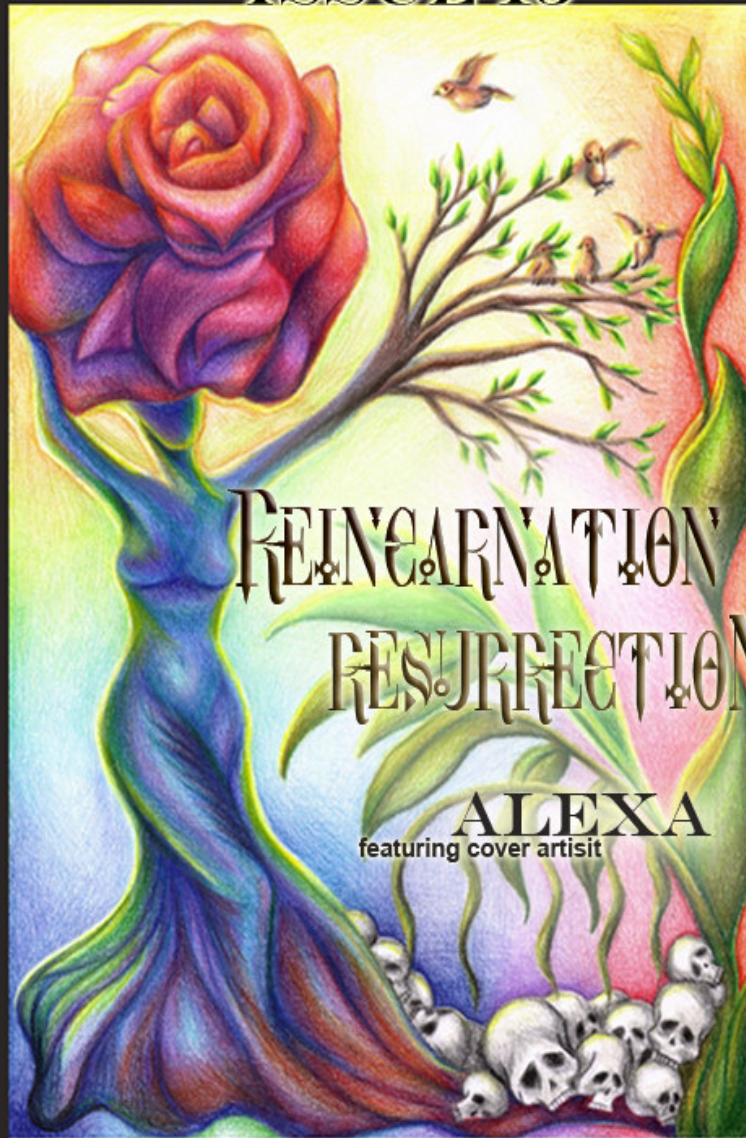


ISSUE 15



REINCARNATION
RESURRECTION

ALEXA
featuring cover artist

www.elftown.com official e-zine, The Town Herald, editor in chief Lerune

The Town Herald

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A Note from the Heralders

written by Mordigen

Well here we are again with a brand new edition of The Town Herald! I know that for a while now we at the Herald have been a bit sporadic with our new issues, but now we are back, on schedule and we have a fantastic issue for you with our Reincarnation and Resurrection theme! Even though our regular editor, the lovely and handy [Kaimee], has been out sick, our ever trust worthy staff has banded together, and worked hard to bring you some great new reviews and articles, along with several featured short stories to tempt your creative imagination. Over these past two months of working, we have done a lot around here trying to make things as clear and easy as we can for both the reader, and the Herald staff. We have recieved a few messages complaining that many people have tried contacting us, and never heard a response. We can't be more sorry for that! :(We have undergone many revamps, mostly behind the scenes revamps ;), but hopefully ones that will make things easier for our trusty readers. We have updated the Heralders page, so that now all Heralders listed are active and current full-time members, so now we hope to recieve every message from our readers without them going unopened and unreplyed, and have reintroduced the Town Herald Honourable Mentions to list and honour all of our past team members, special guests and guest writers and Artists. These changes and additions have helped strengthen the Herald and empty a lot of confusion, leaving us better able to put out a great magazine for you, and allows us to better stay one-on-one with all of you. We hope you enjoy this latest issue of the Herald, and look forward to hearing from you, and even seeing some of your work in the next issue!

P.S - Don't forget about our forum! <joinforum:177:union> (Town Herald : Come one, come all) 'The Town Herald, Come one, Come all!', The Poetry Corner, The Art Corner, or you can submit guest articles to any Heralders to see your own work featured in the next issue of The Town Herald!

—[Mordigen] & all the Heralders

Featured Artist : Alexa

Elftown Artist Alexa, by Mordigen



Our chosen featured Artist for this issue is none other than Elftown's own [Alexa]. A creative mind of many talents, [Alexa], a nineteen, soon-to-be 20-year-old artist from Switzerland, has developed an amazing and inspiring talent with graphite and paper. Ranging from fantasy to surreal masterpieces such as our featured cover to astounding portraitures, Alexa demonstrates her skill at blending traditional graphite and inks and her colours seem to jump off the page.

As an older member of Elftown, she has built up a rather large fan base and extensive collection of pieces, a selection of which can be found at Alexa's Pics and Alexa's Pics2. Her inspirations come from various sources, but are mostly focused on such fantasy and surreal pop culture icons as the Lord of the Rings and director Tim Burton's classic creations.

A versatile artist, her style can change from classical and traditional (as seen in her photograph-like portraits) to a remarkable contemporary and pop feel (found in her caricatures) to a beautiful renaissance-style rendering of many of her angel inspired subject to art nouveau pieces. Alexa miraculously blends all of these elements to create a self-defined style in her original, inspired pieces.

Her ability to combine different elements and sources of inspiration prove her to be an amazing, seasoned artist who can surely withstand the test of time as a force to be reckoned with.



Kudos to you, [Alexa], and congratulations and many thanks for being our featured cover artist this issue!



More about the Cover Piece

A beautiful surrealist-inspired piece, this cover illustrates a scene of life, death, growth and rebirth. Drawn in vibrant coloured pencils, the work comes to life and seems to pop off the page. It is a beautiful and fitting piece to introduce our "Reincarnation and Resurrection" issue of The Town Herald.

—[Mordigen]



Brought to you by the Poetry Corner Staff
and all the Contributing ET Members

"The Rebirth of She Who Remembers"

To hold the child as it cried
My heart felt numb and cold inside
A tear fell softly to the ground
A star was born with a shattering sound
Its brightness dimmed our own true sun
A warmth that brought and encouraged fun
The child looked up, its eyes shone bright
and held the beauty with its sight
I released my grasp,
The child flew free
It looked back and remembered me
-Cia_Mar

"As Death Descends, New Birth Arises"

Quietly slipping, fading, gone,
The breath of life depletes by dawn.
As the lifeless turns to dust and ashes,
A new life springs forth at the sun's first
lashes.

With differences set, determined, defined,
Metamorphosis of sorts, superbly refined.
A new physical form experiences birth,
'Til once again, it will join with the earth.
Each being meets with fate's demise,
Cocooning new life to spawn, give rise.
Artsie_Ladie

The Rise of the Phoenix

Lessons from our own lives,
Are the hardest ones to learn!
But we can rise above ourselves,
And let the bridges burn.
For time is life's great healer.
No teacher could have taught.
To live and love, and make mistakes,
And learn to judge them not.
Each act we take, each thought or deed,
Is mirrored in our souls!
And if we fall,
And if we're wise,
We learn to make new goals.
From the love of joy and innocence,
And wisdom born of pain,
The Phoenix Bird shall know herself,
And rise to live again!
And as she soars across the heaven,
With life anew, begun,
Thou shalt see Eternity,
And know the children of the sun.
-Grandamelf

"The Ghost Of Me"

Languishing behind her will
Yet she is here, beside me still
Her ghost within me still encased
The memory was ne'er erased.

I feel my time here slips away

The world in silent, faded gray
I am weak and small; ineffectual
Where is the girl who used to Rule?

Fear and memory haunt her step
Remembering in closets slept
Rage and anguish fill her eyes
No one sees her through my guise.

Perhaps in taming I've done wrong
And stilled her perfect, soaring song
Timid agreement became my choice
And now perhaps she's lost her voice.

Pain and sickness fill her gaze
Endless thoughts eat up my days
Life seems to be beyond her grasp
Pain comes again with every task.

Life fills me with its' sounds and taste
Hurry, Take hold! She cries in haste
Not wanting to, yet again, give in,
Her ghost still prompts me from within.
- Kaeirdwyn

The Art Corner brought to you by the Art Corner staff
and all contributing ET Members



Starting from top Left: Cia_mar 'Phoenix Rising', Kahri 'New Life', Cobi 'Warrior Incarnation', Cobi 'Reborn from Flames', Pnelma Tirian 'Prodigal Son'

The Poenix by Mirime

I stand on the pyre, tall and proud. Thus would I stand, even if there were not strips of hide holding me to the rough wooden pole at my back. I can feel the bark and scores left from the ax blade under my hands. Poor tree, that it should die for such a purpose! The wounded wood seems to be the only reality as the faces of the crowd and the village behind them fade away before my sight. On this throne, lifted above them, I stare out over the rooftops towards the mountains, and above them, the deep blue sky. Once I dreamed of brushing the clouds at the peak of the highest mountain, the mount of the gods. But no, there cannot be gods there. We are the forsaken...

Aillte lay beside me as we stared up at the sky. It was a clear, beautiful morning, and the dew had just begun to burn away under the sun. We were watching two eagles, circling about the crag above our heads. I sighed quietly, and he turned on his side to face me, seeming to know my mind.

"Don't fly away from me, Mithrael," he said softly, almost a question. I turned also, and smiled gently. "I won't. I promise. But... just watch them." I tilted my head up once more, finding the two birds once more in the vast embrace of the sky. We watched in silence for a moment longer.

"Eagles mate for life, did you know that?"

For life... ah, dear one, but what is life? Only this... memories rising and falling in my mind, birds on the wing that disappear over the horizon. I am sorry, Aillte... I must fly away from you.

Now the shouting grows louder, now they bring torches and set them to my dais of branches. Soon it will be over. I will not look down at them, at the flames that will soon rise. I will stare up at the sky, and remember.

The wise woman looked up from the waters of the fountain, her face unreadable. "What did you see?" I asked curiously, rubbing my hand where the fragment of shell had made a shallow cut. The woman on the other side of the shallow rock basin shook her head.

"It is not for me to say," she said quietly. I glanced down at the dark waters, but all I could see was the reflection of my face.

"Thank you," I said, hiding my disappointment. On Nuila's coming of age, the woman had foreseen a husband from across the hills, and soon after, my family had taken in an injured traveler who fell in love with my sister and taken her back to his home. I sighed, and added the ritual phrase. "As the gods will, so let it be."

The Elder looked at me gravely. "You have been given a hard road to walk, child." Carefully she dipped two of her fingers in the water and reached over to run them down my forehead in blessing. "Go with the peace of the gods." I turned silently and left, a thin line of holy water mixed with my blood marking my face.

What power did that blessing hold? I can smell the smoke, beginning at the very base of the pyre. Someone had strewn herbs and flowers there, and their acrid scent now fills the air. The wind gathers, whipping my hair and thin white shift about wildly, as if it would bear me away as easily as it carries the scent of burning blossoms. The smell reminds me of the ceremonial herbs the elders would burn at the Samhain celebrations. I tilt my head back and lean into the wind, closing my eyes, lost in the strange perfume.

