have nothing more to recommend me as any kind of authority on Christ than a lifetime of study of the record of His works and the deep ring of truth that comes when I hear someone speak of Him.

That being said, I believe there is plenty to recommend a Christian to a life of Objectivism and that any conflict between the two is – as Dr. Akston says to Dagny – “an error of knowledge.”

Probably the most common confusion I run up against is the seeming conflict between Rand’s glorification of “selfishness” against Christ’s sermon (among others) about the Samaritan. Besides telling those individuals who labour under this confusion of ideas to go read her works for themselves and see if they can’t resolve the dilemma, perhaps the following excerpt from Atlas Shrugged can help.
During John Galt’s missive to the world after taking over Mr. Thompson’s radio broadcast, he tells those listening the following:

Accept the fact that the achievement of your happiness is the only moral purpose of your life, and that happiness – not pain or mindless self-indulgence – is the proof of your moral integrity, since it is the proof and the result of your loyalty to the achievement of your values. Happiness was the responsibility you dreaded, it required the kind of rational discipline you did not value yourself enough to assume – and the anxious staleness of your days is the monument to your evasion of the knowledge that there is no moral substitute for happiness, that there is no more despicable coward than the man who deserted the battle for his joy, fearing to assert his right to existence, lacking the courage and the loyalty to life of a bird or a flower reaching for the sun. Discard the protective rags of that vice which you called a virtue: humility – learn to value yourself, which means: to fight for your happiness – and when you learn that pride is the sum of all virtues, you will learn to live like a man.

As a basic step of self-esteem, learn to treat as the mark of a cannibal any man’s demand for your help. To demand it is to claim that your life is his property – and loathsome as such a claim might be, there’s something still more loathsome: your agreement. Do you ask if it’s ever proper to help another man? No – if he claims it as his right or as a moral duty that you owe him. Yes – if such is your own desire based on your own selfish pleasure in the value of his person and his struggle. Suffering as such is not a value; only man’s fight against suffering is. If you choose to help a man who suffers, do it only on the ground of his virtues, of his fight to recover, of his rational record, or of the fact that he suffers unjustly; then your action is still a trade, and his virtue is the payment for your help. But to help a man who has no virtues, to help him on the ground of his suffering as such, to accept his faults, his need, as a claim – is to accept the mortgage of a zero on your values. A man who has no virtues is a hater of existence who acts on the premise of death; to help him is to sanction his evil and to support his career of destruction. Be it only a penny you will not miss or a kindly smile he has not earned, a tribute to a zero is treason to life and to all those who struggle to maintain it.

I see in this much the same as I see in many teachings of Christ. Jacob tells us what he knew of the great plan of happiness:

25. Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy.
2nd Nephi 2:25

And Christ himself extolled the virtues of loving both God, and our neighbour:

36. Master, which is the great commandment in the law?

37. Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

38. This is the first and great commandment.

39. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

40. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Matthew 22:36-40

If you are dealing with a man who is struggling to be good, and if you value that struggle "as Christ, if not your OWN struggles, would teach you to " then it is perfectly moral and properly Objective to assist him. If he is wallowing in his sin, and not making an effort to strive, than providing him "pennies and smiles" will only enable him to continue to drown the Light of Christ that is admonishing him to turn back to the Lord. And, if we are truly taking upon us the name of Christ in all we do, then it should be well within the bounds of "our own selfish pleasure in the value of his person" to help the former, for remember the worth of souls is great in the sight of God.

More to come on this at some point, but feel free to respond below.

Posted by Ancient of Days in Personal Entry at 14:32

Friday, February 19, 2010

Weekend Reading

I'm reading *Compensation* by Ralph Waldo Emerson for the first time and I'm super impressed at what he has to say about life and what you get out of it. You can read a copy [here](#).

Here's an excerpt:

This is that ancient doctrine of Nemesis, who keeps watch in the universe, and lets no offence go unchastised. The Furies, they said, are attendants on justice, and if the sun in heaven should transgress his path, they would punish him. The poets related that stone walls, and iron swords, and leathern thongs had an occult sympathy with the wrongs of their owners; that the belt which Ajax gave Hector dragged the Trojan hero over the field at the wheels of the car of Achilles, and the sword which Hector gave Ajax was that on whose point Ajax fell. They recorded, that when the Thasians erected a statue to Theagenes, a victor in the games, one of his rivals went to it by night, and endeavoured to throw it down by repeated blows, until at last he moved it from its pedestal, and was crushed to death beneath its fall.

This voice of fable has in it somewhat divine. It came from thought above the will of the writer. That is the best part of each writer, which has nothing private in it; that which he does not know; that which flowed out of his constitution, and not from his too active invention; that which in the study of a single artist you might not easily find, but in the study of many, you would abstract as the spirit of them all. Phidias it is not, but the work of man in that early Hellenic world, that I would know. The name and circumstance of Phidias, however convenient for history, embarrass when we come to the highest criticism. We are to see that which man was tending to do in a given period, and was hindered, or, if you will, modified in doing, by the interfering volitions of Phidias, of Dante, of Shakspeare, the organ whereby man at the moment wrought.

Still more striking is the expression of this fact in the proverbs of all nations, which are always the literature of reason, or the statements of an absolute truth, without qualification. Proverbs, like the sacred books of each nation, are the sanctuary of the intuitions. That which the droning world, chained to appearances, will not allow the realist to say in his own words, it will suffer him to say in proverbs without contradiction. And this law of laws which the pulpit, the senate, and the college deny, is hourly preached in all markets and workshops by flights of proverbs, whose teaching is as true and as omnipresent as that of birds and flies.

All things are double, one against another. -- Tit for tat; an eye for an eye; a tooth for a tooth; blood for blood; measure for measure; love for love. -- Give and it shall be given you. -- He that watereth shall be watered himself. -- What will you have? quoth God; pay for it and take it. -- Nothing venture, nothing have. -- Thou shalt be paid exactly for what thou hast done, no more, no less. -- Who doth not work shall not eat. -- Harm watch, harm catch. -- Curses always recoil on the head of him who imprecates them. -- If you put a chain around the neck of a slave, the other end fastens itself around your own. -- Bad counsel confounds the adviser. -- The Devil is an ass.

Experienced men of the world know very well that it is best to pay scot and lot as they go along, and that a man often pays dear for a small frugality. The borrower runs in his own debt. Has a man gained any thing who has received a hundred favors and rendered none? Has he gained by borrowing, through indolence or cunning, his neighbour's wares, or horses, or money? There arises on the deed the instant acknowledgment of benefit on the one part, and of debt on the other; that is, of superiority and inferiority. The transaction remains in the memory of himself and his neighbour; and every new transaction alters, according to its nature, their relation to each other. He may soon come to see that he had better have broken his own bones than to have ridden in his neighbour's coach, and that "the highest price he can pay for a thing is to ask for it."

A wise man will extend this lesson to all parts of life, and know that it is the part of prudence to face every claimant, and pay every just demand on your time, your talents, or your heart. Always pay; for, first or last, you must pay your entire debt. Persons and events may stand for a time between you and justice, but it is only a postponement. You must pay at last your own debt. If you are wise, you will dread a prosperity which only loads you with more. Benefit is the end of nature. But for every benefit which you receive, a tax is levied. He is great who confers the most benefits. He is base -- and that is the one base thing in the universe -- to receive favors and render none. In the order of nature we cannot render benefits to those from whom we receive them, or only seldom. But the benefit we receive must be rendered again, line for line, deed for deed, cent for cent, to somebody. Beware of too much good staying in your hand. It will fast corrupt and worm worms. Pay it away quickly in some sort.

Blog Export: Annals of the Homestarmy, <http://www.thehomestarmy.com/s9y/>

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 16:01

Thursday, February 11. 2010

The Blight of Suburbia

This morning it is snowing, already four inches or so on the ground, and my two school-age children have been outside romping through the drifts in the front yard for 15 minutes, waiting for their walking buddies to show up. (This means that my previously pristine, smooth front lawn is now a riot of paths and bumps, and the trees have deliberately had all their snow shaken down upon young heads. What will the neighbors think? Gasp!)

I sent them to school by themselves when it became clear that the walking buddies weren't going to show, and not thirty seconds later the very thing I had feared occurred - a neighbor mom in an enormous SUV saw them, pulled over, and offered them a ride.

I am outraged.

First of all, it's five blocks to school. Six if you go the long way. It's not hard for elementary school age kids to walk five blocks - in fact, they burn more than that amount of energy just zipping around getting ready in the morning (colliding, panicking, playing, hysterically laughing, and in the case of Preston RIGHT NOW, cuddling three light sabres and tucking them into bed.)

Secondly, KIDS LIKE SNOW. I know this comes as a surprise to those of us who don't remember childhood. But I can guarantee that my kids, upon looking out the window this morning, did NOT think to themselves, "dammit, now I will be forced to frolic my way to school while pelting my siblings and friends with snowballs and sliding on the sidewalk in my snow boots." They LIKE walking those five blocks in a magically transformed, white-purple world (which has miraculously become wholly edible overnight.)

And thirdly, and most outrageously, does that SUV mom actually think my kids are SAFER in an SUV which will go join a queue of a hundred other cars and SUVs, sliding on the slush with kids dodging before and behind as they unload? My kids are much, much safer walking to school than driving. Period. But most especially, they are safer in crappy weather like this. What to a driver is a harrowing death journey is to a child an enchanted wonderland. And yes, I am aware that my children probably won't be injured because of that sheltered, heated, crowded SUV, but that doesn't change the fact that they would have been better off outside of it.

When did Suburbia become like this? When my grandmother raised her children, she sought out a suburban neighborhood. The kids roamed in packs, playing night games and raiding fruit trees. Now, my children play outside alone unless a neighbor invites them in to watch TV or play video games. And in this lovely, soft snowfall, all the children in my neighborhood can only watch through tinted windows as they join the endless queue to drop them off immediately in front of the school doors. Heaven forbid they have to walk down the school sidewalk. They might have to do something inconvenient, like enjoy themselves.

Posted by Daboo in Personal Entry at 08:37

Monday, February 1, 2010

Why Twilight Isn't That Bad

Joey, just stop reading now. Just kidding, it's not really about vampires.

This is a post I've been meaning to write ever since I first read this blog post by L.E. Modesitt Jr. My view on this has been further solidified by the defensive nature the authors of the tor.com blog take when discussing the "elitism" of so-called literary magazines while simultaneously slamming the Twilight series of books and movies.

One person I know dismisses the Twilight series out of hand because it deals with vampires. This person would also willingly admit to avoiding Buffy the Vampire Slayer, Interview with the Vampire, Dracula and basically any media involving vampires. This post is not about that. I think I may have already mentioned that.

This post is about dismissing something because it's not cool or comes from a genre that is not cool. So I willingly admit that there are two things about me that make other geeks scream "TAKE AWAY HIS GEEK CARD." I don't like Star Trek. Seriously, I really don't. The best thing about the JJ Abram's Star Trek movie was that it made Star Trek watchable. For me. As a D&D-playing, computer-programming, video-game loving, comic-book reading, I-own-too-many-F&SF-novels geek, most people just naturally assume that I also love Star Trek. I have seen a large enough sample of episodes to know that it will never be my cup of tea. But I did give it a chance.

The other thing is that I love the Twilight series. There, I said it. I love it. It's not Tolkien, but if I were to compare it side by side with Robert Jordan's massive conglomeration of tropes from other stories and repetitive use of the phrase "tugged on her braid" I think Stephenie Meyer's "pushcart plot" holds up pretty well. Sure it's not for everybody, neither is Star Trek. But I'm getting sidetracked.

Mr. Modesitt's blog post was a defense of the "romance novel" genre of books. I was especially struck by this paragraph:

Romances happen to have some redeeming features, features often lacking in mainstream "literary" fiction, such as a belief in love and romance, and optimistic endings, and often retribution of some sort for evil. There's often a theme of self-improvement as well. Are these "realistic" in our world today? No, unhappily, they're probably not, but paraphrasing one of the grumpy old uncles in *Secondhand Lions*, there are some things, which may not even be true, that people are better off for believing in, such as love, honor, duty... And if romances get readers to believe in the value of such traits, they're doing a lot more for the readers and society than "realistic" novels about the greed on Wall Street or the narcissism of the wealthy or the depths of violence and degradation among the drug and criminal cultures.

I found this to be a strong argument in favor of the romance novel, even if I never take the time to read one myself. This reminded me of an op-ed column I read in the *New York Times* about the same time. The *Times* article was written by Gail Collins (who generally tries to find the humorous side in life.) She said this about the Twilight books:

Before you make fun of this, I want you to seriously consider whether you're interested in denigrating people who spend their leisure time actually reading books rather than watching *America's Got Talent*.

She then went on to describe the basic premise of the first novel, wherein Bella and Edward fall in love, Bella finds out he's a vampire, and he refuses to engage in anything more physical than "kissing and cuddling and talking about their feelings."

Then she unloads this kicker:

"Only a vampire, ladies," said Jessica Valenti, the author of *Full Frontal Feminism*. She worries that in the real world, young men are spending so much time watching pornography on the Internet that they will never be satisfied with normal women and normal relationships.

This sure sounds like trouble to me: A generation of guys who will settle for nothing less than a porn star meets a generation of women who expect their boyfriend to crawl through their bedroom window at night and just nuzzle gently until they fall asleep.

Two of my favorite three characters from the Twilight series are Edward and his "father" Carlisle. They are the kind of characters I most admire. They have morals and they stand by them no matter the cost. They have struggles, but they rise against them. They are the kind of hero I want to be. They don't have to save the world, they just have to find it in themselves to say, "I choose to be a good person no matter the cost." And that's something I think is "virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy."

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 17:56

Thursday, January 28, 2010

The London Broil

When I was 18 and in college in Arizona, Sarah and I went to the Renaissance fair. It was cool for a couple of reasons: It was in a little faux town built just for that purpose out in the desert, there were lots of hot guys brandishing pretty weapons (NOT A METAPHOR), and the performers were awesome. My favorite performers were this group of cute juggling guys. They were so funny that I couldn't breathe through most of their act, I was laughing so hard. I sat through their show twice. They were talented too - they balanced on giant balls juggling flaming clubs (ALSO NOT A METAPHOR).

I was curious today and looked them up, and it turns out that not only are they still performing but they are getting gigs outside of Renaissance fairs. (Not that there's anything wrong with performing at Renaissance fairs. I would be caterwauling ballads there RIGHT NOW if they'd have me.) They're still totally cute and one of the guys, Matt, reminds me of Joey if he had dedicated his life to entertaining others and juggling rather than plotting the destruction of others and writing code. Their website is www.thelondonbroilshow.com

Posted by Daboo in Personal Entry at 11:24

Wednesday, January 6, 2010

A Policy of Non-Embarrassment

Recently I read for school *Concerning The Two New Sciences* by Galileo Galilei. This scientific treatise is presented by Galileo as a discussion over the course of four days between three friends: Salviati, Sagredo, and Simplicio. Salviati leads the discussion, presenting the findings of Galileo, while Simplicio spends most of his time refuting Salviati's argument. This enables Galileo to address probable objections to his work in a way that shows both friendliness and familiarity with the arguments. On the fourth day, a curious exchange takes place, which serves to remind us to avoid embarrassing those whom we engage in discourse, scientific or otherwise.

As Salviati begins to explain a new proof, he is interrupted by Sagredo. "Here Salviati, it will be necessary to stop a little while for my sake, and I believe also for the benefit of Simplicio; for it so happens that I have not gone very far in my study of Apollonius...." Salviati wonders at this: "You are quite too modest, pretending ignorance of facts which not long ago you acknowledged as well known...." Why should Sagredo pretend ignorance? One might think that Galileo employs this device in order to introduce Apollonius' work to the reader, but Galileo doesn't do that. Instead Salviati presents the work of "the Author" (Galileo), saying, "I did not happen to have at hand the books of Apollonius." In fact, Galileo's proofs are shorter, he says, so that he may save time by skipping over Apollonius' work anyway. So, why does Galileo put this exchange into a scientific treatise full of geometrical proofs?

The answer I think comes from Simplicio: "Now even though Sagredo is, as I believe, well equipped for all his needs, I do not even understand the elementary terms...." Sagredo is familiar with Apollonius, but Simplicio is not. Sagredo does not wish to embarrass his friend, however, so he claims to share his ignorance. It is evident that Galileo is showing the reader that one must be sensitive to protect the honor of his friend. Scientific discovery can be shared without humiliating the unlearned.

I sometimes forget to hold other people's honor as sacred to me as my own. In a debate, I will not notice if I have humiliated another if it means I've made my point. This fault of mine ignores the very dearness of the other person. As I post on this blog, it is likely that I will post arguments against others. As I do so, I will endeavor to look after the honor of others. One can be right about an argument, and all wrong about he treats those who either disagree with him or are merely unfamiliar with the facts. Thanks to the Homestarmy (especially Peter and Joey) for the opportunity to write here.

Source: Galileo. *Concerning The Two New Sciences*. Great Books of the Western World. Ed. Mortimer J. Adler. Trans. Henry Crew and Alfonso de Salvio. Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, 1990. 238.

Posted by The Fox in Personal Entry at 21:41

Wednesday, November 18, 2009

Cash poor. House rich!

So for the last 4 months I have been searching to purchase a house. It has been one of the most eye-opening and arduous experiences of my life. And I am happy to say: it is finally over! I closed on my house Monday night and got the keys Tuesday evening. I am officially a home owner.

