

REFRIGERATOR

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#19
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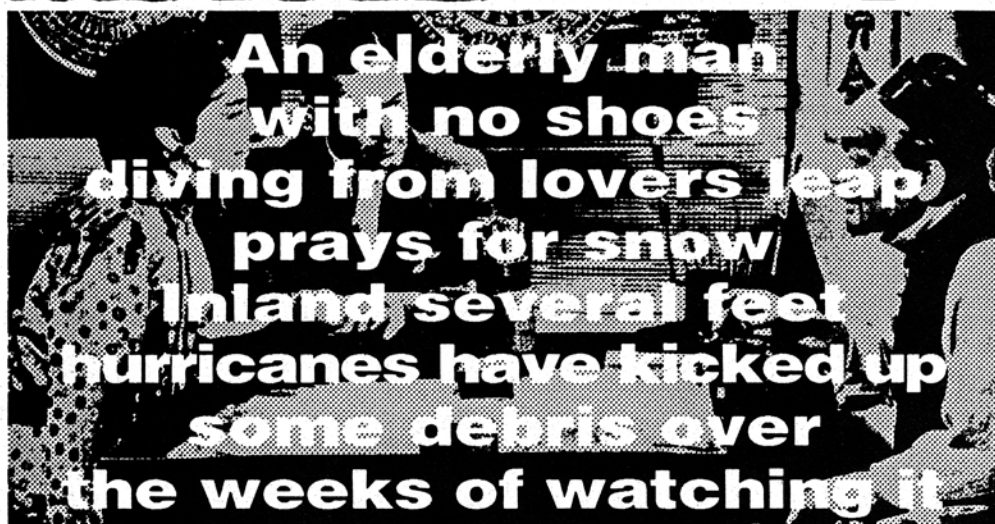


It'd been a long day and the happy hour beers weren't settling too well; I was all gassed up and felt like what I really needed was to flush out the system and reload with something stimulating. I left the bar and went across the street to my friend Marie's juice bar. With a nod to Marie I ducked past the counter and went into the restroom. No one was inside so I didn't feel guilty putting my cash card into the slot on the door of the Kenelley Purge Booth. The keypad lit up and I input my PIN #. The door slid open.

I don't know if you've used one of these things yet but they have really started to get the kinks out so you don't have to worry about the horror stories you may have heard. Marie's is the latest model. Inside I put my elbows on the rail and the door slid shut. I took a tongue depressor from the dispenser, bent over the rail and shoved it up my throat.

The booth is lit by a soft sunrise blue light and has a steady breeze inside with a subtle tang of salt air to it. After I was done I felt a subliminally comforting voice that seemed to ask if I was feeling better. A flow of clear clean water flushed away my overindulgence and the air momentarily swelled to a bracing gale before subsiding. I took the moist towelette from the dispenser, passed my hand in front of the door sensor and waited. A voice said, "the coast is clear" and the door opened.

At the counter I leaned my elbows on the tie-dye formica and ordered a Green Monster. Marie smiled as she dumped a handful of wheatgrass into the blender full of electrolyte solution thickened with a dollup of Simplesse. "Feeling better?" she asked as she added the packet of memory enhancers and creativity spinners. I was and I smiled and nodded yes.



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The Refrigerator is published about 10 times a year. Contributions are welcome. All contributions are kept anonymous (but at least we admit it). Subscriptions are available for \$10 a year. Price includes postage, a Refrigerator magnet and a Refrigerator card that gives you a discount on Refrigerator-sponsored events. Back issues are not available.

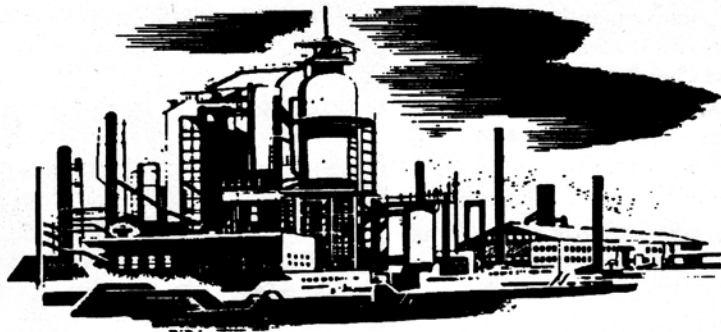
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REFRIGERATOR

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ROCHESTER IN



THE NEXT CENTURY

Virtual Rochester, our temporary tagline for Smugtown in the next century is based on the concept of virtual reality. We are asking Refrigerator readers to look to the future, to create a virtual Rochester now. From the artificial reality in the minds of Refrigerator readers we will shape a vision of our town in the 2000's. Don't be afraid.