The leaves had mostly fallen, and made a rich, multicolored blanket spread over the ground that seemed to flicker in the light of the Samhain bonfire. Nuila, who had traveled to visit our parents, was already dancing in the outer ring with her husband, their young child between them. I stood alone, watching the flames dance. They looked like a flock of birds, trying to rise from a nest of branches. Suddenly, a hand was resting on my shoulder and a soft voice said,

"Will you join the dance?" I turned and stared into the eyes of a tall, fair man. Wordlessly, I nodded, and he took my hands and drew me into the outer circle, then to the inner circle, the one closest to the flames. I took another's hand on the left side, and fell into the rhythm of dancing. Looking to my right, I could see him staring back at me. The only thing I was aware of was the touch of his hand and his eyes upon me. Endless we circled as the drums beat and the voices around us rose in a song to the spirits.

When the dancing was over, he followed me to the edge of the clearing as the bonfire slowly ebbed, and in

the early dawn he kissed me and whispered his name: Aillte.

Now the flames are rising, a mockery of the flames that once rose in my heart. I can see them, beginning to climb up the dais that holds the pole upright. There is little smoke. The wind, still strong, sends it across the hills, light and free. I thank it. I do not want to die without the sky before my vision, the same sky under which I pledged my love.

I stood under the arch of climbing vines, holding Aillte's hands. They had forbidden us to marry. My father had pledged me to the house of the priestess, in return for their support in the time of this famine.

Unable to consider such a future, I had fled from my house in the night.

Proudly around my neck I wore the pendant Aillte had given me when we pledged our love under the eyes of the Elder. Unaware of my father's decision, she had agreed to join us as one soul in sight of the gods. Really, she had only affirmed something I already knew in my heart to be true.

Time seems to slow and stretch, strangely distorted. I can feel the warmth now, and the air before me shimmers with the heat the flames send up before them. I throw my head back in silent agony as the searing flames reach my feet. I will not scream.

I did not scream when they came for us. Aillte leapt up, sword in hand, and I crouched behind him, holding my belt knife. The soldiers, seven in all, approached warily. Confused glimpses flashed before my eyes, accompanied by loud shouts, then three soldiers were lying dead, one with my dagger in his chest.

Two remaining held Aillte, unconscious, by the arms, while the others held me.

I saw his face as they pulled us apart. It was then that I knew there were no gods.

Even with my eyes shut I can see bright light flooding before me. The pain, the heat, engulfs my body. The straps crumble into ash, and my arms are free. With a last breath I reach up to the sky. Almost, I can touch it...

The man stood behind the stand of trees, concealed from the disorderly crowd. Through the tears that blurred his vision, he could see the pyre where Mithrael stood against the pole, her head raised proudly.

When the flames began to rise he hid his face against a tree in agony. Unable to look away, he soon raised his head once more. As the smoke spiraled away and the wind whipped the flames higher, he saw her reach up, as if to touch the sky. The flames surrounding her seemed to blossom outward, and suddenly there were flames rising free, dancing on the wind. Aillte blinked, and stared up at the sight, almost blinded. The flames shimmered, and began to pull together, leaving behind a trail of sparks.

Before the burning pyre, the villagers suddenly fell silent, staring up as the man among the trees was. The wind grew, whipping away bits of flaming bracken. The fire dancing in the air coalesced, and became a winged creature with brilliant feathers, trailing flames that never progressed up its plumage. The man sighed in a sudden release and watched the phoenix spiral upward.

"Go safely, my love," he whispered. When the flames were out of his sight, he turned without a second glance at the empty pyre and walked back into the forest.

Mirime

The Tree Nymph by Chrysilla

The spring began few days ago. The snow that had frozen the trees was now only a shadow and their sap was now boiling. Some merry streams were flowing murmuring through the humid grass. The smaller branches were coming back to life, cracking shyly.

The raw light warmed up my face. I opened my eyes, feeling the rustle the life inside my thin, slight body, still frozen. I was receiving the warmth and I was dressing with it.

I moved away from the heart of my tree and I released my long hair that had covered us both since now. I stretched and arched my body, yawning, awoken from the winter sleep. Languid due to the warmth and with my eyes half closed because of the light too white, I went out and looked up at my beech.

The winter hadn't changed it too much. The little branch with five leaves has broken under the weight of the snow. I had heard its death cry during a frozen night and I couldn't stop myself thinking that, in time, it would happen to the rest of the tree too.

The little nest was still there. It was still full of snow, but I was sure that the birds would come back and live there.

I was glad that everything was fine. I sighed satisfiedly and I went back inside my tree. My legs dug in with the roots of the beech, seeking with the bottom of the toes the water, giver of life. My arms laced between the branches, my palms stretched for the spring sun. I pressed myself against the heart of the tree, giving it my warmth.

Another life was beginning.

I was cruelly and suddenly awoken from my dream of light and happiness by the sound of an axe. Hitting us.

Chrysilla

What has my Child Become? by Silent_voice

What has my child become?

A soft step, the dragging of a bag, silence. Another step, more dragging, silence. This is all the babysitter heard as she lay there, spread out over the cold table, arms shackled and taught, legs, tight and unable to move. She whimpered again at the gag stuffed in her mouth. Where was he? Where was SHE!? The sight of eyes watching her almost made her scream, in fact, it would have, if she could talk. The six year old boy walked closer, dragging behind him a bag. His ghostly white face and blue eyes scared her even more as she could see he held no remorse in them, for they were cold dead eyes.

Standing on the chair he tilted his head "Having fun yet?" He asked in an innocent sounding voice, he didn't seem to know what he was doing was wrong. She started fighting at the bondings screaming at him through the muffled gag. The child giggled "Yeah i know, playing dungeon is so much fun, specially when your actually in a dungeon." He lent closer, moving to her ear he whispered, with a voice that seemed so much older than the child itself "Nobody can hear you precious babysitter." Her movements stopped, she now not only feared what he would do to her, but fear what he would do to her after he was finished his little game.

The child stepped down, hefting the bag up on a table he dumped the things unceremoniously on the table, her eyes widened at the sight, Scissors, a pizza cutter, pliers, a saw, a butchers knife, and a Stanley knife. She whimpered and started crying. Turning away from his implements he looked at her and walked back to her side "Wow... your good at this game, those look real!" She screamed at him again, trying to get it across to him that they were real and he needed to let her go. Turning away, still thinking it was a game he walked back over, taking the scissors and walking back to her "Now stay very...very... still." She whimpered and tears rolled down her cheeks as he began cutting away her hair, large clumps falling to the floor, landing in a pile, her hair had been her pride, nice and thick, lovely and brown and this child, no, this demon had cut it away.

After cutting her hair almost bald the child smiled "Good. It looks nice." tilting his head he began to lower the scissors to her eyebrows "If you move, you might be hurt. Stay very still." He said gently, but behind it was force, she knew now if she moved, she would hurt herself. So still she stayed. Slowly he cut her eyebrows, removing the hair completely. Moving the scissors down he began cutting away at her eyelashes, his hand steady for a small child. Her eyes wide with fear she didn't blink, she barely breathed as he completed his work. When he finished he smiled broadly and kissed her cheek "Good." He clapped joyously and walked back to the bench, depositing the scissors.

She had begun to cry again, in fear, in hate, in desperation, it was all she could do. Suddenly he was by her side again, in his hand held the Stanley knife, slowly the blade came out, she watched it in fear surprised when he began to cut away at her clothes, removing them like surgeon. When she lay there in her underwear did he stop, looking at her slim strong young body "You look nice." He said after a moments contemplation. Surprised by this, she didn't know how to react, the tears stopped for a moment, looking at him with wide eyes. Turning to her he smiled sweetly then began to cut away her undergarments. As he finished the doorbell rang. Looking at the door he frowned "Ill be back then we can play more." He put the stanly knife down on the bench, walking away and out of the door.

Opening the door he looked up at the tall man standing there "Hello i was wondering where Kelly was, she is supposed to be home by now." he said frowning. The eight year old smiled softly "My Mother hasn't come home yet, so Kelly is still looking after me, ill tell her to come home when Mother returns." The man nodded

What has my Child Become? (continued...)

slowly "Can i speak to her for a moment?"

The small boy looked around for a moment before looking at the man "I'm sorry... she is on the toilet. If you like ill get her to call you." Again the man nodded before turning away and walking down the drive, wondering how such a small child was so..... what was he? A small voice in the back of his mind answered... abnormal.

Returning to the room the child smiled softly "That was your daddy. He said you have to call him after our game." He said happily and walked further into the room, looking at her nails and tilting his head. Going to the table he picked up a pair of pliers. She whimpered and tried to tell him to stop, that this wasn't a game, but all she could do was whimper.

Walking around the table he set the pliers on the first nail "I dont like nails. I bite mine." He told her before heaving back, ripping out her nail by its roots. Kelly screamed into the bandage as loud as she could and writhed at the agony through her finger, tears streaming down her face as he moved from finger to finger, ripping out the nails one by one. Walking back to the table he set out his bloody collection of her nails "You have pretty nails Kelly. I always liked them." He said happily and turned back to her, seeing her crying in pain. Walking up to her he reached up and removed her gag, asking "Whats wrong?"

Her response was a crying scream "LET ME GO YOU DEMONIC BASTARD! DANIEL YOU LET ME GO NOW!" Daniel looked down, seemingly upset, she still cried, her hands almost numb from the pain. Daniel lifted his head once more, the Stanly knife in hand "I like your lips." He said softly, with no malice at all.

Her eyes widened "NO!! NO!! NO NO NO!!!!" She blatantly screamed. Daniel nodded his head slowly "Okay. Ill take them later." He moved back and walked to the bench, looking at the tools there he realised he would need her toenails to complete his collection. Walking back to her with pliers once more he walked to her feet, without another word he began to rip the nails out, grunting with the effort. Her screams, now loud and un-held back raced through the house, but that was all, completely soundproof, the house was a place where someone could scream bloody murder, as Kelly was now, without anybody hearing.

Daniel suddenly stopped, tilting his head he looked up at the clock against the wall "Mother will be getting home shortly. Kelly, you stay here and i will be back later." He said happily, putting her now red toenails underneath her fingernails. Kelly began screaming again. "DONT YOU LEAVE ME DOWN HERE, YOU LET ME GO DAMNIT!!!" Daniel stopped, walking back to her he frowned "Don't scream at me." His face twisted to a growl as he grabbed her ear and yanked it, twising "Everyone always yells at me, im sick of it, don't yell at me, Kelly." With that he turned and walked away, shutting the heavy door behind him.

Silent_Voice

Reincarnation: God's Justice

by Sunny SilverUnicorn

Reincarnation is something that exists in many religions and is denied in others. In my own religion, Islam, it's said that reincarnation doesn't happen, or exist. But I personally think that this believe that it's all a misinterpretation. Reincarnation does exist. (So this is the type of article you'd want to read, if you didn't believe in reincarnation, or doubted it.)

Why? Well there are a number of reasons to it, that I can count, but the most interesting and logical of all, is this: God's Justice.

I have decided to explain this, in two categories: One is the justice between all human kind (Based on the kind of life we experience), and another one, justice of one human (compared to himself, and what he gets in return for what he does).

In experiences:

Yes, that's what I have ended up with. You see, people are born to lead one of the three main roads of life; Good, OK, and Bad. These three have a wide saturation range. Some stay in one spot their whole lives, some change which road they walk on, and so on. All of these experience aspects of life, that others may not be aware of. Like someone who has been born to live a good life, would never understand what misery means, and the opposite is true also; a poor and unhappy person, doesn't really understand what the happiness rich people feel is. When you haven't experienced something, you can't understand how you'd feel 'without' it.