I don't have any pictures yet, but when I do I'll post some up for you all to see. And once my moving of my accumulated 8 years of crap has finished I'll even invite you all over for some sort of gathering. Special thanks should go out to my real estate agent Lisa. She was absolutely fantastic. There is no way I could have ever done any of this without her help. If any of you are looking for an agent I highly recommend her.

Posted by Radar in Personal Entry at 09:48

Saturday, November 7, 2009

A Reminder

Just a reminder that Kalissa's Blessing will be this Sunday.
Our Sacrament starts at 11:00 a.m. Our church is located at 3737 S 5600 W, or you can just meet us at the Asylum (3513 S. 5450 W.) before hand.

After Sacrament we will have an open house back at the Asylum.

Posted by Sideshow in Personal Entry at 20:41

Tuesday, October 27. 2009

Happy Halloween

Try JibJab Sendables® eCards today!

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 11:07

Wednesday, September 23, 2009

Don't Fail Me Again

Darth Vader has a special message for you. This is a pretty cool idea. They have a soundboard with a bunch of Darth Vader quotes and you can mix them together.

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 08:59

Friday, September 18. 2009

No Explanation Needed

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 08:06

Thursday, September 10, 2009

Lines Have Been Drawn

Ancient of Days:
you should post this on thehomestarmy:

The Mad Giggler:

I like this new line drawn between us. I feel like I'm in one of those classic novels where the protagonist went to school and was close friends with the person who became his archnemesiis.

The Mad Giggler vs. Ancient of Days
Star Wars vs. Star Trek
Lines have been drawn. Blood will be shed.
STAY TUNED!

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 11:05

Thursday, August 20, 2009

Why I Love Wikipedia

After reading another ill-informed article on Slashdot, I came across this awesome wikipedia article in the comments.

Principle of Evil Marksmanship

I especially enjoyed this:

Imperial Stormtroopers in the original Star Wars trilogy, despite overwhelming numbers, professional military education and training, full armour, military-grade firepower, and noticeable combat effectiveness against non-speaking characters, were incapable of seriously harming or indeed even hitting the film's protagonists. At one point Obi-Wan Kenobi even comments on Stormtrooper effectiveness to Luke Skywalker when the pair find the destroyed Jawa sandcrawler, saying "These blast-points... Only Imperial stormtroopers are so precise." In fact, at the beginning of Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope, the Stormtroopers are portrayed as lethal when invading a rebel ship, overwhelming it and killing most resistance in what seems like mere moments, whereas later the main protagonists would dispatch many of them without ever receiving a scratch in return.

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 11:37

Friday, July 17, 2009

The Top Ten Promises I Keep Making to Myself.

I wrote this for work and thought I'd post it here, as some of you might appreciate it.

10. Learn more about shark breeds.
9. Â Research medieval texts about alchemy.
8. Â Become fluent in Chinese.
7. Â Go back to my chemistry text books and explore the formulae for Composition 4 and trinitrotoluene.
6. Â Adopt a white Persian cat.
5. Â Study the development of lasers.
4. Â Tour Fort Knox.
3. Â Build a robot for helping with small chores.
2. Â Cultivate connections with suppliers throughout Eastern Europe that have depots along the way to Moscow.
1. Â When I finally take over the world, I will spare all the people at . Â Or at least Iâ€™ll try my hardest.

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 11:11

Monday, July 13. 2009

In the Name of Love

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 08:52

Monday, July 6, 2009

Kalissa Rian Woolsey

Well, I don't have any weird symbol to make this announcement, so I'll just say it.

If you hadn't heard, which I think everyone had, Sabrina had our baby on June 30th.

Her name is Kalissa Rian. She was 7 lbs. 1oz. and 20 inches. Everyone is home, and healthy.

More pictures can be seen [here](#).

Posted by Sideshow in Personal Entry at 08:32

Tuesday, May 26, 2009

I Need Some Help

For those with strong backs and beefy arms, my family will be moving residences this Saturday at 9:00 a.m. I'm going to rent a u-haul again, and Daboo will be doing her normal hyper-organizational thing so this should be a reasonably fast move. I'm hoping everyone will be free by noon. We signed on the new house Friday, so I think it's officially ours now. We get the keys on Thursday.

[View Larger Map](#)

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 10:11

Thursday, May 14, 2009

I hate you Frank Longo

I love Sudoku. It is lots of fun for me. I actually use it as a way to relax and get my brain to "turn off" before going to bed. I have been using the Frank Longo Martial Arts series of books. I started about 4 years ago and have casually worked my way up to Black Belt. By the end of that book I was averaging about 5 min per puzzle. I was spectacularly pleased with myself because here was something that I could mentally best AoD at.

I went down to my local Barnes & Noble to purchase a new Sudoku book when I noticed the Second Degree Black Belt version of the Frank Longo Sudoku books. I naturally assumed that this would be the same type of puzzles, and that second degree meant volume 2 and wasn't referencing degree of difficulty. Boy was I wrong. I started about 8 of the puzzles and it was about a week before I finally solved 1 of them. It is not beyond the realm of possibility now for me to sit in bed for a half hour just working on one puzzle. I am going on week 4 now and I have successfully completed 5 puzzles out of 15 started. My best record to date has been 15 min to solve one puzzle. If anybody knows any short cuts I would love to hear them.

Posted by Radar in Personal Entry at 12:50

Thursday, April 30, 2009

I got me some kids!

The adoption is official! Yay!

Posted by Daboo in Personal Entry at 11:47

Thursday, March 5, 2009

The Watchmen: Novel or just Graphic?

[Author's note: This is a very long post (for me at least, but not necessarily Mr. Elbows). I have been working on this for the last six months, reworking things here and there. Frankly, a few points in this post are quite preachy. I don't know how else to say those things, but since the movie Watchmen is coming out tomorrow, I guess we are just going to have to live with it. Apologies to any I might offend. This is meant as my opinion and not an attack on something you love/admire. Writing this has been an arduous experience for me. While I know most who read this won't be judging my writing style, but the content and opinion I share, I still wanted this to come out as perfect as possible. I have not achieved that to my satisfaction. Please look beyond that in your judgment. Special thanks to my friend Melissa for editing assistance (on all but the last paragraph - if I did something wrong in that, it's my fault) and AoD for formatting assistance as well as for providing me a digital copy of the graphic novel to read.]

[Edit: There is a fantastic blog post here at blog.joeysmith.com that takes another point of view on this issue. I recommend it to everyone.]

Graphic - depicted in a realistic or vivid manner

Novel - a fictitious prose narrative of considerable length and complexity

Graphic Novel - a novel whose narrative is related through a combination of text and art

A Beginning

I was first introduced to graphic novels back when I was a preteen. My family was staying at my aunt's home. I was in my older cousin's room and was bored. So I began to go through his stuff. For a ten-year-old, I hit the jackpot. There, in the bottom drawer, was a collection of what I thought were Conan the Barbarian comics. I thumbed through them and noticed that they weren't quite like the Archie and GI Joe comics my parents let me get. The drawings were fantastic and so realistic. I could see the outline of boobs on the female characters. Boobs. Real Boobs! Not just indiscriminate lumps under a long sleeved shirt. A ten year olds heaven. And the dialogue was stuff I had never read before. I spent the next few hours going over each page, taking in every detail of the drawings. I skipped over most of the text as I found it boring or confusing. (I think I just didn't know the back story.) I just loved watching Conan attack countless evil things during his quest. It left an indelible mark on my memory; now, some 20 years later, I still remember lying on my cousin's water-bed that afternoon.

An Introduction

The first time I actually was told about graphic novels was about five years ago by AoD. He told me I should borrow his copy of Midnight Nation by J. Michael Straczynski. I did so. At the time I found it mildly interesting. The art was good, but the story was somewhat lacking. It had nothing to drag me in other than the occasional scantily dressed woman. But the one thing I remember most was how dark it was. There was nothing uplifting about it. I don't honestly remember the point of the story. What I do remember is the darkness. Perhaps that is what the author intended. Perhaps not. To be fair, that wouldn't have been the first time I missed the point of story. But I learned nothing from it.

A Re-Introduction

And most recently my friend Jon Madsen and AoD encouraged me to read The Watchmen by Alan Moore. I knew going in to it that it was going to be very explicit. But after conversations with both friends I decided to "make the attempt" and judge for myself.

If I were to critique the art work I would have to say that it was nothing special. It got the point across, yes, but I found it rather drab. The story was compelling at first. It was a mystery with "superheroes" as the main characters. I was growing more and more excited as it continued on. But then I slowly started to realize just how graphic this thing was. I won't take the time to detail any of the vivid things. Suffice it to say that I had to check and make sure all the blood I saw was actually only a part of the comic and that I had not dipped my laptop in to a vat of blood. Or accidentally browsed to a soft core "art" website.

Probably what disturbed me the most was how the story ends. Perhaps I have grown accustomed to the happy ending, but it was just dismal. I could find no great point or meaning in the conclusion that was worth holding up for praise or adoration. If I had, I might not be writing this. It seemed to me to just be gruesomeness for its own sake. To be fair, there may be some point that I have missed. I suppose if I squint just right it can be taken as a tale of what happens when people choose to not stop injustices. Please enlighten me if I have missed the point. I am not sure it will change my mind, though.

The Soapbox

Now I am sure that there might be those who are reading this who will disagree with me. You might say that I missed the point entirely. You may very well be right. My powers of deduction and analysis are keen but by no means perfect. So let's work under the assumption that I am wrong and there is some greater meaning the author and illustrator were trying to impart. If there is some overarching point or purpose, then why choose to display or present it with vulgarity, nudity, and violence? Why would you glorify the ugly things of the world to make a point?

You might now argue that the world we live in is not happy, kind, or safe. I agree. But ought we not want to lift ourselves above our more base characteristics? Darkness and unhappiness as a medium can be useful tools as long as there is a point. But to portray them in such a blatant and scintillating way smacks the face of the 13th Article of Faith. I offer three examples to add strength to my position.

Example 1: College Soccer

It did not serve to raise the level of conversation. All it did was shock and offend. Nothing was gained. I have played soccer my entire life. I love it so much that I often watch the Spanish language television station just so I can see it played. Well, it turns out that I was pretty good in high school (big fish/small pond syndrome), so I decided to play college soccer. I joined the team and soon became a starter. I was well liked by all the guys. They knew my standards and what I believed. I thought that I could be a positive effect on them. I may have been. But they had the more powerful effect on me. At the time I lived at home with my parents. It was not until dinner one evening that I found out how strong their effect on me was. My parents and I were sitting conversing about something when I made what I considered a fairly tame and innocent comment. The table went silent. Both my mother and father stared back at me with open mouths. I stared back and quizzically asked "What?" My father responded with something I shall never forget: "Bud, do you know what you just said?" I didn't.

It turns out that I had used a rather colorful, yet unnecessary, adjective to describe something. I had just sworn in front of my parents. Anyone who grows up on a farm is going to hear the odd curse word; sadly I had used a more "regular" one. Certainly not dinner-table-conversation vocabulary. It may have fit quite well on a soccer field but not in my parents' house. It did not serve to raise the level of conversation. All it did was shock and offend. Nothing was gained.

Example 2: The Family Guy

Doing something in the name of humor is no excuse for debasement, and some things should never become the subject of humor. I love humor. I see nothing wrong with making myself the butt of a joke to get someone to laugh. Laughing just often feels good. And it can certainly be a good workout, at least a good workout for most couch-potatoes. This naturally carries over in to television. I love to watch funny shows.

I have a friend who used to watch a show called Family Guy (a highly ironic title to be sure, IMO). Knowing that my tastes coincide so closely with his, he told me I should watch it because it contained such good writing and because I would laugh my head off. So I did. The couple of episodes I saw were quite funny. I indeed laughed because of how good the writing was. But I had to stop. It was unbelievably crude. Nothing was safe or sacred. Doing something in the name of humor is no excuse for debasement, and some things should never become the subject of humor.

Example 3: Hot Rod-ing with Jen

...the real problem was that when I realized it, I did nothing to change the situation. My sister Jen crashed with me a few months ago while waiting for her train home. I decided to show her one of the funniest films I have ever watched: Hot Rod. I greatly enjoyed the look of puzzlement and exasperation as she watched this completely farcical movie. Then the jokes began to turn progressively ruder. I had never noticed before how bad it actually was. I always knew it was colorful, but it didn't seem to be "that bad." It wasn't until I had to sit uncomfortably with my sister through several risqué lines of dialogue that I realized how bad it was. She never said anything, but I know she was uncomfortable with them. But because I found it entertaining, I didn't think twice about it. While I should have chosen a better movie from the start, the real problem was that when I realized it, I did nothing to change the situation.

A Conclusion

While under many definitions, The Watchmen can be considered entertaining (a highly subjective word); I know that several of you who are reading this find it to be so. That doesn't necessarily make it worthwhile entertainment. I know that to some of you this may not adequately explain my position. I wish I had another 6 months to more eloquently portray it. I guess the point of all of this is just my way of encouraging you to reach for something cleaner; better; higher. Many of us have those dark areas in our lives that we just don't want to let go of yet. I understand that; for me it is Metallica. But just because you have shades of grey in your life, that does not mean that you should embrace the darkness. Strive for the uplifting. I do not believe that The Watchmen graphic novel rises to the level of worthwhile entertainment. But as with all things, judge for yourself.

Blog Export: Annals of the Homestarmy, <http://www.thehomestarmy.com/s9y/>

Posted by Radar in Personal Entry at 00:45

Tuesday, March 3. 2009

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Posted by Sideshow in Personal Entry at 21:25

Thursday, February 19, 2009

The Spectacular

Thumbs up to Pete's Friend Jon Madsen for plugging the hero creator on his blog.

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 08:35

Saturday, February 14, 2009

It's Official

Winged Wolves is live now. We're in stage one of my development goals, so it's pretty barren currently.

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 15:13

Tuesday, February 3, 2009

Smoking needs more money

Ok, so I have a friend who works for the state of Utah as part of the anti-smoking group (yes, I am sure that they have a name, but I don't know what it is). Anyway, the state is looking to cut all of their funding. So not only would there not be much of a program left in the state to encourage teens and adults not to smoke, but my friend would lose her job.

While I personally am ok with the stupid people of the world finding whatever means is necessary snuff themselves out a little sooner than normal, I am not ok with my friend losing her job. She works very hard and I believe that she does help the cause of the anti-smoking initiative.

So whether you feel strongly about ensuring that funding continue for this program or you would like to join me in helping my friend not lose her job, please fill out this petition. Thanks

Posted by Radar in Personal Entry at 21:12

Monday, December 29, 2008

Sorry in advance.

I don't like to talk about personal stuff. But it was announced by the BBC that David Tennant is leaving as the tenth incarnation of The Doctor. This came as a shock to me as I think he makes one of the best of the incarnations. How is this personal?

Growing up I have watched a lot of TV. Amidst all the other programming I have found a few shows that have shaped me, more than I care to think about. Chief amongst these life altering shows is, of course Dr Who. The tale of a "man" traveling the stars. Going between both past and future. It spoke to me... still does. Through the actions of the Doctor I formed the main core of my feelings toward my fellow man. A race the Doctor has spent some nine-hundred years protecting. I am saddened by Tennant's leaving the show. His exploits have spoken to me as much as Tom Baker, Doctor number four. If not a little bit more.

There aren't many things that bring tears to my eyes now a days. I don't think I'm callous, I just don't have anything worth working up that much emotion for. But there have been moments in the last few seasons that have reached me deeply. Doctor Who is one of four people who have shown me what I should and possibly could be. The other three being my Mother, the Ancient of Days and Mr. Saxton. I realize that I have not lived up to what they have shown me. (At least not yet.) But I'm still here and though I don't have a T.A.R.D.I.S., I'm still running.

I didn't mean for this to be about me and will most likely remove it in a few days. I just thought that it was worth writing. (Not the bit about me, the bit about Tennant leaving.) Still there you go.

Goodbye Doctor.
Hope you don't mind me watching the show after your gone.

Posted by Anon in Personal Entry at 22:13

Wednesday, December 10, 2008

Christmas Time

This is the video of my coworker unwrapping his desk. It's longer than I'd anticipated, and the first minute or so is basically just me giggling uncontrollably while he kind of pokes around, amazed at the work that went into it. The payoff is when he finds the rubber snake about 8:50 (he's deathly afraid of snakes.)

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 09:53

Friday, December 5, 2008

For Radar's Benefit (Or A Conversation with Radar)

Names changed to follow blog policy

Radar:
jerk

Radar:
was my question on the website not worth your time to answer?

The Mad Giggler:
haha
I thought it was self-explanatory
AoD got it

Radar:
yes, but I don't know who that character is

The Mad Giggler:
oh, Daboo dubbed [our five year old] "Captain Flail"
that image I used was just something on google images I found searching for "flailing about"

Radar:
ah
ok
The Mad Giggler:
[Google Images Link]

Radar:
I thought he might be an equally disturbing character to name a child as

The Mad Giggler:
haha
I hated to re-use someone else's character, but really, [our three year old] outdid himself back in October

Radar:
I don't know this story

The Mad Giggler:
Both boys were basically potty trained when they moved in, but their adverse reaction to change resulted in us having to go through the process over again.
At least Captain Flail had the good sense to poop in the toilet.
[Our three year old] just let it go.
So Daboo and I got to clean him up on numerous occasions.

Radar:
the name does make sense then

The Mad Giggler:
And one day, we were sitting around and I started to smell something, and sure enough, he needed another change.
And I just got mad and said, "You know what? You're the poopsmith."