Your letters, articles, artwork and commentary on "Rochester In The Next Century" will be the foundation of our Special 20th Issue. We provide the forum and you provide the form for our future. As usual, all contributions to the Refrigerator will be kept anonymous and letters will be published with names unless we are instructed otherwise.

Think Globally But Act Locally. At least one city councilman subscribes to the Refrigerator and Mayor Ryan is said to have been disappointed with "Vision 2000", the high priced outside consultant's version of our city's future. He has also been a fan of this publication since we featured him at the counter of Donuts Delite in Issue #12.

NINJA HUGH

It's pretty strange when you realize that a person that you take for granted is not what they appear to be; is in fact so very far from what they appear to be as to become almost mythic when the daily mask they wear is pulled away by fate. It makes you wonder about everyone you know and even those you don't, those strangers that you take in with a glance and forget in an instance. Are we surrounded by extraordinary beings all the time?

My friend Hugh is one of those friends you might describe as mutual. He is a mutual friend, someone I know through others. Now that I've witnessed his transformation I realize that he is in fact, everyone's mutual friend and no one's (that I am aware of) personal friend. Quiet and unassuming but very sharp and cheerful, he is not the Clark Kent type of character. He knows how to socialize and has the knack of inspiring respect and appreciation in everyone he meets. This fact alone would make him an extraordinary person were it not for the other fact that you don't see him long enough to notice his extraordinariness. He is skilled at elusiveness.

Sandy haired, usually in need of a shave, an avid runner and biker, occasional musician, round glasses, former owner of a VW bug, single...these qualities are shared by many in my circle. He is skilled at remaining himself and still being one of the group.

One time I asked him about teachers and he told me a long story about his dog which I cannot for the life of me remember. Somehow we ended up talking about Boulder, Colorado and how it is one of those places that seems like the perfect place to live until you go there and then it is a great place to visit. Great places to live often aren't and this might explain why so many of us live in Rochester, an OK place to live. Boulder is filled with people in training because of the altitude and veggie restaurants and Buddhists and something happened to Hugh in Boulder.

A whole bunch of us were outside of a bar downtown after Hugh got back from trying to live there. We were waiting for the bad opening band to finish playing. It was warm and there was a girl down the street carrying a guitar in from her car. She was about a block away when a figure came running out of an alley and wrenched the guitar from her hand, knocking her down. The assailant ran towards us, then appeared to change his mind and turned down a side street. We were all yelling and running when there was a sudden ear-piercing screech from the block behind us. For a moment there was total confusion. I ran to the girl and asked her if she was alright. She nodded. The others had spread out looking for the assailant and were now returning, unsuccessful. It was then that I noticed two strange things. The guitar was sitting on the sidewalk in front of the bar. And Hugh was gone.

Later on I asked him what had happened. He said he went after the crook but couldn't catch him so he stopped and smoked a cigarette which is what he usually does after a run. He says you can taste it better. It has something to do with opening up the pores in your lungs. He said all the Buddhist runners in Boulder do it but I think he was kidding. He's good at that too.

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CHARLES MINGUS

Charlie Mingus played jazz but didn't just play jazz. His music would often sound just plain musical. He has been dead for a while. He was almost dead when Joni Mitchell did her tribute thing. This *Weird Nightmare* album is like a good made-for-TV, Sunday night movie about a real, sensational subject. The one this past Sunday about the Texas cheerleaders was really bad. Remember how good Glen Frey and Tim Curry were in the Wise Guy series about the music industry? These musicians (Charlie Watts, Dr. John, Chuck D, Keith Richards, Elvis Costello, Ray Davies, and Henry Rollins,) are a lot of fun to listen to as they make Mingus sound less like jazz. And there's poetry read to music like in those GAP bluejean ads on TV.

KEITH RICHARDS

Keith writes and sings some very gentlemanly like songs on *Main Offender*. He rocks all right but Steve Jordan is not as hot as Charlie Watts and that took me a while to get past but Keith's rhythm guitar playing is the best in the world.