I know by now you're saying what does all this have to do with God's justice, and you'd think I have gone astray, but no, just keep on reading and you'll be enlightened.

No matter which type of life we have, it's only justice that we experience other kinds just to be equal with our kins, with all humankind. You might say, so like that heaven and hell would lose meaning, as every-one would be equal, but I say no. We are equal in what we experience, but not equal in what way we decide to experience something, or what result we'll get out of an experience. It's all based on what we decide, a personal decision, and that's with what we're judged upon.

In return:

Reincarnation, is a way that God gets back to us for what good or bad we've done in a past life. Imagine a serial killer, or a criminal or highest evil mind. If they're lucky, they'll keep doing what they do, without getting caught, in which case their punishment will have to wait until the end of days, or they might get convicted and be sentenced to a lifetime of imprisonment, or even maybe be executed. But does conviction or execution really equals what they have done? Does executing a serial killer who has taken many lives, bring back their victims? Or does taking his single life, account for the many he has wasted? Well, no. He'll have to burn in hell for all eternity until his sins are cleaned, right? Does that sound like the almighty and just God? Hadn't we always said he was the kindest of fathers? Letting even one of his creations to burn in hell would be so unlike him. He punishes, but as a last resort. Imagine a mother, who has a unruly kid. Does she quickly punish her child for what bad he/she has done? Or does she give them a second chance? I think we all know the answer. Humans, are God's children, they break rules, they defy their maker, but still, before the final punishment, they're given a second chance, or maybe even a third or fourth. That's God saying go live once again, and prove that you can be different, that you can lead a better life. Still, no one knows if they'd succeed or fail.

And that's the two explanations of why God's justice won't let a being to have one single life, end with what good or bad experience and trail it has, and head for the unite end of all. (Which I again doubt is the end end! :p)

Sunny

Edgar Cayce: Healer, Psychic, Seer

by Kaeirdwyn

Who was Edgar Cayce? He was born on March 18, 1877 and died on January 3, 1945. He was born in Hopkinsville, Kentucky. His last name is pronounced like Casey. He received an eighth grade education, which in those days included much more as far as mathematics, English and practical sciences. At that time, if a person was said to have an eighth grade education, it was the equivalent of graduating high school in our day. It was considered more than enough schooling for the working class.

He was born into a farming family, but at age 15, he left the farm to find different forms of employment, including working in a dry goods store and a book store. He was religious and belonged to a church called the Disciples of Christ. He read the bible once a year every year of his life from this period on. Because of this, he is said to have agonized over whether his psychic gifts were spiritually legitimate as well as the teachings they inspired.

When he was twenty-three years old he and his father formed a business partnership to sell Woodmen of the World Insurance. Not too long after this he was struck with severe laryngitis which resulted in complete loss of his voice within a months time. Unable to work because of this, he moved back in with his parents for almost a year. He then decided to take up photography, which would be less of a strain on his voice. He became an apprentice at the photography studio in Hopkinsville.

In 1901, a traveling hypnotist called Hart-The Laugh Man, who worked on stage as an entertainer, heard of Cayce's illness and offered to attempt to cure him. Cayce accepted the offer and the attempt took place in front of an audience. Amazingly enough, Cayce's voice worked while he was in the hypnotic trance, but upon awakening was gone again. He was hypnotized again and given a post hypnotic suggestion by Hart that his voice would continue working afterwards, but this was not successful.

Hart could not continue helping Cayce because of his commitments in other cities, however a local hypnotist, Al Layne said he would help him recover his voice. While Layne had Cayce in a hypnotic trance, he asked him to describe the ailment and the cure. Cayce did this and said that his laryngitis could be cured by increasing the blood flow to his voice box. Layne suggested the blood flow be increased and Cayce's face became flushed red. After twenty minutes Cayce, still in the trance said the treatment was over. When he awoke, his voice was returned to normal. Just to see how far it worked, while under hypnosis, Layne suggested to Cayce to tell him about his own ailments and treatments for them. Cayce did this and Layne said that these descriptions were accurate and the treatments Cayce said Layne should do were effective. Layne then told Cayce he should offer his trance healing to the public. Cayce was reluctant, but finally agreed as long as it was free.

He had great success treating the townspeople and his fame increased, as he was written about in the newspapers. This had people writing him asking for his help from other parts of the country. Strangely enough, Cayce was able to work just as effectively using a letter or later on, a phone call, even just having the person's name, location and their question. He would go into his meditative trance and have someone transcribe what he said while in the trance about the person in question. He could correctly diagnose the persons physical or mental ailment and the corrective procedure to help them recover, supposedly. His accuracy is not rated as one hundred percent, but he was effective in most cases nonetheless.

He would lie down on a couch, close his eyes and fold his hands over his stomach. Then he would enter a meditative state and begin by listening to someone ask a question. These questions ranged from universal philosophical questions about reincarnation and God to how do I get rid of this cold, or this wart. His answers were later to be called readings or life readings. The information contained in them are considered insights so valuable that even to this day many people have found practical help for everything from "maintaining a well-balanced diet and improving human relationships to overcoming life-threatening illnesses and experiencing a closer walk with God". Although Cayce lived before the era of spiritual New Age, he has a great influence on its teachings around the world.

Once his fame was increased he finally began asking for voluntary donations to help he and his family get by

so he could give the readings full time. After a few visits from people who wanted to get rich quick or know what to bet at the ponies, which stocks to buy and that sort of thing, he realized he needed someone he trusted in the room asking the questions of him, rather than just he and the person he was treating. His wife and also his eldest son were to fill this role for him at different times in his life. Also he hired a secretary, Gladys Davis, to record the readings, which she did in shorthand.

Because he did so many readings a day, his health suffered as it drained him not only mentally, but physically as well to do these readings. He attributed his small loss in accuracy to the stress and strain he was under. He also said he completely refunded any donation given by unsatisfied clients if the accuracy of the reading was wrong.

Cayce Moved to Texas in 1920 and lived there for three years, where he was surrounded by money hungry people on all sides, some who wished to pay him upwards of one hundred dollars a day for readings about the cotton market. He refused, though poor and needing of money to support his family. His ability for these types of readings was no better than a guessing game and it left him feeling distraught, depleted of all energy and dissatisfied with his work and what he was doing. Finally he came to an understanding and made a decision that he was to only use his gift to help the distressed and the sick.

A printer by the name of Arthur Lammers convinced Cayce to give readings on philosophical subjects in 1923. While in his hypnotic trance, Cayce spoke definitively of past lives. Though reincarnation was popular at that time, it was not accepted in Christian beliefs, which bothered Cayce tremendously, so much so that he even gave questions to his wife for himself while entranced so he would know whether to continue on this avenue of discussion. It was not Lammers, who argued with Cayce that he should continue the readings on philosophical subjects, but the voice of himself, telling him that he should, while he lay in hypnotic slumber, that finally convinced Cayce he was not doing something inherently wrong. Two years later, in 1925, in a trance, he told his family they had to move to Virginia Beach, Virginia. They moved that year.

By 1925, he was a professional psychic with a small staff of employees and some volunteers as well. His readings increasingly involved occultic and difficult to understand ideas. In 1929 Morton Blumenthal, a wealthy sponsor and recipient of trance readings, helped Edgar Cayce establish the Cayce Hospital in Virginia Beach. Cayce had not given up on his vision that he should be helping the sick. His fame and recognition rose and by 1943, after a prominent newspaper story, more and more people asked for his aid. He said he could not refuse anyone who desperately felt they needed his help, whether they could pay him or not. He increased his readings to eight per day to try and cut down on the multitudes of requests pouring in. His health took a nasty turn for the worse because of this. He was told by himself, through trance work, that he had to cut down to two readings per day or he would die. In 1945, on January second, Edgar Cayce suffered a stroke and died the next day on January third.

Many people think that Edgar Cayce is either a fraud or a misguided fool. They are skeptical of all claims of psychic works and feel that some of his readings used words such as "perhaps" or "I feel that" so that he would not be held in the wrong as much. Some conventional Christians believe that Cayce was under the direction of demonic spirits. Still others believe that there were a collective of good spirits who were speaking through him.

Cayce gave an estimated 22,000 life readings between 1901 and 1944. Only around 14,000 were written down by his secretary, Gladys Davis. The rest were from before he hired her. As far as Cayce was concerned, his trance statements should be followed only if they led to a better way of life for the person receiving the reading. "Does it make one a better husband, a better businessman, a better neighbor, a better artist, a better churchman? If so, cleave to it; if not, reject it."—Edgar Cayce. He also wanted and asked the people to whom he gave readings, if they would test his words, rather than accepting them on pure faith.

He was known as an American folk healer, a psychic and as a medical clairvoyant and psychic diagnostician. He was also known as The Sleeping Prophet and the father of Holistic Medicine. His business card read psychic Diagnostician.

Edgar Cayce: Healer, Psychic, Seer (continued...)

Several different ideas he did readings about were the origin and destiny of humanity, reincarnation, astrology, universal laws, Jesus and Christ, the unknown life of Jesus, ideals, body, mind and spirit, meditation, ESP, Atlantis, Egypt, Akashic records, Earth changes, Cayce cures, and the "Cayce diet". There are Edgar Cayce Centers in twenty five other countries, as well as tens of thousands of Cayce students in the United States and Canada. The major organization promoting interest in Edgar Cayce is located in Virginia Beach, Virginia and is called the Association for Research and Enlightenment (ARE). To Edgar Cayce, the most important parts of his gift to him were his healing abilities and his delving into theology.

Much of the information used in this article was gleaned from the Wikipedia on Edgar Cayce, though there is a special about him on the history channel as well. If any reader should desire more information, there are several books written about Edgar Cayce, as well as vast amounts of information on the internet. The 14,000 "life readings" he performed that were written down are available to be read online as well as in book form.

Kaeirdwyn

There & Back Again: Rebirth of a Traveler by Faery

There is the frenzy of hopping on the plane, then the seven hour flight makes you come down to earth. When you reach the airport on the other side of the ocean, you realize that it's over and done. This life as an exchange student, in a foreign country that you have come to consider as yours, will most probably never happen again. At least not in this way, not with these people you have come to call your friends, and who will soon be scattered all over the planet. You have to recreate your life from what it was before you ever left it, months ago. The process of rebirth isn't always easy.

In this world where globalization has become a daily reality, the number of students going on a foreign exchange for a semester or a year, to experiment the world and learn about life in a different way, is ever-growing. The untrained eye can see this as a wonderful, somewhat romantic experience— and don't take me wrong, it truly is! However, the amount of adaptation needed is too often overlooked by candidates to foreign studies, because it is not once but twice that they go through the ripping feeling of having to leave a beloved place.

Leaving parents, friends and sometimes a life partner at home is always a big step to take, but when a person chooses to leave on an exchange, she is usually well aware and well prepared for it. It took me two weeks after my arrival in Sweden to recreate a circle of friends, and I owe many thanks to [Hedda] for this, who was kind enough to welcome me and help me discover a bit of his country to ease my adaptation. However, the situation often is that foreign students are looking for each other's support and friendship. Everyone is in the same boat; they might as well share meals and parties, hardships, fears, and grief, but also joys and good moments! Friendships are brewed quickly in this atmosphere.

The situation is different when the moment comes to head back home. You might not get to see all those friends you have met and spent wonderful times with again for several years, if for ever. Before even leaving Sweden, I wanted to make plans to go back to Eastern Europe in less than a year to meet with my Polish, Bulgarian, Romanian and Czech friends. However, I soon realised that this would not be possible. More than two months after coming back, I am still trying to find a way to visit one of them— in Mexico— which, for me, is easier to reach than Europe.