Radar:
LOL

The Mad Giggler:

and it kind of stuck

Radar:

it's a shame that he doesn't know the character as that would have been a pretty funny moment

The Mad Giggler:

yes

they do know Strong Bad now though

Radar:

that's important

The Mad Giggler:

Captain Flail really likes the songs "Trogdor", "Dangeresque" and "The Cheat Is Not Dead"

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 14:18

Thursday, December 4, 2008

It's Come to This

You've driven me to this. Just remember that your lack of posts caused this.

Watching Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer with the Poopsmith and Captain Flail.

Well, it was on last night, and I've been doing my duty as an irresponsible father by hyping Christmas endlessly. We've been singing Christmas songs in the car and putting up lights and it just seemed like to take things to the next level, we needed Rudolph. It was on CBS last night, so I got the boys into their pajamas and we settled in on the lovesac to watch this classic piece of claymation.

Opening scene with the weird snowman was not a hit. The Poopsmith asked, "How is he walking in the snow?" How do you answer that? There on the TV is a snowman who can talk and he's what? waddling? through the snow. There's a distinct trail behind him, but he just kind of shrugs his form forward through the snow. I honestly can't remember how I answered the question. Captain Flail didn't seem overly concerned one way or another.

After the second commercial break, Captain Flail asks, "Is it just starting?" Well, son, we already had the opening credits five minutes ago, what you're seeing right now is called an advertising overlay. Since so many people are using DVRs, the networks are putting commercials on top of the actual show content. Hey look, Rudolph is flirting with a girl reindeer! Everytime our elfin dentist is on screen, the poopsmith's attention wanders off. Was dentistry a disrespected profession when this show was created? There are lots of things I don't understand. I can't really blame the three-year-old for losing interest. When the word "misfit" is outside your vocabulary, it's difficult to care about a little elf who puts teeth on dolls so he can practice being a dentist.

Our heroes have encountered Yukon Cornelius, and everyone's singing again. This apparently frustrates both boys. For two kids who love singing so much, this particular musical clearly lacks a beatbox. Ooh! The Abominable Snowman attacks! "Why is he so angry?" asks the Poopsmith. Well son, he's hungry and he wants to eat Rudolph.

The trip to the Island of Misfit Toys is . . .satisfactory. Clearly anyone willing to throw away a train just because it has square wheels isn't getting any sympathy from my two boys. Rudolph sneaking off on his own. . .over their heads.

Ok, we're back from the eighth commercial break and Rudolph has grown up. His parents and girlfriend have apparently been out looking for him all this time in the Abominable Snowman's cave. This is okay with the boys because they like action and this promises to be the best they're going to get. Cornelius and the elf dentist show up just in time to save Rudolph from being eaten alive. Our dental genius removes all the snow monster's teeth, and the prospector jumps over a cliff with him for good measure. Everyone else goes back to Christmas Town.

When Cornelius and the Abominable Snowman show up at Santa's workshop, the Poopsmith wants to know why they let the monster in. "To put stars on the trees." Apparently kids were a lot less demanding in the Good Old Days. They didn't require consistent character motivation for their TV Specials. The Poopsmith on the other hand. . .

And finally Rudolph's time to shine arrives. The boys seem unimpressed. I don't think they were very concerned about Santa getting out to deliver the toys in a blizzard. They did seem to enjoy watching the elves throw the toys out of Santa's sleigh with umbrellas for parachutes. Oh look, there's the Charlie in the Box. "Can I have a train for Christmas?" No, son. You can't have everything you see on TV. It's really sad, but true.

Next time I'll take actual notes instead of going by memory.

Never Go on Vacation

So, we've started a new tradition here at The Summit Group. Several of the people I work with have gone on vacation for a full week, and frankly, I just can't let that stand. We started out putting up Obama propaganda all over a staunch McCain supporter's desk, moved up to classic computer pranks, and finished this up today:

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 13:41

Sunday, November 23, 2008

Some nights...

My Brother has mentioned to me a few times that I should post about my D&D group. This group is a playtesting group under the command of Robert J. Defendi.

The creator of Echoes of Heaven which is what we are playing. As well a crit. system and a podcast book Death by Cliche. Also in this group is Howard Tayler the creator of Schlock Mercenary. My character's name is Lucas. He was a soldier of heaven before the separation of heaven, hell and the mortal realm.

I'll recap his story thus far and then try to stay current with our weekly games.

Posted by Anon in Personal Entry at 19:15

Wednesday, November 19, 2008

art dump III

Lately all I've wanted to do is color with red, black and white. And draw floating heads. Thumbnails after the cut, full view are in the gallery thanks!

Posted by Wren in Wren's Art Dumps (NSFW!) at 20:54

Friday, November 14, 2008

Black Friday

Why must they torment me so?

From CNN:

According to the circular, Wal-Mart's so-called doorbuster deals offered between 5 a.m. and 10 a.m. ET will include a 50-inch Samsung plasma HDTV (\$798), Magnavox Blu-ray player (\$128), Xbox 360 (\$199) sold with free Guitar Hero III Legends of Rock game and wireless guitar, HP Pavilion desktop computer (\$398) and a UniFlame gas grill (\$175).

In addition, Wal-Mart's Black Friday ad shows a GE microwave for \$25, children's clothing priced between \$4 and \$8 and a variety of toys, including a Hannah Montana doll for \$10 or less.

I really wanted that Hannah Montana doll too. :(

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 14:40

Tuesday, November 11. 2008

They say....

... every 6 seconds or so a baby is born.

In July, if all goes well, it'll be mine and Bree's.

Posted by Sideshow in Personal Entry at 10:53

Thursday, November 6, 2008

Terror What-list?!

So I am on the way home to California. My nephew is getting married on Friday. I had a friend bring me to the airport. She was kind enough to drop me off at the skycap desk to help me avoid airport lines. The nice gentleman with the captains hat behind the desk kindly rejected me and pointed me to the desks inside. I went to the first desk and she asked me for my boarding pass. I don't have a boarding pass, that's why I am coming to you. Oh I don't have one, I responded. Then you need to get one from the machines behind you. That's what there for [insert sarcasm here]. Ok, there's like 10 people in the entire terminal, what is it you do exactly?! Oh thank you, I muttered.

I try several times to scan my bar code to no avail. I tried entering my confirmation number and was met with the same result. I again return to the same lady and say that it would not work. Then you need to go to Kiosk Assistance (it's on the other side of the rope line). Again, what is it you do exactly?!

I suppressed the desire to step over the rope line and walked around to the "line." Again, there was like 10, maybe 15 people in the whole terminal. There was only two desk being operated of the 8 available. Whatever, no big deal, since there obviously isn't much of a need at this time of night. I waited for about 5 min.

Finally the nice lady down at the Spanish speaking desk (clearly I don't fall in to that classification), motioned me over. She greeted me with a smile. Let's call her Rosa. Hello sir, where are you going tonight. HOORAY FOR ROSA!!!! Sacramento, I said. She then begins entering my name into the computer. Uh oh, it looks like there is a problem with you. Let's be fair, there really is something wrong with me. You are on the Terror Watch List. HUH!! HUH!! Why am I on that list, I stammer? I am not sure Peter. I just need to verify a few things though and you should be on your way.

I managed to pass whatever test she put my identity through as she took my luggage and gave me my boarding pass. Turns out that is why I was denied skycap and kiosk access. The government sees me as a potential terrorist. Does this look like the face of a terrorist:

This had better not be because of my association with you AoD!!!

Posted by Radar in Personal Entry at 19:45

Proposition 8

There's been a lot of water cooler talk at my place of employment about the various (state) constitutional amendments passed around the country this week. I found the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints' response worth a read. Here's the link.

For those who can't be bothered, here's a snippet:

We hope that now and in the future all parties involved in this issue will be well informed and act in a spirit of mutual respect and civility toward those with a different position. No one on any side of the question should be vilified, intimidated, harassed or subject to erroneous information.

It is important to understand that this issue for the Church has always been about the sacred and divine institution of marriage – a union between a man and a woman.

Allegations of bigotry or persecution made against the Church were and are simply wrong. The Church's opposition to same-sex marriage neither constitutes nor condones any kind of hostility toward gays and lesbians. Even more, the Church does not object to rights for same-sex couples regarding hospitalization and medical care, fair housing and employment rights, or probate rights, so long as these do not infringe on the integrity of the traditional family or the constitutional rights of churches.

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 07:55

Saturday, November 1, 2008

The Importance of an Evil Laugh

MG and I saw Mr. Lasko in Rogers Memorial Theatre's production of Jekyll and Hyde tonight. This has always been one of my three favorite Broadway shows of all time, along with Les Miserables (the triumph of the human spirit plus great music. How could you possibly go wrong?) and Phantom of the Opera (not so much with the inspiring, but very much with the nice music. And I love a good villain protagonist.) Which ties in nicely to why I love Jekyll and Hyde...I mean, most of you know that I'm kind of weird, so it will come as no surprise that I really, really like when evil guys sing. I guess I just really like evil guys. Prince Arthas, Inu Yasha, and Knives are just a few examples. Let's just ignore the fact that these particular examples also happen to be cartoons. It's late and I'm tired, and I'm positive I also like some non-cartoon evil guys. MG and Wren can help me think of more, I'm sure. But it's not the cartoonness that makes them cool. It's the evil. Stop looking at me like that.

But in order to be a good villain (yes there IS such a thing!) you need a few essentials. I would say the most important thing is a good villain laugh. Seriously. I guess you can sometimes get by with an evil smile...(think Nero, Wren) or a smirk would probably do...but you're only half-rate until you can get a nice, good laugh. And Mr. Lasko had an excellent evil laugh.

That's not to say that was the only good thing about the production--in fact, the whole performance was absolutely fantastic. I really liked his posture changes from Jekyll to Hyde and back, and he handled the Confrontation well, which is one of the hardest songs to pull off that I've ever seen done on a stage. All in all, it was absolutely cool and was a pleasure to watch.

Mwa ha ha ha ha!

Posted by Daboo in Personal Entry at 22:54

Thursday, October 23, 2008

General Conference

Because I feel that sharing the notes from President Packer's talk is just fear mongering for the most part, I'm going to link to several General Conference talks that are exactly what God wants us to be thinking about.

Come What May, and Love It by Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Finding Joy in the Journey by President Thomas S. Monson

If you are still in the process of raising children, be aware that the tiny fingerprints that show up on almost every newly cleaned surface, the toys scattered about the house, the piles and piles of laundry to be tackled will disappear all too soon and that you will "to your surprise" miss them profoundly.

"Hope Ya Know, We Had a Hard Time" by Elder Quentin L. Cook Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

The Test President Boyd K. Packer's Message to the World, not just the Forest Bend Ward

Letter to the Editor Food Storage: "It's About Prudence, Not Paranoia"

For those curious, here's a page full of linkage to information in past Ensigns about food storage: LDS.org

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 10:04

Viral Email Campaigns

I've had a few people talk to me about this, so I'm posting a couple items about it.

AoD:
hey, have you heard about this talk "given by President Packer in the Forest Bend Ward in Salt Lake City, Utah, on 12 October 2008?"

MG:
I had two separate people email it to me.
I'm reasonably certain it's untrue

AoD:
here's the response from Church Public Affairs on the talk:

We encourage members of the Church to never teach or pass on such statements without verifying that they are from approved Church sources, such as official statements, communications, and publications. Any notes made when General Authorities, Area Authority Seventies, or other general Church officers speak at regional and stake conferences or other meetings should not be distributed without the consent of the speaker. Personal notes are for individual use only.

President Packer's secretary indicated further that President Packer's message for the world is in the October 2008 General Conference. If members of the Church want to know what message he would have us hear, we need to listen to that talk, and throw this account of his talk away. When prophets and apostles wish to communicate important information for the spiritual or temporal well-being of members, they will do so via official channels to the entire Church, not in small meetings from which we must rely on unverified accounts to receive their message.

Notes below the fold
President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles Speaking at the Forest Bend Ward, Salt Lake City UT Sunday, October 12, 2008

"Even though I regularly have the opportunity to attend Fast and Testimony meeting, I don't usually stand to speak. But today, I feel moved upon by the Spirit to share a message! Last weekend's General Conference was different than any before. We felt that down at Church Headquarters and have been talking about it all week. We live in troubled times. There is great financial crisis and we've seen something that hasn't happened in the last 60

years: the world's financial markets are collapsing. I was six years old when the Great Depression began: the 10th of 11 children. My father was a mechanic and times were difficult for all of us. Many families were suddenly out of work all at once. There were large public projects to try and provide employment – like the great ditch or canal I remember being dug here in our city. It was at least six feet deep and dug by hand, with pick and ax. Nowadays, we use a piece of machinery to do it. But in those days, people worked with what we had. They were desperate times for many. There were things as a child that I didn't understand and was afraid of. I didn't like to go into the basement of our home. I thought the Boogeyman lived there. But as I grew older and we got some lights down there, I realized that the great dark space underneath the stairs was a large pile of old shoes. As a pair of shoes we were wearing would wear out or break down, we didn't throw them out. We would use a shoe from that old pile as spare parts to repair our shoes or make new ones. It was just the way you did things in those times.

There's a scripture that says "Yet learn we obedience by the same things we suffer." It seems sometimes that we don't learn until we need to turn and rely upon the Lord. In the Book of Mormon, well, if you looked in my copy, in the Book of Helaman about chapter 12 or 13, you'd see that I've written in a swirling chain of circles across the top of the page. It might look like old cursive, but that's not what it's meant to be. It's meant to remind me of the cycles of the people. In times when they were blessed with great prosperity and wealth, they forgot the Lord. Then when they fell to bad habits which led some to wickedness and placed many in peril, the righteous would turn/return to the Lord in their humbler circumstances. It's a cycle of prosperity and wickedness we see repeated over and over again in the scriptures and now again in our day.

I remember once I went deer hunting with Brother Tuttle and some others. We were up in the mountains, riding on horseback. He went up one side of the canyon, and I went up the other. As I was riding, I bent over and just nearly kissed the saddle horn as we passed a low cedar tree that was right by the path. Well as we passed the cedar tree, there was no more path on the other side of it and the way before us was just a dropping hillside covered with loose shaley rock. I kicked my feet clear of the stirrups, just in case the horse reacted badly, and it was a good thing I did. She reared up and I was thrown back. I hit my head on some rocks and got a cut right above my eyebrow that was bleeding heavily. I'd been holding my rifle in my hand and as my hand flew back and hit heavily against a rock, it broke as well. So I was laying there hurt and shaken. My companions on the other side of the canyon had seen what happened and I heard Brother Tuttle call out "Are you hurt?" I replied "Yes, I'm bleeding!" He called out again "Are you hurt?" I called again "Yes, I'm bleeding!", but the wind was blowing the wrong way and they couldn't hear me. The fourth time this happened, I yelled in response "No!" And they called back "Okay!" and continued to ride on up the mountain. That's lesson one!

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I finally got myself up, caught my horse down the mountain where she had gotten caught in some branches, and managed to get into town where I was bandaged up and my hand was tended to. Shortly after that, I was traveling on business and was at the airport. A fellow traveler, an older man not of our faith, saw my bandaged hand and asked if I was all right. I replied rather offhandedly. And he responded that it was something I would remember all the rest of my days. He then told me that he had once worked at digging a canal – now that caught my attention because I remembered the canal I have mentioned. He said that he was out of work at the time [the Great Depression] and couldn't find employment. He saw the canal being dug and knew that if he asked the foreman for a job, he would be turned away. He saw a spare pick laying there, so he picked it up and started working. A short while later, the foreman walked by and, not recognizing him, asked him what he was doing. He explained to me that he told the foreman he was out of work and stated "I need to work. You don't have to pay me, but I need to work."

Well, as you might expect, they worked things out and he was paid for his labors. We then proceeded to talk, this older fellow and I, and I have remembered his counsel. Now I am the old man giving counsel to you. In the Great Depression, people were frightened and growing more so. They began to be very resourceful. They had to be. Looking forward, we're all going to learn that lesson, one way or another.

The Church is in excellent condition. You don't need to worry about that. But as individuals we will face difficulty. Some will come to the Bishop seeking financial aid and counsel. And as judges in Israel, the Bishop will respond. The time for financial largess in our ward activities is over. [President Packer then turned directly to our Bishop and counseled him that last year's youth trip to Nauvoo, which was, President Packer said, a great opportunity for testimony building and missionary work, will not happen again. Times off for that sort of expense in the Church are past.]

President Packer then shared experiences of providing aid and service after the great Tsunami devastated Indonesia. He recalled... "I was speaking on the phone with a government minister who said I'm standing in Banda

Aceh and you cannot imagine what I am seeing. A city of a million people has been swept away and there is nothing. A week later, I was standing in area of Banda Aceh and the need was immense.

"What do you need?" I asked. "Body bags" was the reply. So we found 20,000 body bags in China and had them on a plane the next day. A call came, "we need 30 [thousand] more." We found them and they were sent. The next call "do you have any motorcycles? We need to get back into the mountain villages

with aid and medical supplies, but the roads are gone. Trucks can't get through and elephants are too slow. If we had motorcycles, we could get through. "Are they to be found in Asia?" I asked. "Yes," he said. So we found the motorcycles and had them on their way the next day. The Church is sound and is able to provide these types of aid as a back-up where there is need. We [as members and in our individual wards] are the back-up position of the Church. Learn to

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apply the old Pioneer adage "Eat [use] it up. Wear it out. Make do, or do without." We're going to have to learn to do without. Again, "Eat it up. Wear it out. Make do, or do without." Even if we have the resources, we need to do more to be thrifty. Others will rely on us. The Church will rely on us. It is our responsibility and duty to be caring for ourselves, our family, and those around us. Be watching for need. Set something by that we can be of help to others when the time comes. Trust in the counsel of our wise elders/older people.