NEIL YOUNG

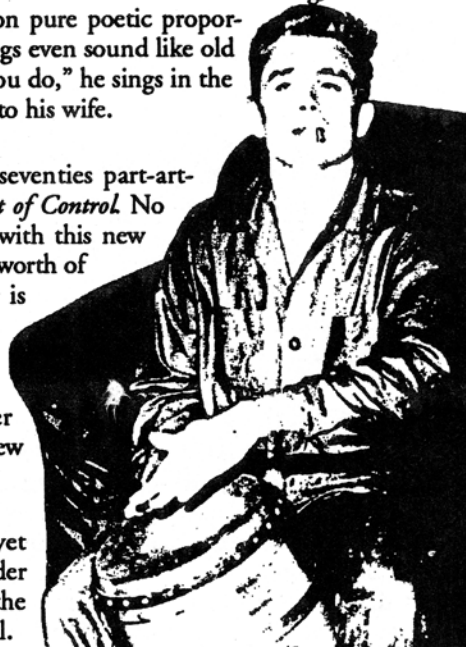
I bought this one while I was out of town. I was staying in a hotel room with my sister and her eight year old daughter. They were reading bedtime horror stories in unison on the other bed and I was reading the liner notes to this *Harvest Moon* cd. In this setting, and without hearing the cd, the lyrics in the first song took on pure poetic proportions. This one sounds like an old friend. The songs even sound like old Neil Young songs. "No one else can kill me like you do," he sings in the beautiful *Such A Woman*. The album is dedicated to his wife.

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TOM WAITS

Bone Machine is Tom Waits' best album yet and Tom Waits has some incredible albums under his belt. Generally speaking, the older he gets the better he sounds — and that in itself is inspirational.



THE ULTIMATE INSULT

"This is unbearable!" said the Countess. "It is unbearable. It is the ultimate insult."

"Please, Countess," I begged, "what was said?" I had not heard what had been said.

"He will pay!" the Countess intoned. "He will wish he had never been born."

The governor had insulted the Countess, to be sure. But what had been said? And, perhaps more importantly, how could the situation be handled with a minimum of unpleasantry. It was my duty to find out.

"The Countess is a fool," decreed the Governor. "You know this as well as I."

"Is that what you said to her, Governor?" I asked. "Surely you did not say so to her."

"Ha!" laughed the Governor. "Ha, ha, ha!"

Mrs. Zeel had attended the party that night, and it was said that she had been standing close by when the Countess took offense.

"I heard nothing," she maintained when I inquired of her. "I heard nothing until the Countess gasped. And I caught her when she fainted."

Though none came forward to admit that they had heard the Countess insulted, rumors as to the nature of the insult abounded. Many of these centered around her physical appearance. Recent weight gain, faulty hair coloring were mentioned. Cosmetic surgery and various implants were hinted at.

An equal amount of rumor centered around allegations of a multitude of improper and unbecoming behaviors. Romantic liaisons were suggested. Political intrigue, financial impropriety, and even criminal activity was inferred.

Still others believed that an even more profound criticism had been leveled. A multitude of hereditary imperfections were mentioned. Family histories (dark secrets included) had been bandied about. Sinister allegations floated to the surface, many too unsavory to be repeated.

Still, none admitted to actually hearing the Governor's insult. Perhaps none had.

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into my thoughts, you want to delve. friends in passing — you claim I am transparent. you can see right through me...you know me. on occasion sure, I've said what's on my mind. small talk, idle conversation. never do I reveal though, what I am thinking about — what's going on in my thought kitchen. time and time again you try to make your way, upstairs into my philandering mind. I've shown you the kitchen from the outside, but won't allow you to come in and sit at my breakfast nook. into my deviance. my depression. my anger. I hint every so often of — the perversity. the pornography. the sarcasm. but never do I let down the wall completely. the wall you said was a self-made enigma. I tell you only the things you need to know, the words I care to share. you call me selfish because I won't let you in. I can't allow you to alphabetize my spice rack. nor can I give you the recipes inside my cook book. these complications are such — they are similar. similar to, trying to find a can opener in the chaotic realms, of an unorganized kitchen. It's easier to divert you away from the dark thoughts, lurking within my moodiness. I recognize the psychotic monstrosity. but I do not need anyone, to clean my dirty kitchen.