Coming back home means recreating this vibe, and this is not an easy thing to do. First of all, unlike the first break-up from home, most foreign students are ill-prepared for the return trip. It always feels so very far, until the very moment you get on the plane! Then, you arrive and most of the time can't find what you thought you had left behind. Being an exchange student makes you evolve in a way that isn't given to everyone. The student comes back with more than just their luggage— they have an emotional baggage of experiences that is greatly different— whether better or not— from that of those people he or she left behind months ago. This can make communication difficult, and loneliness is, at times, inevitable. It is very important in those circumstances to create new bonds with people who have lived through something similar. Looking at pictures and dreaming about that time abroad can be very nice, but is sometimes unproductive.

I could try giving advice to those who are tempted to do what I did. However, this is a very hard task, as each person reacts differently to these situations. However, when coming back, if you can't revive the bonds you had with your old friends the way they were before, try making some new ones. This way, you will enlarge your social circle, find people with whom to talk about your experiences, and when you're ready, it will be a small step to kick back in with your old gang!

Reinventing your Style by Mordigen

As we grow, change, mature-- in life, and in our art-- we not only alter our outlook and attitude on life in general, but we also alter how we portray that in our work. So how do you reinvent your own style while staying true to yourself and those who may admire and look up to you?

Sell out vs. Egotistical

The two most feared things in the art industry, whether it be visual, written, music or otherwise. A sell out has become generally known as someone who abandons their own beliefs and principles to better suite a specific group of fans, critics or other authority. And, of course, the egotistical are those who care nothing for the admirations or respects of fans, fellows, critics, mentors or otherwise; they think that their way is the only way, and sacrifice no shame to prove that true. So how do you find the middle ground?

Though the concept may be hard to grasp at times, it is fairly simple. You know who you are, and you know where you came from-- simple as that. Who you are defines how you reinvent yourself, how you grow. Where you came from defines how you became who you are now, how you reached these new changes, and it also defines the time before this change. If you are new, and have a growing fan base, or even if you are a pinnacle of your industry with a headstrong following, it's blending those two concepts that can keep you afloat or sink you in a heartbeat.

Sad truth: a good majority of highly respected artist/writers and so forth who already have a firm following can do just about anything and their fans would adore them, but never doubt that they have had to struggle with this same dilemma, which is what has made them stand the tests of time. If you are new and growing, you have to keep in mind: yes, in this industry it is mainly about self expression, but on the other hand, if you have hopes of becoming professional (which not everyone does, which is fine), the tough love approach is simply this: you are nothing without someone else thinking you are something. Translation: you don't have fans, you ain't worth s**t. It's the harsh truth of every business in this industry, which is why a lot of people do not go professional.

Before anyone makes a change, or jumps headlong into the professional aspect of this industry, you have to ask yourself how much you are willing to give. Everyone is different, and there is nothing right or wrong with any of it, it is what makes you happy. Some people just cannot bend on their beliefs and principals and what they want to portray in their work, which is absolutely fine, but in this case professionalism is probably not the best bet until you have already built a strong fan base that holds the same principles as you. In such cases, reinventing yourself or changing your styles is no tricky business, as you have nothing to loose.

For those who hope to go professional, it still stands on the fine line between blending what you were into what you are. Again, you're nothing until someone else thinks your something. If you have a new or growing fan base, you may actually have a bit more leeway-- they're still getting to know you, you're still getting to know them; you have much more room to redefine yourself as you grow. With people who have strong followings, again, you can do just about anything and they'll still love you. It's the middle ground that is the hardest. Keep in mind what you are known for, and stay close to that. If you are an artist who has a good-size fan base in anime, you don't want to jump right into still life art. If you are a writer who specialized in fantasy, you don't want to do a 180 into a murder mystery. These examples are a bit blunt and cliché, but it gets the point across. You want to try to transition yourself gradually, giving you, and the people who look up to you, time to adjust and really break into the new you. Stay true to your old tricks, while at the same time adding in new ones little by little.

In the long run, it's about staying true to yourself, expressing your own feelings, beliefs etc., so never be scared to break away, try something new. At the same time, you don't want to lose yourself either. Too often people become over zealous with trying new things, become too caught up in what they can accomplish, how many things they can master, how many new things they can try and conquer and they fall to far away from what they really are, forget what they really wanted to do. Keep a goal for yourself, one at a time, and work towards it, gradually. Once you've reached this goal, give yourself time to experiment and experience it wholly, giving yourself and fans alike time to adjust and become comfortable with it. Once this happens, you'll find yourself a better, more rounded and open artist/writer/musician/etc and can grow in your work even further, and easier with every step.

Never be too confident, never be too shy, never doubt yourself and use these easy steps to help guide you and you can surely grow and mature in your own industry to a respected artist that can surely withstand time...

Mordigen

The Legend of the Phoenix

by Mordigen

The Legend of the Phoenix
a brief history of mythology

The Phoenix is one of the most well-known and well respected myths and legends. It has been seen worldwide, spanning cultures, countries, languages and traditions of all kinds. It is one of the very few creatures of myth that can be found in any culture at any time. The Phoenix, accompanied by its consort, the Dragon, is a lofty and sacred creature in Asian cultures and histories and is often masked in the renowned "ying yang" symbol. While the Dragon represents the male or masculine energies, the Phoenix represents the female or feminine energies. This pair of mythological beings can also be found in folklore around the world, from European myth to Egyptian Hieroglyphs, and in native American and tribal legends worldwide.

The classical legend is the tale of a mighty bird, massive in size, and glorious to look upon, adorned with feathers like the sun, that is ancient, sacred, and holds immense knowledge and wisdom. It continues to grow in what may be considered a rapid time frame, until it reaches death or is struck down, as legend goes, to ash. It is then said that the Phoenix's ashes become inflamed, and is reborn anew from within the flames. Though the appearance of the bird itself varies in small details, the most well-known and well recognized is that of a graceful, long-necked bird bearing a close resemblance to a peacock or bird of paradise, or a cross between the two. Interestingly enough, however, the first records of the story of the Phoenix were collected from Egypt, which stated that the bird originated from Arabia and resembled an eagle. Though every culture may have their own take on the mythical bird, the story of rebirth never seems to falter.

Over time the Phoenix has become a sacred symbol of life, death, rebirth and resurrection and has-- most understandably-- been connected with the sun and fire. In some old Catholic scriptures from the time of the crusades, the sacred bird was often connected with the devil, as it was "immortal, unable to be slain and bearing the inferno of hell upon its wing." Luckily, this darker, more menacing image of the Phoenix never caught on, and it is looked upon today as a source of enlightenment and inspiration, in spiritual beliefs, art, literature and cultural legends.

Mordigen

Quickie Reviews...



The Last Kiss-- Mostly depressing and heart-wrenching. Don't watch it unless you're in that kind of mood.



The Valet-- Hilarious French flick with actors none of us recognize! (That's always fun for me!)

Catch and Release-- It has Kevin Smith, so that partially sells me. Jennifer Garner also partially sells me; she's cute as can be. Entertaining, a little sad-- it's worth checking out.

Peter Pan (2006)-- Best screen adaptation of Peter Pan I have ever seen. Ever. Captain Hook



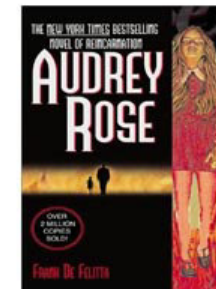
Audrey Rose

by Kaeirdwyn

copyright 1975, published in 1976; reissued December 2001.

Audrey Rose sounds like a nice, inviting book about pretty things or a nice, little, ordinary girl, yet that is nothing like what it is about. This book is about an ordinary seeming young girl named Ivy Templeton who is ten years old. She has nice parents and all the wonderful things that life can offer.

One day her mother notices a man at the school as she picks her daughter up and is frightened as she realizes this man is entranced by her daughter. However, it is not a sexual thing. He looks desperate. Why? He tells her that his name is Elliot Hoover and that he has been told by a psychic that her daughter is the reincarnation of his daughter, Audrey Rose, who died in a terrible car accident-- death by fire. She died banging her fists on the glass screaming for her daddy to save her. Janice, the mother, tells him to stay away. He, of course, does not. Would this



not freak any mother out?

Then the unspeakable happens. Ivy begins to act strangely. She begins to have night terrors and nightmares, almost like a fugue state, that her mother cannot wake her from. In each instance she seems to suffer a horrible death, being trapped and burned alive. Her mother and father, Janice and Bill Templeton, at wits' end, are horrified and take her to doctors, to a priest, and finally to a psychiatrist who begins to detail the problems and tries hypnosis

Audrey Rose (continued...)

with horrifying results.

This time while in the trance-like state, she bangs on the windows of the high rise apartment screaming out her death agonies as her mother and father watch on, unable to do nothing, not even comfort her, because they cannot wake her. She then begins choking as if on smoke, but the doctor somehow pulls her out of the trance before she loses the ability to breath altogether. Finally pulled out of her trance, she has severe burns on her hands, for which there is no explanation. There was no heat on the windows she banged on and no heaters nearby. Poor Ivy has no recollection of what has happened once she is awakened and doesn't understand why there is such a fuss about her or how her hands have been burned.

Not knowing how to stop these terrors, Janice lets Elliot Hoover, who has claimed she was once his daughter, into the sessions with the psychiatrist. After being hypnotized again, Ivy runs around the room screaming and banging her fists, she yells for her daddy to save her over and over. "Daddydaddydaddythothot!" The exact words that Audrey Rose screamed at the time of her death.

Though Janice feels she cannot trust Hoover, for some reason while in these fugue states, Ivy responds to his voice. She calms down, as he calls her Audrey Rose. She is able to hear him, though not her own parents. She crawls into his lap and falls asleep, clinging to the man as if he is her father, to the horror of her own parents, who are lost and confused at this behavior.

The fugue states progress rapidly and time is running out as Ivy starts choking on unseen smoke only found in her mind. Will they be able to stop the fugue states from taking over her life? Does this man have claim to Ivy, though she is not his daughter in this lifetime? Is she really reincarnated from his own daughter, Audrey Rose? Is she destined to replay the horrific events surrounding Audrey Rose's death her whole life or is there a way to end the torment to herself, her family and the man who remembers her as Audrey Rose? And if they end the torment to Audrey Rose's soul, what will happen to Ivy Templeton?

This book is a suspenseful thriller to the end and will entrance any reader. I found it entertaining and interesting to wonder if things like this could or do happen to people around the world today. Stranger things have probably happened.

I give it four stars out of five mainly for the originality of the subject material and for the fact that after eighteen years, I can still remember the story. Also, yes, there has been a movie made of this book, so if you do not read, yet are intrigued, the film is titled the same. On a side note, for those who decide to get this book and love it, I found while looking online that there is a sequel called For Love of Audrey Rose. Yes I plan to get it in the near future. Look for a review of that book in a future Town Herald.

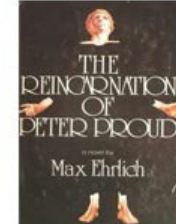
Happy Reading,

The Reincarnation of Peter Proud by kaeirdwyn

"The Reincarnation of Peter Proud"

By Max Erlich, Copyright 1974

Also made into a Movie of the same name in 1988.



When a college professor named Peter Proud begins to experience flashbacks from a previous life or incarnation, he is mysteriously drawn to places he has never been before, but they are all troublingly familiar. As if drawn by an outside or cosmic force, he soon finds himself unwittingly in the company of a woman who turns out to be his previous incarnation's wife.