There are nearly 60,000 missionaries serving throughout the world today. The cost to support a missionary is right about \$400 a month today. That's \$4,800 a year. Consider if we have the resources that there may be others who don't and who have a need. When Brother Tuttle was a young man, he had a strong desire to serve a mission. But he didn't have the money to pay for it, and his family didn't have the money for it. So Brother Tuttle thought of who was the richest man in his town and, after saying a prayer, he approached him. A loan was made, a mission served, and the loan repaid. Those who need our help may not always ask us.

It's about time the Lord taught us a lesson. A great catastrophe is coming. Now I probably shouldn't say that because then it will happen. But it is going to happen. That's what it will take to turn our hearts to the Lord. And we will learn from it. Our prayers will be different, less selfish. The scripture says "If ye are prepared, ye need not fear." Renew your prayers. You can [also] think a prayer. Carry a prayer in your heart throughout the day. Learn to pray for that which is of worth. Another scripture says "do not spend money for that which is of no worth, nor your labor for that which cannot satisfy." (2 Nephi 9:51) That can be applied both spiritually [to prayer] and physically.

Use what we have. If something is broken, fix it. Our young people are going to see different times than what they are used to. To you teenagers, your life will be different. Things are changing. You will have to do without some of the things you are used to expecting. Don't be afraid. Change your life to do without the extravagances and luxuries that you've expected.

Learn to pray. There's a difference between "saying prayers" and praying. A wonderful time is coming "it's not going to be easy, and it's not going to be short. But don't be afraid. Brother Tuttle was one of the Seventy when there were just seven of them. Now there are eight quorums of the Seventy called to go throughout all the world. It's an apostolic calling to teach the gospel to every nation, people and tongue. They know what to do and will lead and counsel where they are called. Take care of what we've got.

Begin to save. The rainy day is coming "in fact, the snowy day is already here [in reference to today's first winter snow]. Reset our expectations. Give up selfishness. Wickedness is all around us. In today's world, it's not safe for children to be outside alone. We need to be ever watchful. We need to protect ourselves from the wickedness, avarice, and greed in the world. Read the scriptures and the revelations. The guidance and counsel are there. Read with new eyes, and the scriptures, the Book of Mormon, will take on new meaning.

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As President Bush and world leaders gather in the coming week and the weeks ahead, there will be no easy answers or solutions. Hard times are ahead and it's difficult for them to see what to do. It's important to listen to the Spirit. We are led by prophets and apostles. We can see ahead. We can be and are prepared. I pronounce upon you an

Apostolic blessing. Comfort our children. Little children can be afraid of things we might not think of. Comfort them and strengthen our families. Turn off the television and focus on family. Pay your tithing. The promise is there "pay your tithing and you'll be watched over. You'll be alright. None of us is exempt from trials. If hard times come upon you and your income dwindles, remember that tithing is equitable for everyone: 10%. If you have nothing, then it's 10% of practically nothing. Pay your tithing, do what you're supposed to do. You'll be comforted.

Sure trials will come. Because of them, faith will increase. Happiness will increase. Security will increase. You'll be glad to be alive at this time. It's a good time to be living. To be raising children. I leave this testimony, counsel, and blessing with you in the holy name of Jesus Christ, Amen!

A catastrophe is coming! According to Pres. Packer, the rainy day is coming. But for the righteous and obedient, it will be a wonderful time to be living because faith will increase, happiness will increase, and security will increase. So "You'll be glad to be alive at this time." This goes along with the counsel of Joseph Wirthlin of the Twelve: "Come what may, and love it." Buddy

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 09:57

Friday, September 26, 2008

Disprove this...

Alright you chumps. How's this for proof?

Is this even safe to eat? This is a park that is only in New York. Some sort of hall or city where radios live. "Hi, is Jack there?" Where the @*&#\$ is the !^%%@* train?

Posted by Radar in Personal Entry at 23:38

Thursday, September 25, 2008

See AoD, I told you I was in New York.

I spent my first day here in New York. What a city. I am going to try and write up a full report of all I did but the camera I borrowed from Jon doesn't have a cable port for me to download the pictures I took, so I can't do it now. But to prove to AoD that I am for certain here in New York, I present this evidence.

You can't fake Lady Liberty. Official Hershey Worker at the Hershey store in Time Square. I got to handle all the chocolate. Lettuce from my salad at Serendipity (in honor of our blog). You should have seen the pitchfork I had to eat this with. I decided to just eat it anyway.

Posted by Radar in Personal Entry at 22:00

Blog Spotlight: New York Maria

To carry on my fledgling tradition of sharing good blogs with you, I present my friend Maria. I have known Maria now for about 4 years. She is extremely intelligent, hard working (her hours sometimes rival mine), and attractive. She is also quite funny. She has a dry wit about her that can sometimes catch you off guard if you aren't ready for it.

Recently she moved to New York for work. Everyone was sad to see her go because they enjoyed her company so much. I was worried New York would either change her, or chew her up and spit her out. Maria does not post to her blog very often but when she does it can be quite entertaining. Here are a couple of posts that are worth reading:

-The toughest Part of the Day

-Chatting

And my personal favorite:

-Get back in your Car

I mention all of this mainly to say thanks to Maria. Why you might ask? I am currently in New York writing this blog entry!! Maria has graciously allowed me to crash at her apartment in downtown Manhattan for the next few days. I arrived in JFK airport last night and took my first NY cab ride. I got to walk down Wall St. last night when she showed me around. The city smells wonderful!!!. More later.

Posted by Radar in Personal Entry at 08:39

Saturday, September 13. 2008

Giddy Up

Some of you may or may not know, that my Bree, as well as my mother, aunt, and cousin all competed in the Utah State Fair Gaited Horse show.

Here are some of the pictures from the event.

Also in case you are wondering Bree went 4 for 4 getting a ribbon in all of her classes (1 2nd place, 2 3rd place, and a 4th place in the grand championship class she competed in.)

Meanwhile my Aunt went 6/6 including 3rd in the same grand championship, and 4th in another grand championship. My Cousin won 2 ribbons, and my Mom won 4 ribbons, including 3 1st place ribbons, including one grand championship.

Posted by Sideshow in Personal Entry at 16:55

Thursday, August 28, 2008

meh

I'm not sure I like the color scheme on this one.. I don't know. I'll make any changes that any one suggests.

Full version here

It's huge so I'm only putting the thumbnail in this post.

My mommy says she's proud of me for doing something other than half naked disturbingly androgynous boys.

Posted by Wren in Wren's Art Dumps (NSFW!) at 11:59

Monday, August 25, 2008

Blog Spotlight: Melanie and Skyler

As I mentioned a week ago, I am going to be featuring some of the blogs I read. This week's introduction is Skyler & Melanie. I have known them for about 3, maybe 4, years. Both were in my ward for quite a while. Both basically lived around the corner from me. I was lucky enough to be invited over to Melanie's home a number of times for dinners and get-togethers. It was always fun (and always delicious). She and her roommate, Courtney M, were fantastic hosts. Melanie is one of the funniest people I know!! She always has something funny to say, or is in the middle of laughing at something else. If any of you listen to the Nightside project, she is the sister of Alex Kirry (the only funny one on that show - I hate Ethan Millard).

Melanie and Skyler got married about 8 months ago. Which is basically about the time they started writing their blog. Melanie is the main writer (actually, I don't know if Skyler has ever written anything). She usually posts at least once a week, sometimes more if the fancy strikes her. I highly recommend adding this to your reading list as you won't be disappointed.

Here is their most recent post, that you absolutely need to read. I laughed my head off!!!

Here are a couple of other worthwhile entries that you will enjoy:

Hated it

Hotel Room - kind of NSFW

Posted by Radar in Personal Entry at 10:51

Sunday, August 17, 2008

Blogs, blogs, blogs...

It seems like nowadays whenever people meet invariably this question will come up: "So do you have a blog?" Everyone has one. I used to think we here on the Homestarmy were special because we had this blog for more than 4 years. And I suppose we still are as I have never seen anyone else doing what we do. But the fact remains everyone seems to have a blog. Good for them.

I like blogs. It gives me a chance to keep in touch with people (mainly because I am rather anti-social). Some people are really funny. Others have really poignant and intelligent things to say. All of them keep me reading. I have added a new folder to our Handy Links section (on the right column of the site) called Radar's Endorsed Blogs. This contains links to all of the blogs that I read on a regular basis. Some you already read. Others will be new to you. But I put them up on our blog to encourage all of you to check them out (and comment on their posts as I know they all like that). I also encourage each of you to put up your own folders with readable blogs as I would be interested to read them. Look for me to feature some of them in the coming weeks.

Below is a list of all of my recommended blogs and a very brief intro about them: Jon's blog - You already know about Jon as he comments from time to time and he has been on our Handy Links list for quite some time. But it is good to point him out again.

Clark Continuum - This is written by the head designer of i4 Solutions. This is about 50/50 family blog and cool stuff. She is extremely creative.

Marmalade Memoirs - Long time friend. She now lives in New York. She doesn't post things very often, but when she does it is worth reading.

Rhett Blog - Long time friend and co-worker. Most of you already read him.

AKBarlow - Written by the part time designer of i4 Solutions and sister of Clark Continuum. 90% family blog. Cute kids.

Skyler & Melanie - Mainly written by Melanie. She is a long time neighbor and a very funny woman. I nearly laugh at all of her posts.

Land of Lauralot - Long time friend. Laura's blog is one of the more intellectual that I read. But she is also quite funny.

Melanie Unplugged - Long time friend and Desert Book employee. I have yet to read a lame post from her.

Phillips Phamily - Jon and Donnarae don't post very often. They are intelligent outdoorsy people.

Simply Stephanie - Very funny friend. I had no idea she was as funny as she is.

Nifervon - First friend I made when I moved to Salt Lake. She has newly started blogging.

Jason Pix - This is the brother of Nifervon. This is not a typical type blog. He does amateur photography and so he just puts up a new photo every few days. He sadly does not archive anything, so you have to check it frequently.

Miss Sorenson - Long time friend who doesn't put up with my crap. She has hit me several times. You should like her. She is also a first grade teacher.

Alexandra - Newly made friend. I have only read a couple of her posts. They were good.

What are the Odds? - My personal Physical Therapist. Her blog is more like a journal/sounding board.

Manatee Man - He just started this blog, so who knows what to expect. But Scott is quite funny, so I expect a good chuckle.

On the john - Always a good read. All of his blog posts are meant to be entertaining.

Paul Graham - I have never met this person. It was a recommendation from AoD. A bit preachy, but meant to be thought-provoking.

City of Salt - I just barely found this blog today. The author is in my ward and I know nothing about the blog. But she is nice, so it goes on the list.

Posted by Radar in Personal Entry at 16:28

Friday, August 15. 2008

Who am I sir?

"UTAH MAN"

VERSE

I am a Utah man, sir, and I live across the green.
Our gang, it is the jolliest that you have ever seen.
Our coeds are the fairest and each one's a shining star.
Our yell, you hear it ringing through the mountains near and far.

CHORUS

Who am I, sir? A Utah man am I A Utah man, sir, and will be till I die; Ki!Yi!
We're up to snuff; we never bluff,
We're game for any fuss,
No other gang of college men
dare meet us in the muss.
So fill your lungs and sing it out and
shout it to the sky,
We'll fight for dear old Crimson,
for a Utah man am I.

VERSE

And when we prom the avenue, all lined up in a row,
And arm in arm and step in time as down the street we go.
No matter if a freshman green, or in a senior's gown,
The people all admit we are the warmest gang in town.

CHORUS

VERSE

We may not live forever on this jolly good old sphere,
But while we do we'll live a life of merriment and cheer,
And when our college days are o'er and night is drawing nigh,
With parting breath we'll sing that song:
"A Utah Man Am I".

CHORUS

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 09:03

Wednesday, August 13, 2008

Thanks joN

From time to time some of my friends post something to their blog that I think is fantastic. I used to wonder how to tell other people about it. I thought that I could just copy the post verbatim and then be done with it, but that just doesn't seem right. So then I realized (I don't know why it took me this long) that I could just link to it. I think I am going to come up with a better way to share some of my friends blogs. Look to the near future for an addition.

This was Well Said!

Posted by Radar in Personal Entry at 08:20

Tuesday, August 12. 2008

coLinux grows up.

So, Ancient of Days told me a while back I should try coLinux rather than struggling with a dual boot, VMWare, or KVM solution to that age old problem: How do I run Linux and Windows on the same desk?

I've struggled for a week now trying to get coLinux to do what I wanted. I didn't have a lot of time until today, when I was assigned a new PHP project to work on. Seeing that I now had the needed justification for investing time into this technology, I set about trying to read through the documentation.

To my surprise, I found that several people were packaging "out of the box" solutions that installed a windows manager and a bunch of commonly used applications - and they use Ubuntu Linux as their distro. I ended up going with andLinux since it was available from sourceforge. I installed it and after a quick reboot, it started working like magic.

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 16:31

Thursday, July 31, 2008

Quote of the Day

I know most of you already get Quote of the Day, but I really liked this one.

The trouble with fighting for human freedom is that one spends most of one's time defending scoundrels. For it is against scoundrels that oppressive laws are first aimed, and oppression must be stopped at the beginning if it is to be stopped at all.

- HL Mencken

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 11:54

Tuesday, June 24. 2008

The Miracle of Ice Cream

Thanks go to thRhett for his recommendation of Farr ice cream.

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 08:24

Friday, May 30, 2008

1337

As you can see if you hover over the title, this is the 1337th article on this blog. It's possible that we lost some articles to server issues, but that doesn't matter, because it's in the URL.

To celebrate this historic moment in I33tness, I've decided to pull something out of the archives. The old archives. That's right, from back when I was a bachelor and this was a website for party announcements and beard growing activities.

Office UT Hero Shows His Stuff on Counter-Strike

Although it had been some time since his last-second heroics sparked a continuing controversy over Assault timers in the original Unreal Tournament, acclaimed Office UT Champ, Curtis Mortensen, wasn't afraid to display his skills in the more stealth-oriented Counter-Strike: Condition Zero.

"Incredible. The action left me out of breath," gushed fellow worker Joseph Wecker. "With the bomb ticking and four terrorists surrounding it, I didn't think anyone would have a chance, even on the Normal difficulty level. I guess Curtis proved me wrong."

The deeds in question occurred recently when Curtis introduced the office Unreal Tournament(UT) junkies to the Counter-Strike (CS) computer game series. While the UT series focuses more on over-the-top explosions with outlandish weapons like the Rocket Launcher and Lightning Gun, CS focuses more on tight, team-based tactical strategy using weapons with real-life counterparts, such as the AK-47 assault rifle.

Paul Hewson, a newly minted CS convert, breathlessly describes the setup. "Curtis was playing on the Prodigy map, which can be very difficult. There's a long hallway for sniping incoming T[errorist]s, but if they go the back way, you can lose your whole team in under thirty seconds. Well, guess what happened. That's right, the Ts went the back way, while Curtis fruitlessly tracked them from behind."

Brandon Woolsey, a former CS player who was drawn back into the action through Curtis' evangelical efforts, cuts in to say, "So then, we started hearing Curtis' teammates go down one by one over the radio. It was like that scene in Star Wars where the Rebels are sending those puny fighters against the Death Star and that one guy keeps saying, 'Stay on target. . .stay on target' and then gets blown up. We kept hearing the C[ounter-]T[errorist]s calling for help over the radio before suddenly being silenced."

Paul resumes his excited retelling. "Right when the last CT besides Curtis goes down, the computer notifies him that the bomb has been planted. We thought we heard some muttered cursing before he pulled out his knife and started running at top speed toward the CT spawn point [where the CT players begin the match]. When he got close enough to hear the bomb timer beeping, he pulled out his sub-machine gun and rounded the last corner opening fire."

"It was out of sight!" interrupts Joseph. "One T down, then the next, then the third. He didn't take time to reload before entering the small room where the last Terrorist and the bomb were waiting. He started firing at the T, when all of a sudden, we heard the click-clicking of an empty clip. Of course, the terrorist still had rounds to fire, so Curtis leaps out of the room while pulling out his pistol. Then he turned around for a schweet headshot. Man! that T went down! We didn't think Curtis had enough time to defuse the bomb, and the beeps starting coming closer and closer together."

"Yeah, but Curtis had the foresight to buy a bomb-defusal kit at the beginning of the round, so he went for it anyway," relates Paul, picking the story back up. "He crouched down and started the defusal process. We could see the defusal progress meter moving quickly, but I still didn't think he'd get it with the bomb timer beeping so furiously fast. I don't know how he managed it, but the meter filled up just in time. Stunning."

Curtis had little to say regarding the latest episode in his growing First Person Shooter legend. "I was just trying to spread the word about what a great game CS is. If I look good doing it, so much the better."

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 06:11

Wednesday, May 14, 2008

My Requested Stats

Many thanks to AoD.

Total Comments to Articles by Author (of the Article)

Average comments per post by author

Posts by month in the past 12 months

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 15:09

Sunday, May 11, 2008

Conflict needed

Johnny Elbows made a comment to me Friday that I thought was quite accurate. He said: "You know I think this has been the most civil thread of comments that we have had in a long time", speaking about AoD's latest rant. I then pointed out that he had missed most of the gentle jibes that Mad Giggler and I had engaged in. He agreed and then left after we concluded our business. But his comment got me thinking: why don't we have more of those types of discussions? I can think of a few reasons:

The subject just isn't interesting.