TRY THIS AT HOME

My first experience with home taping occurred early in life, sitting on my father's knee, in the kitchen, and talking into a small black box with a wire running to another box. He pressed some buttons and the next thing I heard was, what we had just said into that little black box (microphone). The session erupted into a lot of goofy sounds and laughter on tape. As a kid, I played around with an old wire recorder a neighbor was throwing out because "you couldn't buy new

wire for it anymore". This thing was like a tape recorder except it recorded on wire. A reel to reel set up. It didn't last too long because the wire snarled often like fish line on a bad cast.

I grew up listening to AM radio. What a revelation it was to learn that the band playing the music wasn't really down at the radio station! A whole other world existed inside that speaker.. By placing a microphone in front of the speaker and being real quiet I would record my favorite songs from the radio and listen to them when I wanted to. Dark turned to light with the idea of line-in/line-out and a friend showed me how he could record songs on his 8-track deck and not have to worry about room sound. Some of my earliest demos were recorded with two cassette decks, building tracks by playing back the previous track through the other deck.

In high school I had the luck to meet up with Greg Townson. I've always known Greg to have a deep passion for music and bands. He's been like a rudder regarding the direction of the band over the years. I got a kick out of recording rehearsals, shows, etc. Then the day came when a friend of a friend lent us his 4-Track...We recorded a bunch of our own songs, track by track, sound by sound, song by song. We mixed the songs down and had a tape we could play for our friends, family and ourselves. I've been enamored with the process since.

I ended up writing and recording a bunch of songs that weren't right for the band and *The Squires Of The Subterranean* were born. Charles Lockwood from *The Charlies* told me that there was a whole culture of home recording artists out there.

Cassette culture found its way to my mailbox after a pleasant review of *Royal Slumber* (the Squires' second tape) appeared in Option Magazine. Terry Burke, a cassette artist himself, wrote to see if I'd be up for trading tapes. At the moment Terry is compiling a tape of 1 minute and 30 second radio/TV "spots" called ...*And Now A Word From Our Sponsor...* Everyone who submits, receives a copy.

Through Terry I hooked up with two rich sources in the cassette culture. Ooh! Ooh! Music/Pop Cult Funzine* is real special (tape reviews and tapes for a mere buck!!) Thematic compilations. Funny fiction, social commentary, cartoons). Don Campau (KFR)** hosts a radio show in Cupertino, California. His format is all home recording artists. 4-Trackers the world over have an opportunity to communicate with each other through his KFR catalog. Both of these folks have large catalogs of tapes and artists. This is Indie music at its most fundamental level. The styles run as diverse as commercial markets, maybe even wider since the artist is closer to the process. Networking has been fun.

There are quite a few cassette artists here locally. Just check out the selection at the Bop Shop, Godiva's, Record Time, and the Archive. Local faves include John Bartles,

Koo Koo Boy, Pete La Bonne, The Charlies but there are many others here in town that I just haven't heard yet.

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"The very last thing that I want to do is to say I've been bittin' some hard travelin', too." Bob Dylan, "Song for Woody"

When the anonymous editors of the Refrigerator contacted me, requesting that I anonymously contribute an article on the current spate of Bob Dylan events, I thought, "Why not?". I've listened to Mr. Dylan all my life, and probably care more about his music than anyone else's. I've read most of what has been written about him, and have spent countless hours listening to his songs. I'm a fan.

But after giving it a little thought, I realized that I probably wouldn't be able to shed much light on the subject. Not that I hadn't done my homework. I had attended last month's show at the Eastman, and later listened to a bootleg tape of that performance. I bought the new album and listened to it several times. I watched a video of the pay-per-view Tribute Concert that aired a while back. I was confused.

The Eastman show was strange. Bob brought along two drummers, when, judging from the fact that his most successful numbers were those on which he performed solo, it could be argued that none were necessary. He projected his usual cold-as-ice rock star persona, and led his band through a record number of extended false endings. His acoustic numbers, and particularly a song about Moses, were affecting. But the band numbers were arranged without the benefit of imagination, and Dylan's voice was reminiscent of the sound you get when you slowly let the air out of a balloon.

Still, people loved the show. "It was the best I'd ever seen him," one satisfied fan contended. "Every other time I'd seen him, he was awful."