This woman, Marcia Curtis, recognizes in Peter startling personality traits and characteristics which he, and her dead husband, Jeff, share. Even the sound of his voice seems to be that of her dead husband. Peter, strangely enough, becomes romantically drawn to Ann Curtis who was his daughter (Jeff and Marcia's daughter) from his previous incarnation.

Why is he drawn to her? He isn't sure, but doesn't care to fight it. Recognizing the incestuous feel to their relationship, Mrs. Curtis, disgusted, tries to keep them apart, without revealing her reasons or why she thinks Proud is her dead husband come back to life. She must keep them apart at all costs. But how?

Must she finally reveal the terrible secret of the final minutes she shared

with her husband Jeff, in order to keep Peter away from her (their?) daughter? Some of the flashbacks begin to give him a glimpse of how he died in the past. Just why did he die and why has he come back?

Once again a suspense filled book, that even though I read it long ago, I still remember it today. I would have to give it three stars out of five and say it definitely has dark horror parts to it and may have sexual content.

Happy Reading,

Kaeirdwyn

Join me for Dinner...

by All_Most PUNK

Director: John Gulager
Writers: Marcus Dunstan and Patrick Melton
Cast:
Duane Whitaker ... Boss Man
Balthazar Getty ... Bozo
Chauntae Davies ... Drunk Girl (as Chauntae Davis)
Hannah Schick ... Finger Girl
Diane Goldner ... Harley Mom
Josh Zuckerman ... Hot Wheels
Henry Rollins ... Coach
Eileen Ryan ... Grandma
Jason Mewes ... Edgy Cat
Judah Friedlander ... Beer Guy
Clu Gulager ... Bartender
Krista Allen ... Tuffy
Anthony 'Treach' Criss ... Vet
Jenny Wade ... Honey Pie
Tyler Patrick Jones ... Cody

In the beginning, there was Project Greenlight. And then Matt Damon, Ben Affleck and Chris Moore (the three brains behind Good Will Hunting and producers of this reality show, which follows the producing and filming of a movie by independent and mostly first-time filmmakers) saw that it was a good idea that made money for them. And so, Project Greenlight 2 and Project Greenlight 3 followed. In the third season, they decided to go into the horror genre. Feast is the more than entertaining result of this decision.

The story: It's pretty simple, really. A group of persons are trapped inside a bar in the middle of the road between nowhere and absolutely nowhere while a family of monsters (yes, they are monsters and they are a family. Can't monsters have families?) tries to eat them. In part, at least, because some of those inside killed their baby. And, in part (probably the biggest part) because they are hungry. And maybe also because they can. That's always a good reason.

The Good Points: As mentioned, the story is quite simple, and both writers and the director know it, so they don't even bother trying to pretend that there's anything else going on or that there will be twists and turns at every second. Instead, they show people being eaten. In bloody ways. Simple, huh?

What makes this an entertaining movie, then? The way they use simple resources to keep you watching. We are talking about good, perfectly used doses of humor—not too much, not too little, and in all the right places; surprises—the kind that make you flinch even when you can see them coming a kilometer away; political incorrectness (spoiler: Do you see that ten years old kid? Well, you probably won't see him for a long time) and blood. Lots of blood. Blood all over the place. Disgusting blood. And some sex. But not the kind you'd like to see, believe me.

As you can tell from the cast list, they didn't even bother to name the characters, so the owner of the bar is "Boss Man", the guy who delivers the beer is "Beer guy" and so on. How do we know their names? Because at the beginning of the movie the camera goes around, fixes in every character for a few seconds (stopping the time) and show us a short "biography" that includes three items, one being Name, another Life Expectancy, and the third one changing with every character. Some of the comments are hilarious.

The movie is, of course, filled with cliches and commonplaces. Most of them, I daresay, are on purpose. A big part of the entertainment is making fun of the cliches, making them as obvious as possible so you can shout from the top of your lungs "God, I've seen that a zillion times before. But those times they were doing it seriously". Also, that leads you straight into those surprises mentioned before.

The bad: I guess some people could be annoyed by the simplicity of the script and the lack of development in some of the characters and in the story. Well, that's their problem. This is a movie that won't let you think. You'll just be entertained for a while and then you'll go to sleep. Simple as that. If you want to "think" go watch a Bergman flick.

Best Moment: "I'm the guy who is going to save your ass" says the Hero a couple minutes after entering the bar and starting barking orders. Guess what happens next? Well, you probably guessed wrong.

Stupidest Moment: The key that breaks at the worst possible moment. That was a little way too much, maybe because of the way it is told in the movie. It doesn't manage to make fun of the common place and just looks stupid.

All In All: Blood, blood, blood; I love seeing the blood. I laugh when I see the blood. It's fun seeing blood. Maybe I'm a psycho. You should be one too.

All_Most PUNK



Shrek III

You know that because it is a "Shrek" movie it has to be good! It is only because it comes in the shadow of Shrek one and two that it is any bit of a disappointment. Many of the surprises and gags that would have made this movie amazing are not as funny the third time around. There are a lot of great parodies here, including a great scene from the "Six Million Dollar Man." The plot may be getting a little old with over half the movie still spent sieging or escaping a castle, but this time it is the princess' job to rescue the prince in distress.

Overall it is a good movie with great morals and still a pretty decent job with the animation, but none of it could have been pulled off without the great voice acting of a top notch cast. I personally give it 3.5 stars!

Sir. Robert

Harry Potter: Order of the Phoenix...

by Irulan

Before I start the review, let me say this: don't compare it to the book. Seriously. In fact, never compare movies inspired by books to the actual books if you can help it. You'll just be disappointed. Evaluate them as separate entities. Now, with that off my chest, I'll continue.

Harry Potter and his friends, Ron and Hermione, are now in their fifth year at Hogwarts. Lord Voldemort has returned, but the general public is kept in the dark by the Ministry of Magic. Harry and Professor Dumbledore are dragged through the mud as the Ministry attempts to discredit them. Despite the lack of faith, Dumbledore establishes the Order of the Phoenix—a group of witches and wizards who fight Voldemort and his followers. At Hogwarts, a new Defense of the Dark Arts professor, Dolores Umbridge, is appointed. She works for the Ministry, and she is innately wicked. She refuses to teach the class any practical magic, so at Hermione's urging Harry creates the "DA." It is a group of students from all houses who meet secretly to study defense of the dark arts as it should be studied.

Several important events occur in the movie. Harry kisses a girl; yes, this is important. Harry realizes his dreams are allowing him to see Voldemort's plans, so Professor Snape is assigned to teach him Occlumency. Neville truly grows up, and it is amazing to see. Dumbledore kicks some butt. The screenplay is very well written.

As would be expected, this movie is a bit darker than the rest. It is filmed in stark layers of lighting, and it gives a "bad times are coming" vibe. The special effects are up to par, and the sets are just amazing in detail. The ending scene in the Ministry of Magic is fantastically done. I don't want to give too much away, but Dumbledore fights. It's like when we get to see Gandalf fighting the Balrog. We know he's an awesome wizard, but we don't fully realize it until he shows his stuff.

The acting was excellent. The new characters, Luna Lovegood and Professor Umbridge, were cast perfectly. They got all the little details about both characters just right. They seemed born to play those roles. I was very pleased with Michael Gambon's portrayal of Professor Dumbledore. This movie marks the first time I actually bought him as the character. He is more put together and in charge of the role. Daniel Radcliffe portrayed the angstiest teenager well, and Rupert Grint and Emma Watson were fabulous. I would have enjoyed more Ron and Hermione though. They really didn't get much screen time.

Overall, it was a solid movie. I will enjoy watching it over and over.



The Mummy & Mummy Returns

by Kaeirdwyn

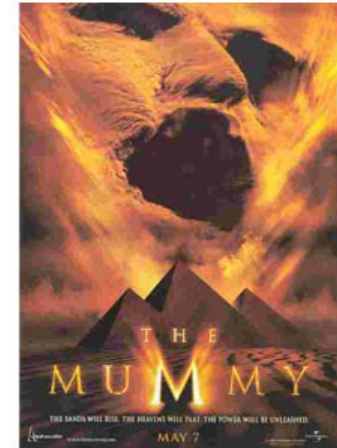
The movie *The Mummy*, though good in and of itself, does not really seem to go along with the theme of reincarnation, as Imhotep was not precisely reincarnated, as much as he was put through a magical ritual called the *Hom-Dai*, which transformed him into an immortal monster. However it did go into how he planned and tried to resurrect his love, Anck Su Namun several times, which does go along with the theme of Resurrection. However, upon viewing the sequel, *The Mummy Returns*, we see that reincarnation is indeed a large thread needed for the resolution of the second movie, as it involves several characters. These movies are not the usual monster mummy horror-type movies, but are much more adventure styled with lots of action and humor.

The Mummy

Directed By Stephen Sommers
Rated PG-13 for pervasive adventure violence and some partial nudity.

Starring:

Brendan Fraser as Rick O'Connell
Rachel Weisz as Evelyn Carnahan
John Hannah as Johnathan Carnahan
Arnold Vosloo as High Priest Imhotep
Patricia Velasquez as Anck Su Namun/Meela
Kevin J. O'Connor as Beni Gabor
Oded Fehr as Ardeth Bay
Johnathan Hyde as Dr Chamberlain
Erick Avari as Dr. Terrence Bey
Bernard Fox as Captain Winston Havelock
Stephen Dunham as Mr. Henderson
Corey Johnson as Mr. Daniels
Tuc Watkins as Mr. Burns
Omid Djalili as Prison Warden
Aaron Ipale as Pharaoh Seti I



In the first movie, Evelyn Carnahan a librarian who loves all things Egyptian, and her brother Johnathan Carnahan find a man, named Rick O'Connell, who has been to the mysterious and lost city of Hamunaptra. Excited, Evelyn barter for his life so that he can take them to this hidden city. He agrees to this and thus the adventure begins.

While he is involved with taking his charges to Hamunaptra, they discover on the same boat as them a group of Americans journeying to Hamunaptra led by Rick's old buddy Beni, who is selfish and is only interested in what he can get or in saving himself.

They race to see who can get to the city first and who can discover the secrets and the treasure that is rumored to have been buried there. The hasty Americans discover a cursed chest with the remains of Anck Su Namun, the Pharaoh's mistress in them, while Rick, Evy (as she is called by her brother), and Johnathan find a huge sarcophagi with the sacred writings missing off of it. Also found at the same time by the American professor was the

Irulan

The Mummy & Mummy Returns

(continued...)

Egyptian Book of the Dead which gives life.

That night, Evy sneaks the Book of the Dead from the sleeping professor and begins reading it. When asked by Rick if she thinks that is wise, She says, "Nothing bad ever came from reading a book." Of course after that everything that could go wrong from reading the book does go wrong. Once she is done reading a passage, deep underground still, in the sarcophagi that they found, The Mummy awakens, immortal and filled with the need for power.

When the mummy was alive he was Imhotep, High Priest to the Pharaoh, Seti I, and secret lover of the Pharaoh's mistress, Anck Su Namun (pronounced anUCK sun a MOON). Upon being discovered by the Pharaoh in a secret tryst, Anck Su Namun thrusts a small sword into the Pharaoh. Then Imhotep joins her in stabbing the Pharaoh with a long sword.