We are too busy.

We are too lazy.

We already share the same point of view.

The last one piqued my interest the most. We have become too homogeneous. We basically come from the same socio-economic background. We have the same religion (which is not the same as having the same religious belief - just ask AoD what the mormons in Orem believe. You might be surprised). We share the same skin color. We basically have the same education. We largely work in the same type of industry. We ought to just give up and form a Borg like collective. Clearly I am taking some liberties for the sake of humor. But my point stands: we are too similar.

AoD and I are big fans of The West Wing. It was fabulously written and acted. That show was undeniably written with a liberal stance. It got so bad sometimes that even I hated those damn bigoted Republicans. But that show provided AoD and I some of the greatest conversations that I feel we have ever had. While clearly we didn't agree with the lefties, it caused us to think about what we believed and more importantly, why.

Our blog posts are unique in that they aren't a diary of our lives. We usually look to the comments for a lot of the real action to take place. I know I have felt annoyed many a time when my article received no comments. I thought I had failed, or that my topic just wasn't interesting (to be fair, I have read a couple of the old ones; they weren't interesting). I really look forward to what everyone has to say on any given subject/post.

My possible solutions:

Force everyone to post an article at least once a week or revoke their membership.

Introduce a racist deaf Chinese atheist woman as an author to the blog.

Get more people commenting on the blog.

Option one would get people putting up more stuff, but it would have the unfortunate conclusion of eventually removing all of the authors. Namely me.

Option two would certainly raise eyebrows, but where are we going to find such a person. This one is clearly improbable for that reason alone. But the idea of inviting more people to write on the blog isn't a bad idea. I'm not sure where we would find them.

Option three sounds good. I just don't know how to do it. Anybody have any other ideas as to how we can get more people commenting or writing?

Posted by Radar in Personal Entry at 23:56

sometimes I contribute, too

I've been trying to get back to more traditional mediums. So. New art after the jump. Oil on board, just practice. I really, really hate it when my traditional, actually-put-effort-into-this pieces don't have a theme or a message, but this one didn't. D:

the full sized version in the gallery

Posted by Wren in Wren's Art Dumps (NSFW!) at 22:54

Saturday, May 10, 2008

Addition: check. Subtraction: um...

So this year I had to do my taxes by myself for the first time in about 6 years. Previously I had a friend who was an accountant that enjoyed doing them and always offered. I indulged and appreciated his assistance. He moved to Pennsylvania last year. Damn him and his promotions. I consider myself a very intelligent man. I did very well in college (though admittedly, that is no guarantee of mental acuity). I was a business/economics major, which means that I am far more comfortable with numbers than I am the written word. Essentially I know how to add. Subtraction seems to elude me though.

I pulled out the Federal tax form and pleasantly went to work filling things out. It took me about 30 min to determine that I owed the government approximately \$30. That suits me just fine. I was about to fill out my State form when I realized that I did not have any. I decided that since the federal form went so quickly, that I could easily handle the state form the next day down at the State IRS office, while I waited in line.

I went down there the next day and picked up the form and began filling things out. I prided myself on being able to fill it out in 15 min (which included doing long multiplication by hand - yeah, no one does that any more). Something didn't sit right though as I waited for the next available window: How could the state of Utah owe me some \$2000 when I had only paid them \$2000 the entire year? I quickly pulled my paperwork out again and re-ran the numbers, to the same conclusion. The intelligent part of my brain then kicked in to say that something wasn't right. I made a hasty retreat to re-think my numbers and forestall any unneeded embarrassment in front of a perfect stranger .

I tried calculating the numbers several different ways, but all came to the same conclusion: I am not monetarily responsible to the state of Utah. As a last ditch effort, I went to my other number crunching friend Rhett to get another set of eyes. He looked it over and found my mistake within five minutes. I am supposed to subtract line 46 from line 48, not add them!

With this new found information, I determined that indeed the state of Utah still owed me money: a respectable \$85.

Posted by Radar in Personal Entry at 01:22

Friday, May 9, 2008

Que Orguloso Estoy

My little twins are all grown up!

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 12:18

Wednesday, May 7, 2008

We're back

Well, we survived our trip to the dangerous foreign land of TJ. I've posted the pictures that I took in the gallery, but Daboo's brother has a lot more as well as some videos I'm hoping to post soon. For those who've forgotten, you can get to the pictures by [clicking here](#).

Also, Wren kept turning her head when I tried to get pictures of her at the wedding, so I have a gallery of my many failed attempts.

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 12:07

Wednesday, April 2, 2008

art?

I tried all day to think of something for April Fools to put up here...But here. Have a zombie instead.

Posted by Wren in Wren's Art Dumps (NSFW!) at 03:05

Saturday, March 1. 2008

I really actually have been using my Wacom.

Just not very much because I've had an artists block, but there are a couple of bust shots below the fold. And don't get excited, I don't mean bust the way you're thinking.

I can't remember my user name and password to add stuff to the homestarmy gallery so as soon as I do, there will be big versions of these there.

Posted by Wren in Wren's Art Dumps (NSFW!) at 19:42

Sunday, February 10, 2008

A trip in snow

I recently* went on a snow-shoeing trip to Little Cottonwood Canyon with some friends from my ward; Emily Utt, Emily Hodson, and Jenny Evans. This was my second trip snow-shoeing (SS). My first trip was a year ago, and I had been itching to go back ever since.

Now some of you who know me, know that I hate the snow and cold. So you might be confused as to why I would voluntarily make a trek in snow and the high altitude cold. Well a year ago I decided that I wanted to try something new and that took the form of SS. I was skeptical, but I majestically persevered. And I was pleasantly surprised. I had a fantastic time. I was able to stay dry and warm the entire time (which is what I hated most about snow - cold and wet). Unfortunately it was done towards the end of the season and the snow was gone. I had to wait an entire year before I could go again.

This trip we went up Donut Falls. It was about a mile and a half to two mile hike with great scenery. The air was not cold and there was hardly any wind. We took some pictures from Emily's phone but the quality is a little poor. I am the blur with the blue checkered jacket in two of the pictures. The last photo is actually of a moose we saw along the trail. I was going to make up a story about how it charged us, but I was too lazy to come up with a good excuse why it would attack us. But I would have stopped it with the scout knife I was carrying in my bag. I would have ended the story by saying I was the best Eagle scout ever because I was prepared. Oh well. Enjoy the photos.

Special thanks go to Emily Utt for letting me borrow her snow shoes, and Emily Hodson for allowing me to use her fathers snow pants. Without these two items it would have pretty much been impossible.

*this was done about 3 weeks ago.

Posted by Radar in Personal Entry at 19:54

Sunday, February 3, 2008

Why M should come work at i4

Really good Project Managers are hard to come by. Pardon my arrogance, but I believe that I am one of them. It takes a special blend of intelligence, dedication, patience, and personability (yes, I know I just made up a word). Another great PM that I know of is M M*.

I have a great crew of PM's at i4 Solutions where I work. But we are in need of another couple more to replace some recent departures.

M is a very intelligent person as I have had many different conversations with her where she has shown such intelligence. M is an extremely dedicated person as I have watched her over the years in positions at church and seen her give consistent dedicated service. She is also a dedicated and loving friend. M is an extremely patient person as I know who her boyfriend (of over a year) is. And lastly, M is extremely personable. She knows just how to put a person at ease and make them feel comfortable. That is what PM's do.

We respect these types of people at i4. We know how to treat them. M's current job just doesn't honor her the way that they should. They abuse her good characteristics. At i4 she would not be mistreated. She would be working with friends. She would be working with an equally dedicated staff.

Come on board M. Come home to a real family.

*name altered to protect anonymity

Posted by Radar in Personal Entry at 19:49

Saturday, February 2, 2008

An emotional morning

Like most LDS people, I heard the news about Pres. Hinckley's death this week with mixed emotion; sadness but mainly happiness. As many have stated, he was an old man and was lonely for his wife. I was glad that his very long and effective life had finally come to an end, so that he could rest. I watched his funeral this morning to close out the memory of a man and prophet I have watched from a very young age. I can recall laying on my sisters floor conference weekends as a boy and hearing him speak. During his time I can recall a few of his talks (Keeping the Temple Holy and The War we are Winning) that have helped change my life. I can recall sitting as a missionary in the Glasgow stake center the night that he announced the work of creating smaller temples throughout the world. Before he even announced it, I had within my mind come an idea to build "mini" temples. The spirit of God was strong in my heart as he then announced the church's new undertaking.

I am not by any means to be considered an emotional man. I have shed a few tears in my life (the death of my grandmother, saying goodbye to a dearly loved old friend in Scotland, and a few touching movies), but by an large I prefer to keep things rather close to the vest. This morning during the closing remarks by Elder Monson and the closing hymn the tears freely came down my face as I realized that this man who meant so much to me and embodied so many characteristics that I cherish was truly gone.

He stood as a beacon of courage, integrity, humor, faith, hard work, and morality in a world that largely ignores such things in its leadership and popular media. Though it is true that I have slept through probably a few of his talks over my life time, most of the time I found myself sitting up a little straighter to hear what he had to say. Everything he did and said during his time pointed to the life and ministry of our Savior Jesus Christ. He did not look for public adulation or demand special treatment. He preferred to quietly do the work he was called by God to do.

I will miss his wit and wisdom as general conferences come and go. I hope that I can continue to retain in my memory the example he was to me. That can best be accomplished not by worshiping him, reading old talks, constantly talking about him, etc, but by quietly seeking to do the will of God and living the precepts of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

While I don't use this blog as a medium to discuss spirituality and religion, I would like all who read this to know that I do have a testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ. He my savior and redeemer. I testify of the truthfulness of the Bible and the Book of Mormon and the great comfort and teachings that come from their pages. I know that we are and were led by men called of God and that they bear his Priesthood and receive his revelations to guide the church.

Posted by Radar in Personal Entry at 20:46

An invitation to family and friends

I have been a member of this shared blog almost back when it started 3 years ago and I have enjoyed every day of it. This blog was first set up as a place where a bunch of friends could all come and share interesting thoughts. This blog runs quite a diverse set of writings: from technical computer programming, movies, politics, sports, fiction/fantasy stories, and my personal favorite oddities (better perhaps entitled the ridiculous).

I have been hesitant to share this blog with my friends and family as I felt that many would not be interested because of the very technical, and sometimes inappropriate, topics that are shared here. There are 8 main contributors to this blog: Ancient of Days, Mad Giggler, Johnny Elbows, Sideshow, Daboo, Wren, Captain Jack Sparrow, and Radar (me). I invite you to read and share this blog and its many different articles with yourselves and any one else you think might find interested.

Here are a few articles I think are worth a read:

Decision Reached

Another top 10 list

Product Reviews

Mmmmm...workahol

10 Ways to Kill Your Star Programmer

I want to give one word of warning though. As this is a shared blog, I am not in control of the content of this blog. If you

Blog Export: Annals of the Homestarmy, <http://www.thehomestarmy.com/s9y/>

find something dissatisfying, then I am sorry. If you feel so inclined then you may comment to this or any article that you wish. The only thing you need to enter is your name and your actual comment. I hope that you find enjoyment in it.

Posted by Radar in Personal Entry at 13:14

Sunday, January 27, 2008

Mad Giggler is a dummy

Mad Giggler recently remarked that I had failed in my attempt to skew AoD's statistics by only posting on the weekend. As it turns out, he is wrong, just like the failed politics that he chooses to support (communism). If you read my actual words, you will see that at no point did I actually say I would post an article every weekend. All I said is that I would only post on the weekend.

Perhaps we should be concerned for MG. Is he illiterate? Does the Mad in his name mean that he has Mad Cows Disease? Or is he, as I postulate, a dummy?

I think I speak for all on the blog when I say: Are you ok Daboo? We're here to help you. You don't have to do this alone. Just reach out, we'll support you.

Posted by Radar in Personal Entry at 21:28

Saturday, January 26, 2008

A Capitol idea

I have a couple of friends who work for the state of Utah (Laura Durham and Chelsea Barrett). They were both volunteer guides during the re-opening tours of the newly renovated Capitol building. Though I did not actually go on a tour of the Capitol, I am quite interested in things like that. I asked Chelsea if she could give me a tour as she actually works in one of the buildings at the Capitol. She said that she would sometime (lucky me). But she also sent me a link to some of the material that the guides got to use.

I thought it was quite interesting, especially the symbols documents. Enjoy.

Posted by Radar in Personal Entry at 15:11

Saturday, January 12, 2008

I am going to screw with your statistics.

I am going to make sure that I do all of my blog posting on the weekend so as to make your statistics invalid!!!
HAHAHAHAHAHA

Posted by Radar in Personal Entry at 20:39

Friday, January 11. 2008

Mostly for the ladies

This video of a polar bear cub that a zoo in Nuremburg is rearing by hand is just about the cutest thing since Beth. Yeah, okay, Beth is still cuter.

Posted by Wren in Personal Entry at 08:39

Saturday, January 5, 2008

oops

In AoD's haste to throw me out the door last night, I neglected to thank Mrs. AoD for my dinner. I enjoyed the chicken noodle casserole very much. Thank you.

For any of you keeping score, this is the fourth time Mrs. AoD has fed me dinner. I think that means she likes me more than she likes the rest of you. :)

Posted by Radar in Personal Entry at 12:31

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

another picture

....

Posted by Wren in Wren's Art Dumps (NSFW!) at 21:47

Wednesday, November 7, 2007

art dump

Is it just me or did this not work the first time? Now I'm confused.

Anyway, art dump. This stuff isn't really super fantastic so I don't really have any commentary.

Yeah, no. Of course, the big versions of these can be found in the gallery under my originals.

Posted by Wren in Wren's Art Dumps (NSFW!) at 17:24

Monday, October 29, 2007

Just in time for Christmas

I know my personal crusade against corporations like Wal-Mart and KFC has had little or no effect on any of you, but I just thought I'd put out there that The Gap has now been added to my blacklist for the same kinds of reasons.

The article that convinced me that The Gap is not just overpriced or made up entirely of gay but that it is also evil. I understand that the accusation of 'evil' is arguable; my reasons for labeling Gap are this:

They were accused of violating child labor policies YEARS ago. If they really cared about it, wouldn't they be more assertive about making sure it wasn't happening again? My theory is that they've known this was going on for quite some time and have chosen to turn a blind eye to the whole mess--after all, it's free labor.

Corporations like this get involved in charitable causes (such as the 'Red' campaign mentioned in the article) because it's marketable. People like to feel good that they're buying certain garments that promise to donate x amount of funds to thus and such a cause; they can tell themselves that they're doing a good deed without ever having to invest real time or attention.

PFF.

Posted by Wren in Personal Entry at 15:12

Saturday, October 13, 2007

Art dump

You can call me Zelda for short.

Anyway I haven't actually been doing any art lately except for dumb doodles and an art meme that was circulating around deviantArt. But this is what I've done since the last time I posted. It's not much. And it's just some more stupid boys.

Their names are Charles, Tristan, and Darcy.
HOLY SOCKS these files are huge. Sorry.

Posted by Wren in Wren's Art Dumps (NSFW!) at 17:09

Tuesday, October 9, 2007

Dear Blog

I woke up today and after a series of morning rituals, came in to work. Work was going pretty good until a co-worker who shall remain nameless made a snide remark about my blog (that's you). I quickly took a look and sure enough, your style sheet has gone missing. This makes me sad. :(

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 09:10

Saturday, September 29, 2007

Javascript Color Fader

I had a kind of interesting idea last night. I got bored, and decided to write a set of javascript functions that would allow programmers to fade something from one color to another. I don't mean that this would allow them to create a gradient. I mean that this would allow them to change the color of an element from one color to another with a kind of fading transition between the two colors. It's kind of a niche need, and it's not really very complicated, but I still had fun with it.

The first step is to get the current color of the element.

In IE, you can do this by calling: `color = colorBlock.currentStyle.color;`

In Firefox, you get the color by calling: `color = document.defaultView.getComputedStyle(colorBlock, "").getPropertyValue("color");`

IE returns the color in whatever format you entered it, so if you gave it a hex color, IE returns the color in hex, and if you gave it an RGB color, it returns the color in RGB. Firefox converts all colors to RGB, and always returns the color in RGB. For convenience, I converted all of the colors to hex. Here's how I did it:

```
function getElementHexColor(elementId)
{
    var colorBlock = document.getElementById(elementId);
    var color;
    if(colorBlock.currentStyle)
    {
        color = colorBlock.currentStyle.color;
    }
    if(document.defaultView)
    {
        color = document.defaultView.getComputedStyle(colorBlock, "").getPropertyValue("color");
    }
    if(color.indexOf("#") != -1)
    {
        return (color);
    }
    else if (color.indexOf("rgb") != -1)
    {
        var red = getRgbComponent(color,0);
        var green = getRgbComponent(color, 1);
        var blue = getRgbComponent(color, 2);
        return "#" + red.toString(16) + green.toString(16) + blue.toString(16);
    }
    else
    {
        alert("Invalid color: please enter a valid hex or rgb color.");
    }
}

function splitRgb(Color)
{
    Color = Color.split("(")[1];
    Color = Color.substring(0, Color.length -1);
    Color = Color.split(",");
    return Color;
}

function getRgbComponent(Color, Component)
{
    Color = splitRgb(Color);
```

```
    Color = parseInt(parseFloat(Color[Component]) * .06);
    return Color;
}
```

After getting the current hex color, I break the hex color into individual red, green and blue components, and then find the difference between the current color and the end color, like this:

```
function getComponentDiff(startColor, endColor, component)
{
    var start = getHexComponent(startColor, component);
    var end = getHexComponent(endColor, component);
    return end - start;
}
```

```
function getHexComponent(color, component)
{
    var Length = color.length;
    switch(Length)
    {
        case 4:
        {
            color = parseInt(color.substring(component + 1, component + 2), 16);
            break;
        }
        case 7:
        {
            color = parseInt(color.substring((component * 2) + 1, (component * 2) + 2), 16);
            break;
        }
        default:
        {
            alert("Invalid color: please enter a valid hex or rgb color.");
            break;
        }
    }
    return color;
}
```

I call these two functions three times, once for red, once for blue, and once for green. This gives me the difference between the current color's red, blue, and green, and the end color's red, blue and green.