He was pretty awful most of the times I'd seen him, too. Like the first time, on his Rolling Thunder tour. I had hitchhiked all the way from New York City to Springfield, Massachusetts to see the show, and when it was over, I hitchhiked all the way back. All this to hear Bob, Joan and a herd of also rans revel in their celebrity. And what can be said of his last two Finger Lakes outings? The less the better.

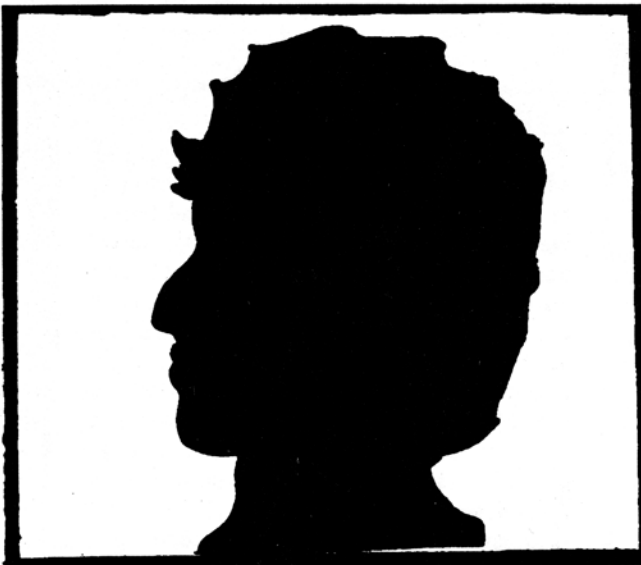
But I've seen him put on some good shows, too. The best of these, in retrospect at least, was at the Loew's Theatre in Syracuse in 1980. He was on his Gospel Tour. "Solid Rock," "Slow Train Coming," and "In the Garden," were all delivered by a crack band and three female gospel singers, with Dylan singing his heart out. (Several years later, a friend gave me a copy of a book that compiled his "sermons" from that period. Very inspiring, believe it or not). And at SPAC a

few years ago, with Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers, he was pretty good, too. He opened with a killer rendition of Ray Charles

NOTES ON BOB DYLAN

"Unchain My Heart," which I remember with great fondness unto this very day.

The Eastman show, though, wasn't as good as the good memories, and wasn't as bad as the bad memories. As a member of the audience, I was moved only to observe, never to offer up my heart for alterations. I couldn't help but compare it to a concert by Jonathan Richman at X last year. Richman got totally involved in his music — he sang as



if in a trance. It was a great experience to see a human being so inspired, and the inspiration was contagious. Nothing like that happened, as far as I can tell, at the Eastman.

Still he did a good job with acoustic stuff (though to tell you the truth, he could've left off "It's Alright, Ma" and I wouldn't have missed it) and, like I said, that song about the baby Moses was great. Live, he's always had a way with cover songs...

Which I guess brings us to this new record. It sounds like a great idea: Bob Dylan, his voice and harmonica, recorded live in the studio. Like on his first album, released about three decades ago. That first lp had but one original: The above-quoted "Song for Woody." The new one has one less.

The most surprising comparison between the two records, though, is that on the old one the singing is — get this — more affected! Check it out if you don't believe me! Listen to "Pretty Peggy O" for instance (much improved, by the way, by the Eastman show's live version). It's pretty funny. There's nothing nearly as laughable on this new one.

At first the sound throws you, though — it's a little muddy, shall we say, in the lower registers. Maybe the engineer thought he had an electronic cure for that nasal whine that has become Bob's voice. But as any sound man will readily tell you, "your ears can adjust" to almost anything, and after awhile, that bassiness gets taken for granted and forgotten, leaving the listener to concentrate on

loftier concerns.

The songs are great, of course — they're folk songs after all. "Froggy Went A Courtin'" is the likely favorite here, but there's a bunch of good ones, and after several listenings, there aren't any I don't like. At first I thought that "Frankie & Johnny" was kind of a foolish choice, but was later convinced, after listening to all the verses (some of which I had never heard before), that it was indeed a powerful cut. Likewise is "Tomorrow Night," which finds Bob crooning in a Self Portrait vein.

The songs are thick, which is to say, they withstand a lot of listening. And the more you listen, the more truths these humble folksongs seem to uncover. To a degree, that is; I do not mean to imply that an infinite number of truths can be gleaned here. If so, the \$13.95 selling price would be a bargain indeed.