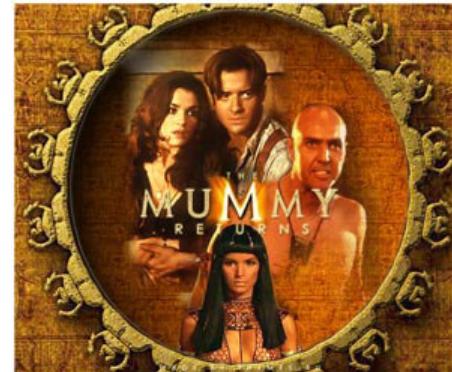
After they have murdered Seti I, Pharaoh of Egypt, his bodyguards come running to protect him. Anck Su Namun has begged Imhotep, her love, to leave, stating that he is the only one who can bring her back from the dead. His priests take him in hand and he leaves in a panicked hurry.

The bodyguards of the Pharaoh arrive and upon seeing Anck Su Namun over the dead body of the Pharaoh, try to take her into custody. She will not have this, stating, "I am no longer his temple." Then she stabs herself, taking her own life. Her punishment for killing the Pharaoh would have probably been severe and death by her own hand was preferable, even if she was not given new life from Imhotep. Later, in secret, Imhotep takes her body and sacred jars containing her innards and goes to Hamunaptra, the City of the Dead, to perform the ritual of bringing her back from the dead so they can be together forever on.

Unknown to the High Priest, he has been followed by the Medjai, the bodyguards of the pharaoh, who trap him while doing this ritual, and sentence his followers to mummification while still living, and perform on him the same tortuous fate, as well as the Hom-Dai an ancient ritual involving flesh-eating scarabs that sets his eternal soul to torment. However, if he is awakened on this earth it also bestows upon him the ability to come back much more powerful, with the ability to bring back the ten plagues of Egypt, and virtually take over the world if there is no one to oppose him.

This is where we come back to the future. The group of Americans and also O'Connell's group has had a run-in with men who call themselves the Medjai, descendants of Seti I's guards. They were set to guard the burial place of Imhotep, so that none would awaken him. Of course he is awakened and now it is up to O'Connell, Evy and Johnathan, as well as one of the Medjai, Ardeth Bay, who joins them in trying to destroy Imhotep and stop him from gaining his full powers, which may be beyond their ability to stop.

Many people loved this film, in that it was less intense and more fun, like an Indiana Jones movie, however there were also many people who did not like the movie, as the story line was not strong, was not a horror like they thought it should be and didn't like Brendan Frasier in the lead role of hero instead of comic. This writer however loved the movie, the kids love it and it is still watched often here in this home. A definite four points out of five.



The Mummy Returns
Directed by Stephen Sommers
Rated PG-13 for adventure action
and violence.

Starring:
Brendan Frasier as Rick O'Connell
Rachel Weisz as Evelyn(Evy)
O'Connell/Princess Nefertiti
John Hannah as Johnathan Carnahan
Arnold Vosloo as High Priest Imhotep
Oded Fehr as Ardeth Bay
The Rock as Mathayus The Scorpion King
Freddie Boath as Alex O'Connell
Patricia Velasquez as Meela
Nais/Anck Su Namun
Alun Armstrong as Baltus Hafez
Adewale Akinnuoye-Agbaje as Lock-Nah
Shaun Parkes as Izzy Buttons
Bruce Byron as Red
Joe Dixon as Jaques
Tom Fisher as Spivey
Aharon Ipale as Pharaoh Seti I

This movie starts off back in the past at the time of The Scorpion King, who is trying to conquer parts of Egypt. His army is driven back and into the desert. They die one by one until he is the last. He makes a deal with Anubis, the god of the underworld that if the god helps him vanquish his enemies, he can have his soul. Anubis likes the arrangement and so sends his army of the dead to help The Scorpion King. After his enemies are conquered the soul of The Scorpion King is taken by Anubis. 5,000 years into the future the movie continues.

Ten years after the first movie, Rick and Evy have married and they and their ten year old son Alex, are busy busting into a tomb, because of dreams Evy has been having since the beginning of the Egyptian New Year. The Year of the Scorpion. They find a chest again, and open it, finding The Bracelet of Anubis, which will control the undead army of The Scorpion King. They take it home and their rascal son Alex puts in on behind their back, and through a vision, gains the first step in a set of directions to Ahm Shere, the hidden oasis of The Scorpion King. He hides this from his parents, of course.

A woman bearing a striking resemblance to Anck Su Namun finds Imhotep's encased body, somehow knowing exactly where the hidden city of Hamunaptra was located. She has Egyptologists helping her; their goal? To get The Bracelet of Anubis, of course. They want Imhotep to battle The Scorpion King, win and then command the undead armies of Anubis.

Oded Fehr, resuming his role as Ardeth Bay, one of the Medjai, who seeks the mummy's destruction, comes to merry old London to seek the O'Connells, believing the woman, Meela Nais, is after them. He comes just in time, or in another sense, not soon enough. He gets to their house soon enough to help Evy battle Lock-Nah, a warrior in the employ of Meela Nais, the woman who resembles Anck Su Namun, but not soon enough to either warn them in advance or stop them from taking her captive. While she is busy battling warriors with swords and fists, Rick is upstairs trying to stop them from murdering Johnathan, or himself, by poison asp, or sub machine guns. They run through the house, chased by bullets, which amazingly don't hit them, only to watch as a vehicle drives away with Evy in the backseat, screaming for help. Rick is somewhat upset at Ardeth Bay, however they go off together to find Evy once Alex tells them that the man they are looking for (He sees a picture) is the curator of the British Museum. They rush off to the British Museum, the four of them, Johnathan more there by chance than anything else, to rescue Evy once again from death of some kind or another.

The Mummy & Mummy Returns (continued...)

Next Meela is in the British museum with the British Curator, who is in cahoots with her and he uses the book of the dead to once again bring Imhotep back. They have all of Anck Su Namun's old burial jars and have brought Evy to kill her in front of Imhotep to please him.

Once Meela and Imhotep meet, she says to him, "I am Anck Su Namun reincarnated." He says to her, "You are her in body, not yet it soul. But soon you will be." They, of course kiss, he as a nasty, disgusting mummy. Rick and Ardeth Bay get there in the nick of time, save Evy and cause general havoc, angering Imhotep at them once again. Once the bad guys discover The Bracelet of Anubis is not in the chest, Lock-Nah decides the child Alex has it, and follows after them to get him. So right after Evy is rescued, their son Alex is snatched right from under them, though Rick runs his heart out after them.

At this point Alex has shared with them his adventures with the bracelet of Anubis and that he saw the pyramids at Giza and then went whoosh! Right to Karnak. If they don't get to Karnak in time, they might lose his trail forever. Evy begins to realize through her waking dreams that she is the reincarnated protector of the bracelet of Anubis; the daughter of Seti I, Princess Nefertiti.

Also, through a tattoo on his wrist, Rick is recognised by Ardeth Bay as a Medjai, a protector of mankind. Rick acts like it is all a coincidence, however Ardeth Bay says, "There is not much difference between coincidence and fate."

This is a good movie, with a good story. The CG effects however are lacking. Perhaps you would count the CG in this movie as learning. Hopefully no one does it this bad again. The special effects in the first movie, though more old school, less digital, were still preferable to the second's film attempts. These were new special effects at the time, therefore some movies would have to have them, before they figured out how unrealistic they were. Unfortunately The Mummy Returns is one of these. If you can get past the special effects on the mummy and at the end of the movie, then it turns out to be a fairly good movie.

Though the storyline of the second movie is better than the first, the special effects detract so much, they almost pull you out of the story, out of the place your mind goes in fantasy based movies, where anything is possible.

The whole family still enjoys this movie, especially the kids. There is a distinct rumor of a third mummy movie out there, however without the actress Rachel Weisz playing Evy, which is one of the main reasons these movies are such a success. Hopefully they find a way to work her into the movie or the new movie is based on other people. For no one can really replace Rachel Weisz as Evy. Just as the movie wouldn't be the same without Brendan Frasier's comical stance he takes as Rick O'Connell. This movie is given a 3.75 points out of five.

Alien Resurrection

by Kaeirdwyn

Alien Resurrection is a science fiction thriller. It is the fourth movie in the series and was written by Joss Whedon. The movie happens two centuries after the third movie. Ellen Ripley was cloned from DNA found on the prison planet, Fiori 16, so that the military could harvest the alien queen embryo that resided in Ripley's chest when she killed it and herself along with it. After they extracted the queen from Ripley, they decided to keep her alive for further study. They allow the queen to grow and collect her eggs, excited about seeing them in use. Because Ripley was cloned along with the Alien queen, they share DNA, and she now

has enhanced abilities including improved strength and reflexes, acidic blood, strange black fingernails, and a link with what she considers her child, the Queen.

The military are going to bring to life, through stolen cryo pods, aliens from human bodies. The Ship, "The Betty", crewed by mercenaries who brought these humans to the military. They soon encounter Ripley and their new member Call, knows who she is and what her presence may mean. She offers to kill Ripley to end her pain, but Ripley replies, "What makes you think I'd let you?". Call wants to stop the creation of any aliens, but then sees Ripley's scar and realizes she is too late. Too late indeed. Within what seems like minutes, Call is caught in Authorized Personnel Only areas and is brought to stand with the crew, as the military tries to arrest the crew of "The Betty". They soon realize this is a mistake when they crew opens fire on all of them and they end up dead.

While this is happening, a scientist watches on a camera, and tries to warn the other military men in the area. With radio problems, he is distracted from the adult aliens he is watching and two of them turn on one and within moments have killed it, spilling its acidic blood all over the place. Never one to dispute their intelligence, they wait as the floor melts out from under the dead one and then they escape. Soon all eleven other aliens, not counting the dead one, have escaped and are on the loose. Ripley barely escapes herself, using her own acidic blood on the wiring of her room to freak out the door and have it open.

She soon catches up with the mercenaries, who discuss whether they should kill her or take her with them. Christie, the one who is in charge after the captain was killed by an alien decides she goes with them. Call has a problem with this telling them, "she's one of them. She's a part of them. We can't take her with us. We can't trust her." To this Christie replies, "I don't trust anyone. She goes with us." At this point, Johner who is interested in all things female, especially strong, capable females, decides to chat up Ripley.

Johner--Hey Ripley, I heard you, like, ran into



these things before.

Ripley--That's right.

Johner--Wow, man. So, like, what did you do?
Ripley--(she smiles and replies) I died.

The crew, along with Ripley, a military man left over named Distephano, and Dr. Wren are all running for "The Betty" to escape the ship and the aliens. Whether they will make it before the aliens capture or kill anymore of them is not certain.

This movie has a good intensity to it, and with any movie where there is a "you have to get there first" quality, it does well with keeping it interesting, with surprising changes in characters and plot twists. A lot of people do not like the alien that shows up near the end of the movie, but that is really up to the viewer. It is a different, yet disgusting alien. This movie has many more qualities than just slash, bite, and blow 'em up. The intricate relationships that are experienced bring this movie up a notch, as most who see it are familiar with most of the concepts of the Alien movies, so the writer chose to delve deeper into the characters. Near the end, the fear factor was no longer a part of the film, but whether this was from having watched four Alien films and knowing pretty much what to expect, is not clear. This movie receives a three out of five stars.

Kaeirdwyn

Linkin Park: Minutes to Midnight

by Mordigen

Four years in the making, Linkin Park's third album, *Minutes to Midnight*, has opened up a whole new genre and outlook for this band and their fans alike. Trying to reinvent themselves, their views and their sound, they have steered away from the 'Nu Metal' label that has been put on them, at the same time staying close to their unique style that makes them who they are.

With this new, rather eclectic album, it is sure to please both the diehard Linkin Park fans, as well as open new eyes to this ever-rising band. *Minutes to Midnight* has a unique sound all its own, with tracks harbouring a strong and undeniable sound inspired by U2, old-school punk, new-wave Emo Punk and even some of their old Nu-Metal sounds. It is an awe-inspiring mix of intriguing melodies and the eye-opening, blatantly truthful and enlightening lyrics they have become known for.