Now that I've divided the colors into three components and found differences between the current color's components and the end color's components, I have to create a transition color. For each component, I look at the difference between the current color and the end color. If the difference is greater than zero, I add one to the current component. If the difference is zero, I do nothing to the current component. If the difference is less than zero, I subtract one from the current component. I do this for all three components, and then build a hex color based on the new settings for the components, like this:

```
var Color = "#";
for(i = 0; i < 3; i ++ )
{
    var diff = getComponentDiff(startColor, endColor, i);
    if(diff > 0)
    {
        var NewComponent = getHexComponent(startColor, i) + 1;
        Color += NewComponent.toString(16);
    }
}
```

```
if(diff == 0)
{
    var Component = getHexComponent(startColor, i);
    Color += Component.toString(16);
}
if(diff < 0)
{
    var NewComponent = getHexComponent(startColor, i) - 1;
    Color += NewComponent.toString(16);
}
}
```

During this process of building the new color, I check to see if the new color is any different from the old color. If it is, then I call the function that fades the color recursively using a timer. Here is the final fade function:

```
function fadeColor(elementId, endColor, stepTime)
{
    var startColor = getElementHexColor(elementId);
    var doCallback = false;
    var Color = "#";
    for(i = 0; i < 3; i ++)
    {
        var diff = getComponentDiff(startColor, endColor, i);
        if(!doCallback)
        {
            doCallback = (diff != 0);
        }
        if(diff > 0)
        {
            var NewComponent = getHexComponent(startColor, i) + 1;
            Color += NewComponent.toString(16);
        }
        if(diff == 0)
        {
            var Component = getHexComponent(startColor, i);
            Color += Component.toString(16);
        }
        if(diff < 0)
        {
            var NewComponent = getHexComponent(startColor, i) - 1;
            Color += NewComponent.toString(16);
        }
    }
    document.getElementById(elementId).style.color = Color;
    if(doCallback)
    {
        setTimeout("fadeColor('" + elementId + "', '" + endColor + "', '" + stepTime + "')", stepTime);
    }
}
```

That's all there is to it. The arguments for the fadeColor method are:

elementId--the id of the element that you want to fade.

endColor--the color that you want the element to be when the fade finishes. This has to be a valid HTML hex color, eg. "#00F700"

stepTime--the amount of time that you want to pass between each step in the fade process. This is in milliseconds.

Download Javascript Code

Blog Export: Annals of the Homestarmy, <http://www.thehomestarmy.com/s9y/>

Posted by Johnny Elbows in Personal Entry at 08:55

Wednesday, September 5, 2007

Nebula Girls

So a while back, AoD gave me the idea of using some of the images found at the Hubble site to incorporate into some arts.

I have done that.

I don't think this is what you had in mind, AoD, but I kind of like the result anyway. Here are three nebula girls; the first one is from Orion's nebula, the second is a star birthing area in the Sagittarius constellation, and the third is a dust cloud in the Milky Way.

WARNING: I know that most of the stuff I post is considered NSFW either because you think 1- none of my girls wear enough clothes 2- my boys are way too girly or 3- you really shouldn't be looking at illustrations at work anyway, but this post actually probably isn't very safe for work by anyone's standards. The nebula girls have clothing that is either falling off or non-existent. I don't feel like I'm pushing any kind of artistic/shockvalue boundary here, but just to be safe, don't look at these unless you're sure you want to.

ooh I've made you all curious now, haven't I?

Posted by Wren in Wren's Art Dumps (NSFW!) at 12:26

Tuesday, August 28, 2007

^^

a few things I've been working on..

The girl in the dress won my kiriban on dA and wanted a picture of herself in her prom dress, so there that is.

The kid with the purple hair is an angel XD

And the last guy is a pirate! yeharr.

Posted by Wren in Wren's Art Dumps (NSFW!) at 23:58

Wednesday, August 22, 2007

Delilah

This was a request from a friend of mine.. he was very specific about the clothes she was supposed to wear, and her hair length and color, and that she should be holding a CD player and *not* any kind of mp3 player.

I don't know if he'll like it yet.. it seems a little off to me, and I'm not sure if it's just the lighting or her pose or what, so I'd love feedback.

I wanted it to look like the sun was just coming out and she's singing that Prince song 'Raspberry Beret'.

Posted by Wren in Wren's Art Dumps (NSFW!) at 02:23

Saturday, August 11. 2007

excuse me.

You're standing on my neck.

Posted by Wren in Wren's Art Dumps (NSFW!) at 23:24

Friday, August 3, 2007

Comparison

Daboo and I recently challenged each other to start painting again.

Using the same reference picture, we each painted a portrait in our own styles.

I've put them side by side here so we could compare our styles.. they are very different, and I thought they'd look really cool next to each other but mostly I just think they don't. Each version can be viewed by itself in my gallery.

The colors are not as true to life as I would like, but this is how they scanned. -shrug-

PS this file might be HUGE.

Posted by Wren in Wren's Art Dumps (NSFW!) at 18:34

Thursday, August 2, 2007

it is a crime to put a pretty werecat boy in a shirt.

This was a commission.

Posted by Wren in Wren's Art Dumps (NSFW!) at 16:19

Wednesday, August 1, 2007

art dump.

Not really, though, only two things and one of them is rough and one of them is lame.

Okay first of all, I lost a bet with my friend Sally and the stakes were art, so I asked her what she wanted me to draw for her and she said 'your favorite of my characters with your favorite of your characters as little kids maybe doing naughty stuff but it could be anything' So I sketched her Cerpin and my Darcy playing doctor. (it's not as bad as it sounds, although I did have a lot of fun drawing Darcy's tighty whities.)

The next is a picture of a guy named Charles. He hates his job and is mostly annoyed all the time.

Then there was also a picture I did that was supposed to be a vampire picture, but it turned out looking pretty gay so I'm not going to put it up here.

Posted by Wren in Wren's Art Dumps (NSFW!) at 10:40

Saturday, July 21. 2007

Narcisistic Post of the Day

So I'm filling out an application about being a possible future contestant on VH1's World Series of Pop Culture.

One of the questions is "How would your friends describe you?"

So. I kind of need your guys' help since the majority of my friends are you guys.

Posted by Sideshow in Personal Entry at 10:33

Wednesday, July 18, 2007

oooold

This is an old painting I did in high school.
Don't get the wrong idea; it scanned really.. vibrant. IRL it's more neutral. But it still looked cool.
Have I mentioned I love my new scanner?
This is the kind of effect I want to get on the new painting I'm working on with Daboo.

Posted by Wren in Wren's Art Dumps (NSFW!) at 21:49

Saturday, July 14. 2007

I's feeling angsty.

Never gonna give you up
Never gonna let you down
Never gonna run around and desert you

-dance dance-

Posted by Wren in Wren's Art Dumps (NSFW!) at 04:28

Thursday, June 21, 2007

Art dump - NSFW

Yeh this one really isn't safe for work because it has half naked boys. -cough-

Uhm so my friend wanted me to draw a 'pretty, girly boy with big brown eyes' so I did. And then I liked him so I drew him again only less girly. And then it was my friend Roma's birthday and she is in love with Vincent Valentine, so there you go.

hey can I have my own 'art dump' category now?

[Ed: Done and done! "Wren's Art Dumps (NSFW!)" is found immediately under "Personal Entry".]

Posted by Wren in Wren's Art Dumps (NSFW!) at 11:02

Thursday, June 7, 2007

Oh, the Humanity

So I don't know if I've made this clear to all of you, but my overall view of the human race is that we suck. We pretty much ruin everything we touch. I mean, throw 50 people into a place where there is goodness and beauty, and if one person doesn't ruin it all another person will. Pretty much because of selfishness, nearsightedness, and pure stupidity.

But every once in a while, I realize that along with all that suckiness, we have the potential to be really good. And that realization usually comes as a result of seeing someone, somewhere, doing something that is purely good.

So yesterday, it was pouring rain as I was driving home from work. I was taking the back streets, and I saw this woman sitting in the road. (This was 9th East, so a very busy road.) She was by the corner of an intersection, but definitely IN the road. She had this fierce, protective look to her, and was not moving even though cars were coming really close to her. It was kind of an usual sight, so I watched her trying to figure out what was going on. I eventually realized she was sitting by an open storm drain which was flooding with water.

On the sidewalk near her were three big mechanic guys. They had clearly come over from the car repair shop on the corner. They were fussing over a cardboard box.

As I watched, one of the guys pointed over to the grass--where there was a duck. Not just a duck, but a panicking, quacking female duck.

I said to my car, "Are there DUCKLINGS in that box?"

And right as I said it, one of the guys reached into the box and lifted out a little yellow fuzzy duckling, which started peeping for all he was worth. He rushed to his mother, who was rushing toward him.

I have to say, seeing those people so concerned for those little ducklings made me remember how good we all can be. I wanted to write this as a salute to those people, and the kind of people who will stop what they are doing to protect baby ducks in the middle of a downpour. Good job.

Posted by Daboo in Personal Entry at 16:28

Wednesday, June 6, 2007

Once more with the musings

Editors Note: There is a hidden joke in this article, for those who know how to find it!

Well, here I go again; one more business vacation, and one more essay of random thoughts written before, during, and after the flight. This trip I am heading down to Southern California. I have a niece who wanted to get married in the San Diego Temple, even though she (and everyone else involved in the wedding lives in Northern California, some 7 hours away). But apparently the San Diego Temple is "prettier" than the Oakland or Sacramento temples. But I had to come down and support her. She is a middle child and was never really shown much in the way of quality time by her parents. I always tried to make time for her so that she knew someone out there really loved her for who she was. She is a good kid and I want to be here for her. As I walk down the aisle to find my seat, I come to the emergency exit row. I chose this seat as I wanted to have plenty of leg room for the flight. But I am struck with something that until now, I had never before thought: If this door comes flying open during the flight, I'm dead! There is no way that I would survive being sucked out my seat and into the wide open expanse of clouds that surround our plane. Some might say: well won't the seatbelt hold you in? Those are the stupid people. The seatbelt would either give way, or cause my body to be ripped in half. So my only recourse is to gently float to the ground in one piece or two. I don't even get the dignity of choosing which way I go. Life can be so unfair sometimes. Another thing strikes me as odd right now, and forces me to question the flight attendant: "Miss, should the wing really be shaking like that?"

I think I would prefer to be sucked out whole. It's got to stink being ripped apart by wind-shear and a federally approved seatbelt at 487 MPH (our current cruising speed).

Last time I wrote on a plane, I said that I wanted to change the way my life was spent. Somethings have changed, but I still have not yet met my goal. I still work ridiculous amounts of hours at work (so far for two days this week, I have put in 25.5 hours). I did manage to convince the bosses to hire some new help for me (2 new Project Managers to split the load). I also got them to refine and right out our company process. That way everyone would know what was to be expected and how everything should flow. We are still in the implementation phase, but already we are starting to see the fruits bear out.

Actually I change my mind. I just caught a glimpse of the ground below. Rip my body in half and let me die quickly. I don't want to watch myself slowly float some 34,000 feet to what surely is to be a very hard and abrupt landing.

I am also excited about this trip as I will get to see my sister, Pam, for the first time since she was diagnosed. We all just thought she was stupid, turns out it was a brain tumor. What are you going to do?! She has been doing well. Her treatments have been successful so far, so we can all joke about it. But the time will come when the tumor will kill her. It is the kind that keeps growing back despite treatments. Thankfully she gets checked often, so they will see the next one coming. And on the positive side, she has lost a lot of weight! That seems like a fair trade off - deadly disease; trim waste, thighs and buttocks! Trendy women are sure to start lining up as soon as this secret gets out.

Wait, no, I change my mind again. Just let me have a heart attack and pass out.

They say that weddings are a great place to meet girls. I find this very odd, and not at all comforting to me. The only weddings I attend are for family members. Should I really be looking around the room during the ceremony thinking: Which one of these 2nd cousins can I ask out? I did ask a girl out the other day at church. She accepted, once I talked her into it. I didn't realize until later that I didn't actually set a time or day for the date. I know what we are going to be doing, but not when. We are going to watch the first installment of the greatest film ever made: Lord of the Rings! She has never seen it before. We will pick up some sort of to-go meal, bring it back to her house, and watch the movie. She is cute, Czechoslovakian, and willing to watch a 3 hour movie. I'm keeping my fingers crossed for this one!

Oh, crap! This door better hold, I don't want to die!

Posted by Radar in Personal Entry at 12:17

Monday, April 16. 2007

Art dump.

Like the title says. ~5 new things in originals.

Posted by Wren in Personal Entry at 20:24

Monday, March 26, 2007

What a nice girl did for me

So I decided to leave work at a normal time today (6:30pm) because I had an FHE activity. It was a talent night. We had a couple of dance numbers (both interpretive, and tap), several musical numbers (personally written and reproductions of professionally written material), art work, stand up comedians, and a Guitar Hero duel! It was fun.

But the night was topped off by the best thing of all; I got free food! So my thanks to Maria Merrill for giving me a Little Ceasars hot and ready (though by the time I got it, it had ceased to be hot) pizza. I now have lunch for most of the week. It's awesome!

Posted by Radar in Personal Entry at 21:49

Wednesday, March 21, 2007

Debate

Alright. So I think I've finally come to accept the fact that most everyone can't look at the things I post in the Homestarmy gallery at work; this might be because looking at animeish type art during work is unprofessional; this may be because you all think it's slightly riske.

Since MG's confession that he never felt my galleries were work safe, I've taken down any and all images that might be frowned upon (the cleavage ones). The grand total was five; all other pictures I felt were perfectly fine and work safe, as far as content goes.

At this point, I'd like to know if you guys would like me to just keep it that way, or if you want me to put those pictures back up (including the one I know you've all seen because I used it as a D&D visual aid--the dryad, remember?) and whether or not I should continue posting (or not posting) images that may contain some questionable content.

I've got two pictures I've done for a couple of Deviant Art friends, both featuring boys with their shirts off. These are *girly* boys. One has a few wounds.

I've also just posted a picture in the originals section of a guy with hand guns. If you guys want me to take that one down, I will.

Just let me know what you think is appropriate for the Homestarmy Gallery, and what is not. I'd really appreciate feedback.

Posted by Wren in Personal Entry at 16:26

Thursday, February 22, 2007

What Would You Do?

I work with adolescent kids every day, some of whom are emotionally unstable, mentally disabled, uncontrolled train wrecks. But no child I have ever worked with seemed to be completely and utterly evil. I can see motive behind most of their bad behavior--it's the first step in refusing to be manipulated. In so doing, I can assess the situation to a point where I am almost always calm, in control, and even compassionate. I don't have huge discipline problems--I learned all my lessons last year, during my first year of teaching. Sure, sometimes I have to mentally step back and allow a student to fail--which is actually quite hard, but it is their right to do so--but again, there is always a motive, or something wrong, that prompts a kid to do stupid things. And by "stupid," sometimes I mean "bad."

Also, I am a religious person. I believe that every human being on this planet is a soul who chose to come to this earth. Sure, some are "brighter" (in many senses) than others, but they all have the potential to be wonderful, and to do good things and learn how to love each other. I do not believe that any person is inherently evil, although I am fully and depressingly convinced of our free will to choose evil should we wish to do so. But my philosophy here kind of points to evil as something that would HAVE to come with some time and experience in the human condition--i.e., the older a child gets, the more likely he is to become evil, because of his experiences and subsequent choices. That would mean that a child raised lovingly would be unlikely to become evil. Of course, it's possible, but it's very unlikely.

But lastly, I am also a little chaotic in nature (

Posted by Daboo in Personal Entry at 17:33

Wednesday, February 21, 2007

Under the Influence

Okay you guys all know that if I was a man, writing my name in the snow would be my number one priority.

But this would be a close second.

By the way, if seeing the naked torsos of slightly chubby artists isn't good for your workplace, then this isn't safe for work.

Posted by Wren in Personal Entry at 22:13

Thursday, February 15, 2007

I just can't keep in the awesome anymore.

This post is mostly if you are bored at work (or home) and have the freedom to browse the internet. I don't know if you are aware of it or not, but there is an entire underground society of geeky teens and young twenty somethings that make incredibly entertaining time wasters. Seriously. I am not one of them but I wish I was because then I would make people giggle a lot more.

My involvement with this subculture dates back to the pantspress days when I started reading comics by Dylan (Bite Me) , Vera (Return to Sender) , Jen (Strings of fate, which would be linked except she sucks and took it down), and Bill (Anne Frank Conquers the Moon Nazis) After I went to San Diego three summers ago (or was it two?) to the San Diego Comicon for the *sole purpose* of meeting the Pants Press gang, I started follow Clio Chiang's work as well.