And Dylan's voice is, if not pleasant, at least expressive. Real expressive. The little guy carries a lot of weight.

Let's see, the live show, the album ... right: The pay-per-view. That was really strange. The crowd was very hostile to that Irish girl who ripped up a picture of the pope on TV the week before. They really let her have it! Brought her to tears! Not that she didn't deserve it. But it was still a little scary to see the ugly mob rise its head in a venue the size of the Garden. A little compassion might have been in order. Especially at a party.

It was a fun concert to watch, all in all, especially on video tape, where you can turn it off occasionally, say if you want to get a bite to eat, or if you get a phone call, or if the kids ask you to come up to their room to look at something. Video concerts! I think they've got something there!

Before we get to the music, a word about the stage hands: Stage hands are a fine group of people. They work hard. They take a lot of shit and get little credit. Forget Bob and George and Neil and Eric! The real stars of the show are the stage hands!

Next comes the back-up band, Booker T and the MGs. Amazing! They learned all those songs, remembered the arrangements, and kept the whole thing together so the big stars would look good. They're real professionals — real American heroes.

And lastly, the featured celebrity performers. Some were pretty good. Chrissie Hynde, for instance. She was great. Even in a real setting, like a bar, for instance, she would have sounded great. And Lou Reed, too; I bet Bob wishes he could still sing like that. And you know who else? Eric Clapton! I've never been a great fan of EC's but, he was good — as good as a local, if you know what I mean. I mean, even without the celebrity, which kind of serves as a safety net, he was good. When is he coming to Richmond's?

On the not-so-good side of things was Sophie B. Hawkins. I don't think her perfor-

mance would have gone over well at all, if she were an unknown playing at Richmonds. Milestones maybe, but not Richmond's. In fact she did some pretty strange things — things that we don't really do here in Rochester. She ran around in circles during the instrumental passages, which is rarely done here, and would probably be under appreciated. And she kind of fell to her knees at one point and it looked, I don't know, kind of phony, like she really didn't mean it, like she really wasn't all that emotionally involved. I thought she might start writhing around on the floor at one point, like in her video, but she didn't. I think she was considering it, though.

Neil Young wasn't so great, either. He had a look on his face like he expected any minute for someone to blow the whistle on him, and expose him as a no-talent celeb in farm clothes. Not that I feel this way, mind you — that's just the way he looked.

It was kind of interesting to observe the rock hierarchy at work here. The really big acts — that is, the really big acts from a long time ago — got to do two songs, while the newer acts and lesser lights were relegated to one. Roughly. I was a little miffed that what remains of The Band was relegated to one song even though three original members were alive and still in the group. That seemed a little unfair.

And I was a little surprised that George Harrison did not immediately precede the Man of the Hour — that honor was given to a worshipful Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers — though amends seemed to be made when the former Beatle was asked to introduce His Royal Bobhood, the Bard of Hibbing, Mr. Dylan himself.

As for Bob's own performance, to say that it was anticlimactic would be a vast understatement. The sickly whine that he conjured up for his first number, "Song for Woody," sounded like a cruel parody, something that you might hear on the comedy channel perhaps. And he looked strange, too. "Was that a smile or was that a grimace?" my wife wondered aloud at one point, and verily, it was impossible to tell for sure (though if I'd had to bet, I'd have put my money on the grimace). Surrounded by his admirers during the final everybody-on-stage rendition of "Knockin' On Heaven's Door," Dylan looked completely alone, carefully avoiding eye contact with any and all of his fellow minstrels.

What's going on here? Is Bob Dylan not well?

The clue is in his voice. Though it's always referred to as nasal, it's worse than that. His voice is constricted; it sounds as if his throat is trying to choke his words, as if his lungs are unwilling to offer up the breath to carry them.

I don't want to get too personal here but his voice conjures up pain, distrust, self-reproach, and dread.

I think maybe the great Bard of Hibbing has been fighting, lo these many years, a long and vicious battle with himself.

May the better man win.

FROM THE MIND OF MARK GROANING...

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(BACK)

A TUMBLIN' LIZARD PRODUCTION



Dear Refrigerator,

Do you, would you, could you know... how could you have any idea how much I want to contribute to the Refrigerator? It is so very inspiring to read because the contributions are made by actual living, intelligent people I've never met and surely don't exist in my world but I really don't think your staff just makes 'em up in your world of yours. You'll probably even print this entry with its run-on sentences and bad grammar — I don't even have to dare you. Can I have one of those magnets? Have I earned it by submitting this very much work of genius?