The overall feeling of this new album is both heartbreaking and enlightening, with such soft emotional lyrics as "When my time has come, forget the wrong that I've done, help me leave behind some reasons to be missed", found in *Leave out all the Rest*, and the anti-establishment, anti-government, politically driven yet mournful lyrics as found in *Hands Held High* and *Bleed it Out*. It holds a definite reminiscence to the late 80s early 90s days of U2, Depeche Mode and Nirvana, all of which lead vocalist, Chester Bennington, listed as a few of their inspirations for the album.

All in all, this has turned out to be one of my all-time favourite albums, leaving something for everyone that I'm sure won't leave you disappointed. I highly recommend everyone to check out this album, and keep an eye out for Chester Bennington's debut solo album *Snow White Tan* due to be released in early 2008, said to hold the same inspirations and feel as *Minutes to Midnight*.



Quickie Game Review...

www.the-reincarnation.com

The Reincarnation Portal is an online, multiplayer game. A RPG Platform similar to *Warcraft*, *Black Hawk Down*, or other online interactive RP games. In a fantasy realm, you are a mage leading the kingdom to glory through various hardships and struggles. It has a very strong feeling of *War*, *Civilizations* or other kingdom-conquering games. Though, the most accurate way I know to describe it is "Magic-the Gathering come to online RP". It is still new and under construction, so it is always being improved and developed, but looks to be a great game full of fun and hold interest, that I feel is to be the next "hit" in online fantasy RPs.

Horoscopes

curtosey of www.astrology.com, by Mordigen

August 2007

Aries: On the 1st, if you encounter a bit of frustration, try not to get, well, too frustrated. Sometimes frustration is just the universe's way of trying to get you to rethink your plans, or reassess your motivation, or reexamine your desires. Or maybe, the universe wants you to take a little break and get some sleep. By the 2nd and 3rd, frustration is a thing of the past. All of your ambitions are paying off, and you've never been so active. By the 7th and 8th, there could be some pretty serious flirtation going on in your world. On the 12th, your competitive streak comes to the fore. Whether it's sports or romance or both, you want to win-- and that probably means you will! At the very least, you give it your best. By the 17th, it's time to slow down and think about what other people in your life might need from you. On the 21st and 22nd, a very mysterious stranger could give you an extremely helpful tip. On the 26th, those goals you were trying to reach at the beginning of the month are looking very much in sight. Don't be surprised if you achieve a couple of them before the month is over. And don't give up if you encounter a little of that old frustration on the 30th and 31st.

Taurus: Get out your barbecue tongs and your lighter fluid and your 'Kiss the Chef' apron on the 1st and 2nd, because it's time for you to have a summertime party. It doesn't have to be anything major. No need for the crystal and linens. Just call a few of your nearest and dearest and ask them over. Tell them to bring tofu kebabs if they don't like hot dogs. Whip up a nice potato salad, throw ice cubes in the Kool Aid and prepare yourself for a little sharing and caring. Yep, it's high time you talked to your friends about what's on your mind: the good, the great, the bad and the so-so. By the 4th and 5th, you're feeling really glad that you got some input from your support network. Not only did they have helpful things to say, but they reminded you that you're not alone with your decisions. On the 11th and 12th, somebody might snag your 'Kiss the Chef' apron. Oh! Are there too many cooks in the kitchen? Don't give up your space at the grill. On the 17th, it's time for you to get fit. So hop to it! On the 21st and 22nd, count your pennies. How many dollars do they add up to? Ignore somebody who's being weird on the 26th, and on the 30th, why not plan a few more barbecues?

Gemini: On the 1st and 2nd, you could find yourself sitting at your desk, staring out into space and dreaming about change. Where do your thoughts bring you? Are you climbing the Himalayas? Sunbathing in Acapulco, Mexico? Saving the world, one rain forest at a time? Launching a career as an advertising executive? Take a moment to jot down your thoughts. After all, many changes start out as fantasies. On the 5th, you may not have a lot of follow through, but you have a whole lot of fun. Enjoy whatever it is-- maybe sunshine, companionship, a swimming hole and running back to your car barefoot. Take pleasure in drinking sparkling apple juice on a hillside under the stars if that tickles your fancy. On the 10th, you might need to check your budget. Get to it if adjustments are needed. By the 14th, it's time for you to write that letter. (You know the one!) On the 15th, you'd better get to the post office and send it. By the 21st and 22nd, you're ready to take on something big with a partner. On the 26th, said partner presents you with a very intriguing, brand-new point of view. On the 28th and 29th, don't let a few misunderstandings get in your way.

Cancer: Your mind, on the 1st, could be like the proverbial gypsy: It's wandering. Yes, your mind has its walking shoes on, its walking stick out, its kerchief on its head and a few extra bandages in its back pocket for its feet, just in case. That's right: As the month gets started, your mind is wandering. And it's really enjoying the walk! You could have all kinds of helpful inspirations during this time, so be sure and give yourself plenty of opportunities to stop and look around. By the 5th, the zanier your ideas, the better things turn out. On the 10th, you're in a highly emotional kind of space-- which is exactly where you thrive. Take advantage of it to make some big, exciting changes! Spend the day of the 15th communicating, and by the 16th and 17th, you're in a better position to negotiate a few tricky issues on the home front. If you feel selfish on the 21st and 22nd,

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maybe it's time to take a step back and make sure you're getting everything you need. If you've been neglecting yourself, you could be finding it very hard to give to others. On the 26th, try to be flexible, especially when it comes to money. On the 30th, you end the month with some good energy and a right-on intuition

Leo:: The 1st of the month could be the time when you begin to understand the lesson the less successful miners learned during the Gold Rush: Not all that glitters is gold. But before you get too down on things, take a minute to be thankful. Hey, at least you didn't waste the last of your drinking water pouring it on a whole bunch of sparking pyrites. Now, that would have been really terrible! By the 3rd, you're already seeing the silver lining in the lesson you just learned. On the 8th, brainstorm with a few friends, and you could come up with a plan that's better than mining. Heck, it's even better than spinning straw into gold-- and far more practical. On the 11th and 12th, you achieve something you thought was out of reach, and you could attract some romantic interest while you're at it. By the 17th, you fix a problem. By the 21st, you're ready for serious romance. Get out there and explore! On the 26th, you could have a little ego clash. Or is that a relationship issue that's coming up again? Look at it hard before you decide what to do. On the 30th, don't get mad-- get creative. Try painting, singing, dancing or doing a little graphic designing. Any one of these is a great way to channel any pent-up aggression.

Virgo:: Do you feel like the proverbial tortoise? Do you feel like your coworkers are the proverbial hares? That they run around in all directions wasting their energy and overestimating their capacities while you stick to the job? In the end, is it you who makes it to the finish line while they're all still catching up on their sleep back at the starting point? Are you sick of it? On the 1st, you may well have had enough. If that's the case, then this month is the month to make some changes. Try a little philosophy on the 5th, and if that doesn't work, try some new ways of communicating on the 7th and 8th. By the 13th and 14th, you're more than ready to have a couple of great days-- and you do. Take advantage of all this good energy to start a new project or two. On the 19th, delve deeply into a project that excites your intellectual curiosity. By the 23rd and 24th, you're ready for romance, and romance might be calling you on the phone and asking you out on a date. Don't forget to smile and bat your eyelashes! On the 30th and 31st, it's important that you respect other peoples' opinions, even if you're right and they're wrong.

Libra:: Your schedule gets a little disrupted on the 1st. So what? Take advantage of the snafu and head to the beach or park. Take your towel and your suntan lotion and your bathing suit and a nice, easy read and enjoy the summer. By the 5th, you're back to work, and one of your associates could be giving you a funny look. Use your natural diplomatic skills to see just what's up with them, then figure out what your next move ought to be. On the 9th and 10th, you could be in for a little more disruption when it comes to your routine. This time, instead of heading out to the beach, put your head down and get through it. This project must get finished! By the 16th and 17th, you're in a terrific-- and extremely flirtatious-- place. The great outdoors is calling, and so is that very attractive somebody. Get outside, preferably hand-in-hand with them! By the 21st and 22nd, you're ready to communicate. Don't let a little depression on the 23rd or 24th knock you for a loop. Get through it with some exercise. By the 28th and 29th, you've regained your natural harmony.

Scorpio:: You're ready for romance on the 1st. It's been a long, hot summer-- so when that cool drink of water walks into, say, your computer hardware store and asks if they can hire you to debug their personal computer's software while they sunbathe by the pool, smile and say 'yes!' Here's a bet that you two are going to have lot in common (you both enjoy sunbathing by the pool while sipping lemon drinks? Wow!). By the 3rd, you might need to check in with your mood. Are you feeling a little bit hurt and angry because they didn't call you back

right away? Do you think there's a better way you could react? Maybe instead of being hurt and angry you could just call them? Maybe they lost your phone number and have been hoping you'd get in touch with them? Anyway, try it out. On the 8th, focus on business, and on the 13th and 14th, discuss some of your feelings with your friends. They might have a helpful insight or two. On the 18th, 19th and 20th, everything is going your way. (So make sure you know which way you actually want to go.) On the 24th, you work well with somebody at work, and by the 29th, this could blossom into a romance of its own!

Sagittarius:: If, on the 1st, you just can't seem to get revved up to start the day, maybe it's time for you to start going to bed a little earlier. Yes, it's true that in the summertime the sun stays up longer and you want to go to bed later. But if you're feeling worn out, it could be a sign that you need to slow down. If at all possible, spend some time lying in the sun by the water. This is one of the best places to catch up on your sleep-- just don't forget to apply sun block! By the 5th, you're revved up and ready to go. See what a difference a little catnap in the sun can make? By the 10th, you could be in a very mystical state of mind. Maybe your mood is veering toward the transcendental. Maybe you're ready to make a career change. Maybe you're about to fall in love. Go with it, and find out. On the 16th and 17th, you need to be clear about what you think is fair. Don't stand for anything less! Goodwill abounds around you on the 21st and 22nd. Feels good, no? Well, there's nothing like goodwill abounding to remind you what it's all about, right? By the 28th and 29th, it might be time for another couple of sunny catnaps. Meow!

Capricorn:: If you aren't building sandcastles with high modern architectural flair and technologically elaborate bridge systems that span their moats on the 1st, you're probably performing in a barefoot beach ballet. Yes, as the month gets started, you're feeling extraordinarily creative. And that feels good! By the 5th, this feeling of creativity has morphed into a desire for creative romance. And it's extremely likely that creative romance is just what you'll get this month! Whether you meet a fellow sandcastle fanatic or a barefoot ballet fan, you'll find something in common with a lover of the arts. On the 9th and 10th, you might have to deal with an issue or two. Get all your errands out of the way, and you'll be in for some very high achievement days on the 13th and 14th. On the 19th, organize a potluck, and on the 21st, don't be afraid to dream. The 23rd and 24th could see any number of these dreams coming true -- and you'll be feeling pretty great at this time, no matter what stage of achievement your plans are in. On the 29th, put on your bathing suit and take off your shoes. Then head to the pool for a little impromptu water ballet!