So a while ago, Clio (who is awesome) did a little animation about a cat and a fish. Did I post this? It was pretty cute so I'm sure it did. Anyway, the ending credits are decorated with a song that Clio asked for specifically from the guy (guys?) over at the SONGS TO WEAR PANTS TO site. Which is really awesome and which everyone should go check out, even if they don't click on any other links from this post. How Songs to Wear Pants To works, is, people can request a song they'd like to hear and the guy who runs the site makes it. For example, someone simply wrote in 'I want you to make a song in your least favorite genre about why you dont' like that genre'. The response was a little one minute song in punk rock style about how punk rock is too loud. Another was a guy who wrote a poem for his girlfriend and wanted it in a certain style. The Pants guy did that too.

One of the people who requested a song was Emmy (or B1ind1 as we know her on deviantart.) she requested "When I am feeling sad like life is just a bowl of soggy oatmeal, I would like my very own song to encourage me to keep going and have an awesome day, and that everything will be alright no matter what happens. Like my own theme song hahah!

Can have a punkish feel, can have a banjo, can mention kitties, can be any kind of awesomeness you want.

If you can't think of any lyrics, heres some topics I enjoy: Cats, sunshine, flowers, Unicorns, rocking out, Harry Potter, magic. I also enjoy computer gamish sounds like from oldschool mario and junk.

I like to draw everyday, for I am an artist! I do mostly cartoony stuff. I drink tea everyday. I wear weird clothes everyday. I am a chocoholic."

and got this song

Emmy is a genius for both her cartoons and her sense of humor, which apparently runs in her family, since her brother Neil was the one who created the Potter Puppet Pals website. and I suspect he also came up with that Charlie the Unicorn youtube video in the first place, but I could be wrong. There are too few clues to tell.

Posted by Wren in Personal Entry at 16:59

less than backslash three

-points an accusing finger at Daboo- Last night, your *stupid* cat knocked my printer/scanner/copier off my desk, and now it wont scan. There will be no more arts until I can find an affordable yet moderate quality scanner and then have the money to purchase it.

That's all.

Posted by Wren in Personal Entry at 13:21

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

D:

Okay well I'm pretty sure this next one is work safe but what do I know apparently I've been drawing risque images for ages now.

Oh oh also? This was colored by my sexy Romanian friend, Roma. She loves me like no one else has ever loved me.

Posted by Wren in Personal Entry at 23:21

Chink

THAT's the sound of an art dump if there's only one piece to put down.

Anyway, the one I posted is my next Valentine's Week theme (What a Girl Wants) picture.. I'm not sure I like how it turned out. Originally, the girl was just in her underwear which was supposed to make her look vulnerable; the wish this girl has is to be told she's beautiful. She's got a lot of insecurity issues (don't we all?) and every girl just wants to hear it sometimes..

Then Ladybug saw it and said 'what, you're drawing soft core porn now?' And I said 'It's not porn!' and she said 'Would you show that picture to Jesus?' and I said, quite honestly, 'Yes.' because I think Jesus would understand what I was trying to say with the picture and not think I was drawing porn.

Nevertheless, it occurred to me that while this picture *means* something to me, the message may or may not be clear or it may not mean anything to anyone else even if the message is clear. And while I would not be ashamed to show this picture to Jesus, my mom would be ashamed to admit her daughter had drawn it (apparently). *So I put a dress on the girl.*

Also? Not sure I like the background texture. Bleugh.

Posted by Wren in Personal Entry at 02:30

Sunday, February 11. 2007

Thunk

Two new pictures in the originals section; London is a birthday present for a dA friend of mine, and the other is the start of my Valentine's Week theme thing, which is 'what a girl wants'. I'll post one each day until my wrist falls off.

Posted by Wren in Personal Entry at 20:48

Thursday, February 1, 2007

SOC: The Trip Home

Well I am on my way home. My first official "work vacation" is over. I am once again several thousand feet in the air and my ear drums are tight with pressure. It hurts just a little. So does my knee. But my belly is quite full and my belt is under a bunch of pressure too. But this pressure makes me very happy.

You see on the way out of town to the airport this morning I had my mother stop at In-N-Out. While there I ordered a vanilla shake, Double-Double, and fries both animal style (but more on that later). For those who have never eaten at In-N-Out, you are missing something truly great. They are without a doubt the best hamburger joint I have ever eaten at. That's all they do; burgers, fries, and drinks. I was able to go there twice this week. My breath stunk of onions, cheese, and meat, but I didn't care.

To order something Animal Style means that you have them grill the onions with their sauce (normally it just comes with fresh onions). But the grilling seals in the flavor. It wasn't until I accidentally ordered fries animal style three years ago that I became a believer. Not only do they grill the onions and the sauce, but then they put cheese on the fries and mix it in with the onions and then put more sauce on top of it. Arteries get clogged!

But enough of food none of you can have. I want to say that I am glad to be coming home. Not only am I happy to be able to come back to my own bed, but I actually look forward to coming in to work. While it was nice not to have to deal with some things this past week, it will put my mind at ease once I can get my hands on a few projects that I know need some attention. I am needed at my job, and that makes me feel good.

I was hoping to be able to talk with Dad while I was home about how to properly balance my life. While I had more than enough opportunities to do so, I did not avail myself of any of them. I don't know why. He is old (68 today!). He has a wealth of experience. But for some reason my stubborn self seemed to say that I want to figure this one out for myself. Maybe it's my passage into manhood. Who knows?

Addiction is bad. And I am without a doubt addicted to work. It is my goal this year to try and find that balance. To say: "It's 5pm and it's time to go home." And then not worry about what didn't get done, or what isn't going to get done because I actually left. We'll see.

Well I think my stream of consciousness is nearly over. For those of you who managed to get this far, you must enjoy reading. Did I learn anything on this trip? Nothing life altering. But I do know how to check the battery life on my laptop. 1:34 hours left!

Posted by Radar in Personal Entry at 06:21

Tuesday, January 30, 2007

Mlyeh

So I posted another couple of arts... one is an original of an emo kid, the other is birthday present for my friend Ahcri on deviantArt.

Emo Boy - <http://www.thehomestarmy.com/gallery/Originals/emojason>

Dresden in a party dress - <http://www.thehomestarmy.com/gallery/Fanart/bdaydresden> - A note: Yes, this is a boy. It was a birthday present and the recipient liked it so I will apologize to no one. PS don't click to make it bigger, because it's HUGE.

More soon... I will at least have something up for Valentine's day.. >_>

Posted by Wren in Personal Entry at 22:29

Thursday, January 18, 2007

My crappy night!

So I came home from my soccer game last night (we won, and I scored another Hat-trick) sweaty and tired to find that my apartment was rather cold (approximately 60 deg. and falling fast). I called my landlord only to find out that she knew about it, but could not do anything until the next day. So I had no heat and no hot water.

My options:

1. Take a cold shower right then and get clean. Then go to bed with extra blankets to try and stave off hypothermia.
2. Go to bed as is with an extra blanket to hopefully stave off the cold of the night, and then shower in the morning. Hopefully again avoiding hypothermia.
3. Go to bed and not shower in the morning, and just hope no one would smell my sweaty body at work.
4. Boil water and take a bath.

I opted for item #4.

So I began the long process of boiling copious amounts of water to fill my tub with hot water. Around 10pm I had filled my tub with enough water that I felt comfortable taking a bath. I poured the last pan of hot water in the tub and then all the lights went very dim. I quickly started to turn things off, but to no avail. I was plunged into darkness. Sweaty, stinky, cold, and moist (from all the steam of the boiling water) I slumped into my chair and just sat in the darkness for about 5 minutes.

I finally picked myself up and called a friend to crash at his place. I think I got about 4 hours sleep last night. I am about to leave work right now. Here's hoping when I get home I will have heat and hot water.

Posted by Radar in Personal Entry at 13:52

Wednesday, January 10, 2007

fanart!

Although Ladybug is the only one who will appreciate this.

Posted by Wren in Personal Entry at 09:52

Saturday, December 23, 2006

Uuunhg.

What do Sailor Moon, Ed Elric, a love affair, a baby dragon, a skipping hippo in a tutu, and a witch with a wish for a merry Christmas have in common?

Nothing.

In other news, there's been an art dump for those of you who haven't noticed. Seven in total, eight if you count the details shot.

Posted by Wren in Personal Entry at 00:57

Saturday, November 18. 2006

Thanksgiving

Since I won't see anyone between now and then I just wanted to wish you all a Happy Thanksgiving. May your holiday be quiet and peaceful. We'll see you all in a little over a week.

Posted by Sideshow in Personal Entry at 12:24

Friday, October 20, 2006

Coming Monday October 23, 2006.....

Sideshow's Asylum.

That's right Sabrina and I have bought our first home. We close Monday night.

However this will cause some issues for D&D. First being that next week I won't be able to make it, as we'll be moving in. Second the week after I won't be able to make it as Sabrina's Family will be in town, as they are bringing some of her stuff (Washer/Dryer, Table, Desks, Dresser) from Oregon, and will be in for that weekend and leaving on Wed.

After that though I should be clear, as well as there will be a secondary HQ for the occassional D&D Night.

Posted by Sideshow in Personal Entry at 10:35

Monday, October 2, 2006

A Dying Breed

As some of you may or may not know my grandfather passed away last week. I lived with my grandfather for about the first 5 years of my life. He was a big influence on my life.

He also was one of the last true Cowboys left. At one time in Riverton he had well over 30 Horses (Including some draft horses) Goats, Dogs, Geese, Ducks, Turkeys, Bees, and Chickens all at his place.

About 7 years ago he moved down to be the trail leader for Rockin R Ranch in Antimony, Utah. Somehow this little Ranch in the Middle of this little speck of a town in the Middle of Utah caught the attention of The Tonight Show and moreso Ross the Intern.

Last year he spent some time down there to drive cattle.

I can't find a better link but for now here is a link to the video of that segment (Scroll down a bit) My grandpa is Jerry Lovelady on the video and his "wife" is Diana who helps Ross at the beginning.

Posted by Sideshow in Personal Entry at 09:22

Friday, September 22, 2006

The Most Relaxing Game in the World

Seriously. I felt very zen the whole time I played it. I found half the charm to be that at first I didn't know what to do. You evolve, stuff unfolds...it's fantastic. It's linked over at PA as well.

Posted by Daboo in Personal Entry at 08:07

Tuesday, September 12, 2006

Who wouldn't want to date her?

Old and tired werewolves still trying to cope with the deaths of their boyfriends.

So AGES ago, I set out to do some fanarts and never really got 'em done. I mean, I finished Ginny and the dementor, but I was also gunna do Tonks and Voldy.

Well, Voldemort is still a sketch in a book, but Tonks is finished.

I imagine her hair is spikier some days than others. And I expect she wears a lot of band tees. And I suspect she'd be the kind of person who would quirk and eyebrow and say something like 'Aye, aye, Cap'n Amazing." You know, semi-sarcastically.

And since I put in a picture of Ginny mourning Dumbledore on the Ginny spread, I thought I'd put one in for Tonks. Poor Tonks, unrequitte love all year long and then her mentor up and dies. He's the only one she ever let call her Nymphadora. So I'm thinking the mousy brown and pale aspects of her would stick around a bit longer. You know, because of the depression.

Another thing: How could Harry ever have every thought ever that she was in love with Sirius? He's her cousin for Pete's sake!

Posted by Wren in Personal Entry at 10:45

Monday, September 11, 2006

Mira and Gwen take a sunny vacation

I thought I could do it, but I just can't. I can't maintain the story while teaching full time. I will continue to try to write, but I am not going to start posting again until I'm sure I can get some continuity going. I'll post everything I have so far, and then the girls will be off for a sun-drenched holiday in Majorca.

Posted by Daboo in Personal Entry at 07:44

Thursday, June 29, 2006

Opinion Formation

I have hesitated for some time over whether or not to post this subject. But after much thought I have decided to do it. It should be stated that I do not wish to offend or divide the group dynamic in any way. I simply want to know what everyone thinks. Should you find this not to your liking, then please be respectful of others opinions and just don't read it.

I recently watched an episode of the West Wing, a highly liberal show with superb writing and acting. I recommend it to anyone who enjoys fine art, and drama. While I do not share the opinion of about 90% of the material discussed, I have found it to be an excellent launching point to several meaningful debates between Joey and myself. One of the topics of the show in question was the legality/necessity of Stem Cell Research. It was proposed by the sitting Democratic White House that we should delve into such territory to provide possible cures for many maladies. While the Republican controlled House vehemently opposed any forays into Stem Cell exploration, citing it as immoral and against God.

I have some ideas of my own on the subject, but I would really like to hear some of yours. Please take some time to think this over and reply to this over the next few days. Thanks

Posted by Radar in Personal Entry at 08:24

Wednesday, May 10, 2006

Pet Re-Placement

You may or may not know that I've worked and volunteered for various vet clinics and animal shelters, and over the years have been a halfway-house for many homeless pets. I've had a lot of experience with really bad people. One variety of these is the type of person who wants to purchase your pet for a voodoo or satanic ritual. Yes, people do this. I've had teenage boys tell me very bluntly that they wanted my black cat for a satanic sacrifice. However, the more common and subversive type of bad person tries to get your pet so that s/he can sell it to a private lab for experimentation. I recently received an email from just such a person over our cat Prosper. This is what it said:

Hello Dear Sir / Madam,

Good to meet you, My name is (deleted), I saw that you are will to place your pet been adoption and immediately, I got so fascinated about having the pets. I am an honest, caring Woman with the utmost fear of God. Having the Pet is like owning a fortune and the thought of the Pet makes my vein leap for joy because i really Love Pets.

I will have my International Shippers Company comes for the Pick-Up.

(shudder)

Posted by Daboo in Personal Entry at 14:12

Wednesday, April 26, 2006

Spooky

So I read an article on CNN about the recent seance with John Lennon, in which his voice was allegedly recorded saying "Peace...the message is peace." This, of course, reminded me of several nearly-hysterical episodes with Wren in which we listened to various EVP (electronic voice phenomenon) examples on the internet, looked at several horrifying photographs of ghostly phenomenon and, to my everlasting regret, watched...videos. (shudder)

You can look at some examples of EVP at <http://www.aaevp.com/>

If you're fearless (which, by the way, Ray Bradbury equated with a lack of curiosity akin to a coma of the soul) you could also watch the Urban Legends series, which I can't link to due to the silly webnanny here at school.

There is also a lively (no pun intended) movement of "ghost-hunters," especially here in Utah. Video, voice recordings, and photographs of their outings can be found [here](#)

I believe in ghosts--several varieties, in fact. I believe that places can have memories, especially when something extreme has happened there. These residual sounds and impressions are not the presence of a real entity, but merely a place where space-time got...wrinkled, perhaps? due to the experiences of people living there/then. Like a psychic scream, perhaps.

I also believe in life-after-death, that spirits of former living people can visit this plane. I don't know whether it's possible for them to get "trapped" here, though, as that idea is extremely depressing and disturbing to me. Watching a video clip of a shadow circling a car in which people had died earlier that day makes me think that perhaps when we die, we can't easily let go of our fears, worries, etc.

And lastly, I believe in demons. Demons are everywhere. They can indeed possess people, if allowed, and can perform extremely accurate impersonations as well. In fact, the reason that Ouija boards and other methods of contacting the dead (including EVP) are dangerous is that I believe that demons enjoy preying on our hope to see or hear from our loved ones again. And, once you invite their presence, it is difficult to force them to leave.

What do you all think?

Posted by Daboo in Personal Entry at 13:37

Wednesday, March 29, 2006

More Cowbell

In the style of ESPN's The Sports Guy (Bill Simmons), I've got some things on my mind, and I want to throw them out there for people to be aware of.

First off, thanks AoD for your hard work in keeping this server running. I don't know what you're doing to keep the hard drives spinning so much, but I think you're going at a rate of one burnout per year. Please let us know when you'll be ready to take donations for a backup.

AoD and Anon won't be able to make it to D&D tonight, due to AoD's leaving for St. George tonight. Feel free to leave comments disparaging his commitment to the group below. Sideshow informs me that he'd prefer to go ahead with things tonight, because he's purchased the food for his turn at grub a second time now.

How about that patch 1.10? Anybody know? Anybody able to log in last night? Anyone?

Wren, has your lazy \$#! brother fixed your local network yet? Meaning, can you connect to the outside world from your computer?

The results are in. . .and Oblivion looks like a fantastic graphical update for Morrowind. Unfortunately, the combat still sucks \$#!

Daboo has now successfully owned me in Warcraft 3 so thoroughly that I'm afraid to even load the campaign. *Sigh* guess I'll never play the Frozen Throne after all. At least the Counter-Strike kids will have me back. HEADSHOT!

For lack of something more entertaining, we could always turn this thing into a political blog. We have all sorts of different political views represented. I propose we discuss the immigration bills being bounced around in Congress. I look rather favorably upon the one that just passed the Senate's committee; it seems like a really good compromise all around. The New York Times has a very biased editorial on it. Some Texas news station has a short article detailing the difference between the two. And our own Deseret News has a longer article with much more detail on the bill recently passed through the Senate committee.

Edit: One other thing, please contact me if you want an email with thehomestarmy.com for a domain. Google was kind enough to let us use gmail for the webclient and mail hosting.

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 11:52

Tuesday, November 15, 2005

Now with Pictures!

The new gallery with pictures of Banshee the Abandoned Cat is up!