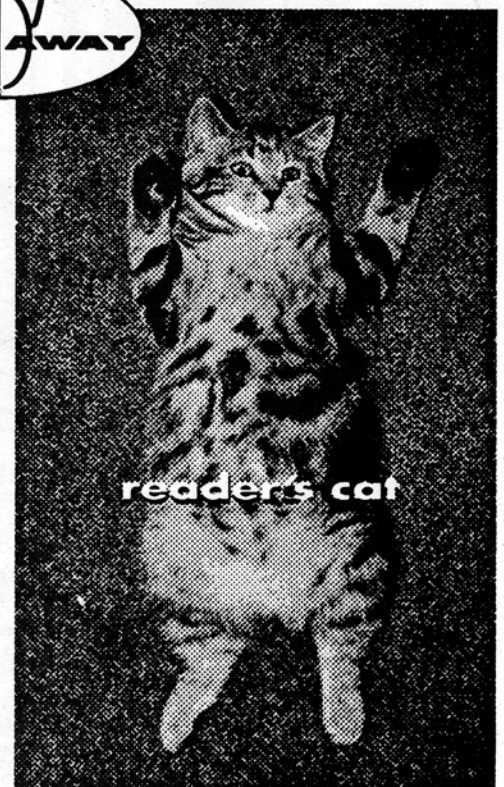
M.D.G.

Dear Refrigerator,

Enclosed are a couple of pieces that I etched out in the hopes they might interest someone. Hopefully you will find some uses other than dart targets for these sketches. Thanks for the great publication.

P.S. In light of the recent pumpkin season, I was wondering if anyone has ever had pumpkin seeds with soy sauce and dion mustard. A friend of mine takes this culinary delight to new heights.

dmm



REFRIGERATOR 7

Dear Refrigerator,

I've just started grad school here in town, and happened to pick up a copy of your 18th issue when stopping for ice cream at a Gelato's.

I consider myself a science geek (but not a *boring* science geek — there's a difference), a girl-next-door type, a goody two shoes", a good listener, an impatient person, a Christian, and yet I'm a firm believer in the importance of circumstance — of grey areas (vs. blacks and whites). Yeah, so my point is that I don't know what, exactly, I find attractive about your publication.

But all that doesn't really matter, I figure, as long as I know that I *do* want to become a subscriber. And so I'm enclosing the \$10 check that's required to make my dream come true. I look forward to getting issue #19 in my mailbox. Tak ska du har, Julie Ostberg

Dear Refrigerator,

Love to read your publication when I can nail one down. It's so "way out there"! Hope you accept "other side of the street" opinions, and will publish the article attached. Just so you moon people don't get your heads stuck in the ice cube tray. After all, we all like to have fun, don't we?

Sincerely, Sara Lou

Yeah, the Virgin Mary came to Rochester last night but you couldn't prove it by me. All bright and shining, telling Earthlings how to get real, so they could have lasting love and peace — I didn't see nothin but I heard her though.

I went to catch a snooze and I still had the earplugs in but I got the message.

I remember you racing through the rosary, and cracking up the other altar boys. You never really got to know me, did you? I don't care much for those big ideas you have been kicking around and you had better include me in your Vision 2000, because I'm here to stay. Since you still don't get it, I'm going to put you into orbit, just to show you what it's all about Alfie."

And there I was, free fallin' as though there were no bottom, and Newton and the apple never connected. Nothin' like hittin' paydirt off 390. Just a floating non-person. And there was Madonna flying by in her own little, lonely orbit, with her little whip; only she wasn't usin' it now — chokin' on somethin' around her neck; poor taste, I'd say! And the avenging angel, intoning: "You can't help someone who doesn't want to be helped — you can't save someone who doesn't want to be saved."

And here I was, still free-fallin', wishin' I had one little rosary bead to hang onto; and my mom callin' 911.

Right after that, there was a whoosh! and I fell flat on my face, connecting nose-first with an immovable object (probably the God-Lady); and my head cracked wide open, spilling its slimy contents all over Nowhere.

Geeze! What a Halloween nightmare! What a bad trip! Must have been somethin' I ingested last night!



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