As you know, we are looking for someone to adopt her. She is really sweet, but our other cats terrify her. Luckily we got these pictures before Wash could come up and sniff her.

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 19:25

Thursday, November 10, 2005

For you 'Arrested' Fans

Mainly Radar, and AoD. Looks like Arrested Development is finally getting put out of it's misery.

Posted by Sideshow in Personal Entry at 10:16

Thursday, November 3, 2005

A Real Incident

Anne: Josh,* you need to sit down now.

Josh: Mrs Mortensen!! I'm cleaning out my folder!!!

A: Stop wadding up papers! Go sit down and write your book report.

J: Look, I can make it from here!!! (tosses a huge wad of papers across the room.)

A: You have 5 seconds to sit down, or I'm sending you to ICS. 5...4...

J: WHY DO YOU HATE ME????

A: 3...2...

J: (makes a mad dash for his desk, sprawling across the floor and touching the seat with one finger)

A: ...?

J: (frantically crawls into his seat)

A: ...??

Class: (stares open-mouthed)

A: (begins to write referral slip)

J: (Passionately and yet completely silently pantomimes being choked by what seems to be an army of monkeys)

Class: (stares open-mouthed)

A: (holding up referral slip) It's all filled out. I'm just waiting for you to say ONE more thing.

J: (implodes into a bony huddle at his desk for 15 minutes, completely crumpled and silent)

Later, after class...

J: Did you really write me a referral slip?

A: (holds up referral slip)

J: You were going to send me to MS. STONE????? TO COPY DICTIONARY PAGES?????

A: (nods)

J: (snatches referral slip, violently wads it up, thrusts it into his mouth, and chews.)

*name has been changed to protect insane student.

Posted by Daboo in Personal Entry at 12:38

Tuesday, October 25. 2005

Curtis. . .

I'm sorry! Please come back.....

Posted by Ancient of Days in Personal Entry at 12:21

Monday, October 24, 2005

So I'm Sitting here...

Noticing that the day is almost over, and there hasn't been a post yet. None of the sites I check on a normal basis have anything worthy of a post, so I figured I'd go with an old classic.

Some of you might enjoy this little time-killer. Just thought I'd share with you one of my links that keep me entertained.

Well time to have another one of Andy's cookies.

Posted by Sideshow in Personal Entry at 15:44

Thursday, October 6, 2005

Creation

I know there are a lot of versions of this, but I thought this one was worth posting:

Server Message: [Server registered to lobby. IP: 777.777.777]

Server Message: [Log on: EARTH]

Server Message: [Admin status granted to: god]

god: omg
god: this is ****ing gay

Server Message: [God makes light]

god: omg its good

Server Message: [god makes more ****]

god: omg its good
god: brb

Status Change: god (Away)

god: kback

Status Change: god

god: k im lonely ;_;

[adam joins server: EARTH]

adam: omg animalz
god: omg who da **** r u
adam:dood im man in ur image
god: k

Server Message: [god takes rib from adam]

adam: omg wtf

[eve joins server: EARTH]

eve: asl
adam: 26/m/e
eve: kewl cyber?
adam: k
eve: holdon ima get sum fruit

[satan joins server: EARTH]

satan: sup
eve: omfg who r u
satan: eet frute k?
eve: k

god: omg wtf
god: ****ing noobs
satan:ur a noob
god: stfu

Server Message: eve has been kicked from: EARTH

Admin Message: [lololpwn]

Server Message: adam has been kicked from: EARTH

Admin Message: [omfg lolol pwnt]

Server Message: satan has been kicked from: EARTH

Admin message: [LOL!!!11]

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 11:06

Tuesday, September 20, 2005

A Mighty Fortress

Dmitriy (from inter-net-solutions) put up some pictures of his vacation in Turkey. I thought that you guys might find them interesting, but I haven't moved them to the gallery yet. So here's the link:

http://inter-net-solutions.com/~dkaloshin/some_my_vacation_pictures/

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 14:21

Thursday, August 11, 2005

Wedding Pics

For anyone who cares, there are new pics up in the gallery--the marvelous marriage of Daboo and the Mad Giggler. Come! Partake!

Posted by Daboo in Personal Entry at 15:07

So..."interesting" morning on my end...how about the rest of you?

(09:37:43) TML: Do you know what ph34r is?

(09:37:53) Curtis: fear

(09:38:41) Curtis: what is fear?

(09:40:10) TML: fear is when you're cruising down I-15 at 70 MPH in the left hand lane with a ditch on your left and a concrete mixing truck to your right, and you lose your power steering.

(09:40:32) TML: I clenched muscles I never imagined I had

(09:40:55) Curtis: your life is very. . .interesting

(09:41:14) TML: wanna trade?

(09:41:24) Curtis: um, no

(09:41:32) TML: I could do with a lot less interesting.

(09:42:01) Curtis: I can imagine

(09:42:49) TML: *click* *brdbrdbrdbrdbrd* *thunk*

WAAAGGGHGHGHH!!!!

(09:43:41) TML: pleasedontletmedieherepleasedontletmedieherePLEASEDONTLETMEDIEHERE
iwannalivecmonyocandoitjustslowdownkeepthewheelstraightbutgetslowdownbeforetheroadcurves
dontdiedontdiedontdie

(09:44:25) Curtis: gotta keep that heart pumping somehow

Posted by Ancient of Days in Personal Entry at 09:37

Thursday, July 28, 2005

Walking To Moriah

We were five small figures moving among the shimmering waves of heat that rose from the desert floor. Dust kicked up by my old, shuffling feet, and by the donkey's hooves, covered our sweating faces. One of the young men, my son, looked over at me, a concerned look on his face, but I didn't respond. I walked with my head bowed, shoulders hunched. Every movement was pain, and my thoughts were far away, back in the land of my childhood.

I remembered my father's curses vividly, the curses that he had screamed at me the day that I left my father's house to find God. I had always known God. Not the gods my father knew, Elkanah, Libnah, Mahmackrah, Korash, and the various gods of the Pharaoh, no I knew, or thought I knew, the true God, the living God, the God who didn't need golden images to show His majesty, for the Earth itself showed His power. I'm not sure how I came to know that God, but as I walked from my father's house that day, I knew that I could not follow the ways of my fathers. I would, I decided, go to the house of the King of Peace, the great high priest, and I would learn from him. And so, despite my father's curses, I walked from the house to seek God wherever I might find Him.

Long shadows followed us and the heavily-laden donkey when we stopped for the night. As night fell, the young men sat around the fire, eating, talking and laughing. Even though two of them are my servants, I have always treated them well, if not always as friends, at least as equals. They love my son, the son of my old age. He is their friend, and, they know, he always will be. Even those who don't like their young master have to admit that he is loving, and unbelievably loyal.

I didn't join them at the fire. I huddled against a boulder nearby. I refused food, and sat, brooding. Every now and then, I stared up into the low-hanging stars, and a careful observer might have noticed tears in my eyes. God was up there. I knew it, perhaps better than any man living. I had spoken with God many times; people called me the friend of God. "I might be God's friend," I thought, "but is He mine?" Despite my years, my sight was still clear. I looked up at the stars, and began reciting their names, the names that God had taught me. It was calming.

Again, my thoughts drifted back to earlier days. After years of study, searching, and striving, I found God. Maybe, more accurately, God found me. I returned to my father's house. I was surprised by the welcome that I received. Everything had seemed better. He hadn't screamed curses at me; he kept his religion to himself, and left my religion alone. One morning, though, I woke to find a priest of Elkanah, and four heavily armed guards standing in my chamber. Strong arms bound me with heavy cords. The priest cautioned the guards against being overly rough, though, saying, "Elkanah will not accept damaged goods." The memory of the priest's words jarred me back into the present. "Once," I muttered, "I thought that I could say that I knew what God would and would not accept. Now, I do not know. Once, I thought I knew God. Now, I can't say."

I glanced over my shoulder. The fire had burned low. My son, and the servants were asleep, careless as the stars wheeled overhead, confident in the care and protection of God. Would He protect them? I couldn't say. I can't be sure of anything now. Slowly, painfully, I got to my feet, and walked over to the fire. I laid there, near my son, tossing and turning, but the memories came back, and wouldn't let me sleep.

The guards dragged me through the pre-dawn darkness toward the hill called Potiphar's Hill. As they left my father's house, I saw my father, standing by the door. I called out, pleading for help, but my father just nodded to the priest, and turned away from me. We soon reached our destination: the Temple of Elkanah, at the head of the plain of Olishem. There, I was cast into prison to await, along with others, my turn to be sacrificed to Elkanah's insatiable thirst. There were many of us in those cells. Some were young children, sold by their parents to pay debts, or given to the gods in an attempt to gain their favor. Some were slaves who had offended their masters. All of us stood in awe, though, in the presence of the daughters of Onitah.

They were princesses, beautiful virgins who were to be sacrificed because they refused to bow down to gods of wood or stone. Somehow, amid the squalor of the prison, they remained clean. None of the fear that haunted the rest of us seemed to touch them. I will always remember the day that the priests came to take them away. I hid my face in my hands as they were bound to the altar. I heard them cry out to God in prayer; over the noise, I heard their screams as the knife of Elkanah pierced them. In my mind, I saw their beautiful faces distorted by the rictus of death. That image, will I see it on my son's face? Will I hear his voice begin to pray, and then listen as his words die under the knife?

I don't know when I fell asleep, but morning came long before I was ready for it. My limbs felt heavy. I pushed forward,

as if against a heavy weight, moving ever nearer to Moriah. Why? Why God? What have I done? What has he done? Isn't there some other way? Night came without any answer. My questions drowned in the darkness, and once again, my memories came to haunt my attempts to sleep.

A few days after Elkanah drank the blood of the daughters of Onitah, my turn arrived. The priests dragged me from my cell. As the hot morning sun shone down, they bound me to the altar. Sweat ran off me, wetting the blood that clung to the altar, so that it felt sticky against my back. As the priest raised his knife, I called out to God, hoping that my prayers would have greater effect than the prayers of the daughters of Onitah. I watched as the knife began to descend, and then, through the din of the ceremony, I heard His voice. He spoke to me, and opened my eyes to His visions, and His angel stood beside me. I felt the bands fall from my hands and feet. The priest dropped his knife with a clatter, shaking before the power of the true God. Moments later, he collapsed, never to rise again in this life. The gods that stood watch over the altar fell before Him, smashed into dust. The altar cracked, and fell into pieces. I walked as if in a dream. The crowd parted before me, wailing, and I left that land.

We left the servants at the bottom of the mountain with the donkey, and went on, just me, and my son. I carried the firepot and the knife. He carried the wood. Once, just as we began the climb, he asked, "Father, where is the lamb for the burnt offering?"

My voice broke when I replied. "My son, God will provide himself a lamb for the burnt offering."

Atop Mount Moriah, I began building my altar. "God, is this what you saved me for? You let so many die, but you saved me. Did you save me just so that I could follow in the fouled footsteps of my father, and try to kill my own son? What about all of the promises? How am I to become the father of many nations if you tell me to kill my own heir?" The stones seemed to fit themselves together without my help, but the voice of God, that voice which had comforted me so many times in the past, remained silent, and my son watched in puzzlement as I began to weep.

I untied the bundle of wood, and stacked it upon the altar. Then, taking the cords that had bound the wood, I turned to my son. He could have run. I wouldn't have been able to catch him. He could have fought against me. I wouldn't have been able to overcome him. He just looked at me, tears in his eyes, and a question on his lips, "Father, is there no other way?"

I looked down at my son, lying bound on the altar. In his eyes, I saw my own memories of him, my joy at his birth, the incredible pride I felt when he first began to walk, and to talk, the pain that I felt as I watched him struggle. Once again, my thoughts went to God. He called me His son. How could he ask this of any father? Could he not hear my pleas? Was He now as deaf and dumb as my father's idols? I listened for the voice that had guided me so many times in the past, but all I heard was a deafening silence. Looking down at my son, my only son, my heir, I raised the knife, and braced myself against his scream. It was then that I heard the voice, calling my name, "Abraham, Abraham."

"Yes, I am here."

"Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me." With that voice came comfort, and the knowledge that God would never take my son from me. Though He Himself would have to sacrifice His Only Begotten Son, that would not be required of me. God would provide himself a lamb for the offering.

Posted by Johnny Elbows in Personal Entry at 16:12

Thursday, July 21. 2005

Ramblings (For Lack of Something Better)

It's been far too long since anyone posted anything longer than a few lines. I guess everyone is suffering Potter-itis. Today is really the first day I've been able to think about much else. Ok, that's not entirely true. But I started reading Dune this morning on the train, so my brain has moved on from the Chosen One to the Kwisatz Haderach, at least as far as reading material goes.

I'd write more about video games, but I'm still mostly playing NFL 2K5. I think everyone has heard enough about football for the time being. I mean, the NFL season doesn't start for another seven weeks (college football, of course, starts a bit earlier - go Utes!). The only other game I've played lately is Jade Empire and it's difficult to discuss Bioware RPG's in any depth without giving away the plot. Fortunately, my home has been blessed with high-speed internet today, so I can get my Counter-Strike groove going again.

In unrelated news, Radar and I were discussing posting all the latest happenings of Jackle, Nalathisor, Kitya, Maxwell, Azrael, Rath, and Urfengar to the homestarmy. Since Glim and Llan can no longer meet up to continue their "Conversations" series, I figure we need an easy way to recap what's happened lately. People could even post journal entries from their character's point of view.

P.S. Andy (Kermit) is almost done with The Half-Blood Prince, so everyone can start posting spoilers tomorrow.

P.P.S. Wren will love this billboard.

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 13:29

Prosper and Wash

Well, it seems that I've become a cat farmer. I am the proud new owner of two boy kittens (named Prosper and Wash) as well as hundreds of new digital pictures of them.

Now, if we can keep Nokie from eating them to secure her powerbase, we can start branching out into lions, tigers, jaguars, leopards, and cheetahs.

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 11:16

Tuesday, July 19. 2005

Yes

That would be correct, oh Ancient of Days.

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 10:16

Thursday, July 7, 2005

Executive Order

I'm sorry, but I have to put a moratorium on the nickname Muffy. For those of us who are corrupt and have soiled minds, there are bad connotations. It has been proposed that Sgt. Muffin be turned in for Wren until a true nickname or nom de plume surfaces.

From wikipedia:

The true wrens are members of a New World passerine bird family Troglodytidae containing 55 species.

A troglodyte means a cave-dweller, and wrens get their scientific name from the tendency of some species to forage in dark crevices. They are mainly small and inconspicuous except for their loud songs. These birds have short wings and a thin down-turned bill. Several species often hold their tails upright. All are insectivorous.

Only one wren, Troglodytes troglodytes, known as the Winter Wren in North America, also occurs in Europe, where it is commonly known simply as the Wren.

According to European folklore, the Wren is the King of the Birds. Long ago the birds held a contest to see who could fly the highest; at first it looked as though the Eagle would win easily, but just as the Eagle began to tire, the Wren crept out from under the Eagle's tail feathers and soared far above. The wren's majesty is recognized in such stories as the Grimm Brothers' The Willow-Wren and the Bear.

The small, stump-tailed Wren is almost as familiar as the Robin. It is small and mouse-like, easily lost sight of when it is hunting for food, but is found everywhere from the tops of the highest moors to the sea coast.

Its movements as it creeps or climbs are incessant rather than rapid; its short flights swift but not sustained, its tiny round wings whirring as it flies from bush to bush.

It is a bird of the uplands even in winter, vanishing into heather when snow lies thick above, a troglodyte indeed. It frequents gardens and farms, but it is quite as abundant in thick woods and in reed-beds.

When annoyed or excited its call runs into an emphatic churr, not unlike clockwork running down. Its song is a gushing burst of sweet music, loud and emphatic. It has an enormous voice for its size.

Individuals vary in volume as well as quality of song. The song begins with a few preliminary notes, then runs into a trill, slightly ascending, and ends in full clear notes or another trill. At all and any season the song may be heard, though most noticeable during spring.

At night, usually in winter, it often roosts, true to its name, in dark retreats, snug holes and even old nests. In hard weather it may do so in parties, either consisting of the family or of many individuate gathered together for warmth.

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 09:24

Tuesday, June 28, 2005

Hi, I'm a real limerick!

There once was a Giggler named Curtis
Whose poetry basked in absurdness
Though his meter is odd
We must give him a nod
As with rhyming he's sure to out-nerd us.

Posted by Daboo in Personal Entry at 11:11

Monday, June 27, 2005

Radar is Going to the Mall

Radar is going to go to the mall.
There he will have a dinner not small.
Of his chicken nuggets, he will eat all.
For that is how he became so tall.

Yet that is not why his pate is hairless.
No, that story is quite another mess.
He once fed a man to the monster in Loch Ness
For revealing the secrets behind his baldness.

I am not a man so brave.
Peace and security are things I crave.
Rhythm and meters are things I save
For those more deserving, not this knave.

But rhyming is something in which I delight.
It tickles my fancy and makes my thoughts take flight.
Not getting silly, however, try as I might,
Is something for which I must always fight.

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 17:28

Friday, June 24, 2005

Math Jokes

A physicist, a biologist, and a mathematician were having lunch at a cafe. They watched two people enter the building across the street. A bit later, they see three people exit.

The physicist deduces, "The measurement was inaccurate."

The biologist proclaims, "They reproduced."

The mathematician then suggests, "Now if one more person enters the building it will be empty."

Well, the Homestarmy blog is now up and running. Please reply to this article using the comments field below if you want me to set up a username/password for you.

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 13:03