Aquarius:: There are days-- like the 1st-- when you feel like spending too much money. Instead of getting out your credit card, why not go for a run or a long walk or a hike or a swim in the ocean? After all, overspending is just a way of trying to make a change in your life. And getting healthy is a much better way to go about making that kind of change. By the 3rd, you could have made a very important discovery. Does being in nature make you feel more balanced than a new pair of designer shoes ever could? On the 7th and 8th, you lock eyes with a very seductive somebody while on your new daily sunset jog. Get their number! You never know where this could lead! By the 13th and 14th, the more you look beneath the surface of your emotional reactions, the more grounded you feel. By the 19th, you want to focus on your career. How satisfied are you? On the 23rd and 24th, discipline yourself-- if you feel like staying home and watching TV instead of going for your sunset jog, don't! Everything around you is as brilliant as you are on the 25th and 26th-- which is pretty brilliant! End the month, on the 31st, by hiding your credit card under your mattress. Keep it there for a few days.

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Pisces: You start the month, on the 1st, with some very transformative energy. Whether you've made a discovery about yourself (or about the world around you, about somebody close to you or about the way things work in general), you've gotten some new insights that will help guide you from now on. On the 5th, whether you're writing love letters, receiving love letters or both, there are one heck of a lot of love letters circulating in your vicinity! Make a nice dinner for yourself and read them over. What's more delicious? Your organic salad or the sweet sentiments expressed in those pages? On the 10th, it's more romance, romance, romance for you. You're very much appreciated and admired by the people around you. On the 14th, you might have to examine an old pattern you have when it comes to relationships. Try not to just react to a problem that comes up the way you always do. This could be a real chance to do something different. On the 19th, watch out at work. Somebody thinks you're a pushover. You aren't, but you'll have to show them the hard way (by pushing back!). On the 24th, you could help somebody in a serious way. On the 27th and 28th, you start to wind down the month with some great energy, and on the 31st, you might have to solve a little love puzzle.

September 2007

Aries: Financial and social affairs begin to move forward after a period of lag. Opportunities in both these areas of life more readily appear when you are engaging in leisurely activities—vacationing, going to parties, and taking a break from the busy pace of your life. You continue to be busy running errands and taking care of business, and you could find yourself especially harried mid-month. Changes in work and health regimes are in store, whether it's an adjustment in your working environment or job tasks, or a brand new job on the horizon.

Taurus: Your drive to make money continues to be strong this month. Activities with, and attention to, a close partner are in focus. Feelings of being misunderstood in your personal relationships disappear after the first week of September, when you become more dynamically involved. Flaws in a love affair (or, for some, a creative project) come to light in September, demanding changes in your approach. This month and in the months to come, it's time to take a relationship to a new level of responsibility, or to re-evaluate your romantic needs altogether.

Gemini: Opportunities to make friends abound this month—others seem to magically come to you without much effort on your part! Problems with work or health ease and these areas of life move forward dramatically. Challenges in domestic matters and with (or surrounding) family members arise this month. Special attention to your domestic life is essential, and September begins a long-term trend in which you feel the need to organize your home and family life. An opportunity period occurs for you on the 12-14, when relationships, travel, and fun are the themes.

Cancer: You are filled with plans and ideas this month, but more inclined to put them into action in October. This works best for you, as you need time to collect your thoughts. Financial matters improve dramatically in September. Pressures begin to ease, and a financial burden lifts. This improves your overall mood. Problems with communication systems, siblings, neighbours, and machinery or equipment demand immediate attention. It's time to take more responsibility by running important errands and getting your paperwork in order. A love affair moves forward quite suddenly, and with gusto.

Leo: This month, flaws in your financial affairs are revealed and demand important action. Money matters are challenged yet strong—you are ready to take the necessary steps to get spending under control and your finances organized. September marks the beginning of a long-term trend in which managing your personal income more effectively is in focus. Challenges with a significant other can occur around the 9-10, and likely

Virgo-Health and self-image issues become a strong priority this month. A solar eclipse in your sign on the 11th necessitates the need for rest in the week before and after the event. Much of the energy in your life this month has a magical quality to it as things are just automatically going in a certain direction. It is important to be intuitive and allow the natural course to show you the way to the next step. The 17-26th is excellent for you—love finds you, and others respect your opinions and character.

Libra: From the 11-18th, a revelation comes to you that has the power to change your life. Listen carefully to others while honoring your intuition as well. Money matters move forward in September. Delays you have been experiencing with funds and possessions disappear. Your self-confidence improves, although you are still a little more insular than usual, enjoying peace and quiet and time to reflect. You are taking pleasure in privacy for the time being. A partner's job changes may affect you, and partnership matters require special attention in the last week of the month.

Scorpio: This month, a partner's attitude and affairs begin to move forward, serving to ease challenges and to bridge gaps between you and a special someone. Singles feel more confident. Your personal projects begin to move forward and a sense of relief contributes to a hopeful mood. You are picking up much important information intuitively this month, so keep an "idea" journal. Career pressures are easing, as you are entering a new long-term trend in which you are less concerned about public image and more interested in long-term happiness goals.

Sagittarius: Potentially dramatic career changes, disruptions, or activities are in store for you by the middle of September. Rest up in the first weeks of the month in order to ground yourself and make sure you are meeting your responsibilities to your satisfaction. September marks the beginning of a long term trend in which your career goals become a priority. Challenges between the demands of a special relationship and those of your professional life arise from the 15-19th. A romantic revelation keeps life exciting in the last week of September.

Capricorn: Work and the demands of daily life continue to be hectic this month, but you become more pleasantly busy as the month moves along. Although there may have been some confusion or stagnation in your love life recently, September is easier for romantic expression and attention. With your ruler, Saturn, moving into fellow earth sign, Virgo, your life begins to stabilize, life becomes neater and more fulfilling, and you are more able to meet your responsibilities happily. This long-term trend boosts your confidence. Life is becoming less stressful and more fulfilling!

Aquarius: In September, stimulating activity along romantic, pleasurable, and creative lines continues to enliven your life, dear Aquarius. Career matters begin to move forward with pleasing results, as do travel and educational plans. Family relationships and domestic life are strong. A close partnership intensifies. Whether this makes you feel more deeply connected or it challenges you with mini relationship crises depends on how you feel about this increased intimacy! Issues of intimate sharing as well as joint finances come into high focus, demanding attention now and in the months to come.

Pisces: Relationships and especially close partnerships become a strong issue this month with a Solar Eclipse occurring in Virgo, your opposite sign. Seeing the "other side" of the story will be in high focus now and in the next few months. Your recent displays of independence are likely the topic, particularly around the 9th. You may need to reassure and soothe. Some relationship tests are likely, as flaws are revealed in your current setup. Now is the time to make important improvements. Family life continues to be especially cantankerous, calming down in October.

Mordigen

Comic : Reincarnation Finale



Sunny Silverunicorn

Resurrection and the Light

by Kaeirdwyn

The resurrection gives my life meaning and direction and the opportunity to start over no matter what my circumstances.

~~~~Robert Flatt

-Our Lord has written the promise of resurrection, not in books alone, but in every leaf in springtime.

~~~~Martin Luther

-Every parting gives a foretaste of death; every coming together again a foretaste of the resurrection.

~~~~Arthur Schopenhauer

-Imagination has always had powers of resurrection that no science can match.

~~~~Ingrid Bengis

-Death is not extinguishing the light; it is only putting out the lamp because the dawn has come.

~~~~Rabindranath Tagore

-It is not more surprising to be born twice than once; everything in nature is resurrection.

~~~~Voltaire

-The apathy of the people is enough to make every statue leap from its pedestal and hasten the resurrection of the dead.

~~~~William Lloyd Garrison

-Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead yet shall he live.

~~~~John 11:25, The Holy Bible

-Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our Light, not our Darkness, that most frightens us.

~~~~Marianne Williamson

-In the attitude of silence the soul finds The path in a clearer light, and what is elusive and deceptive resolves itself into crystal clearness. Our life is a long and arduous quest after Truth.

~~~~Mahatma Gandhi

-Faith is the strength by which a shattered world shall emerge into the light.

~~~~Helen Keller

-Sometimes our Light goes out but is blown into flame by another human being. Each of us owes deepest thanks to those who have rekindled this light.

~~~~Albert Schweitzer

-I am not bound to win, but I am bound to be true. I am not bound to succeed, but I am bound to live by the light that I have. I must stand with anybody that stands right, and stand with him while he is right, and part with him when he goes wrong.

~~~~Abraham Lincoln

-Faith is the bird that feels the light and sings when the dawn is still dark.

~~~~Rabindranath Tagore

-If that vital spark that we find in a grain of wheat can pass unchanged through countless deaths and resurrections, will the spirit of man be unable to pass from this body to another?

~~~~William Jennings Bryan

-Dawn and resurrection are synonymous. The reappearance of the light is the same as the survival of the soul.

~~~~Victor Hugo

Reincarnation Quotations

by Kaeridwyn

Reincarnation: People coming back to life at quitting time.

~~~~Unknown

-Sex is one of the nine reasons for reincarnation. The other eight are unimportant.

~~~~Henry Miller

-What we do in life echoes in eternity.

~~~~Unknown

-Reincarnation and resurrection have some things in common as ways of thinking. Both are affirmations that death is not decisive. Both presuppose a life, a Godward life-energy which, as the Bhagavad Gita puts it, "does not die when the body dies." Both address the mystery of that ongoing, irrepressible life that cannot be done in by death. But there are critical differences as well. Reincarnation is not what I as a Christian mean by resurrection. Reincarnation has to do with a wide understanding of life, one that includes both birth and death. Resurrection has to do with the meaning of life itself, no matter how long its trajectory might be.

~~~~Diana L. Eck, U.S. educator. Encountering God, ch. 4, Beacon (1993).

Reincarnation - Quotations by "Zen Master Rama", Dr. Frederick Lenz

-Reincarnation is a dance. It is a movement of life to the rhythm of the universe. Spirit and matter join together as one dancing partner. They dance and it goes on forever.

-Reincarnation is a cyclic process. There are endless levels of creation, different universes. In each one something similar is taking place, the evolution of spirit through matter.

-All incarnations are lived at once, and yet there does seem to be a linear sense of time when you're in the vortex of time and space, when your consciousness is fixated in a body.

-Naturally, there is reincarnation; otherwise life would be pretty dull. All the patterns in this lifetime are results from patterns in other lifetimes.

-In different lifetimes, you incarnate in different dimensional planes, let alone in different universes in the physical universe.

-Mind is not simply the collection of aggregate cells inside your brain. If you are only the grey matter, then when that dies, you won't exist any more. It's not that easy. You exist forever.

-Reincarnation is simply changing awareness. What you are reincarnating into are different states of mind. The whole show is on the inside.

-Reincarnation is a process in which a finite being will go through a series of transmutations and will perceive different things. There will be a continuity of perception.

-Most people don't why they are born or why they die. They have no understanding of the forces in life that pull them and push them to their death and another rebirth in this or another world.

-From infinite awareness, something comes forward, a sense of infinite awareness and finite awareness. That perception is the birth of a being.

-Reincarnation is happening all the time. Every moment we are going through a change. Our being isn't solid. Reincarnation is now.

-It is really hard to talk about reincarnation because you have always been and you will always be. You just experience different things in different ways.

-Reincarnation is not necessarily linear. Sometimes people actually become more immersed in darkness or illusion than they were in previous lifetimes.

-If we get above the individualized soul's journey, you will see that we are all one. We are all one light. In that sense, we are all enlightened.

-Reincarnation is a process of moving from one state of mind to another. Whether you are in a body or out of a body is immaterial.

-Just remembering what you did in previous lives doesn't mean a thing. It's nice to remember that you had higher states of mind, but that won't necessarily get you there. It might even make things painful.

-The inner aspects of reincarnation have to do with where you put your mind. The more expansive state of mind you enter into, the less suffering there is.

-Reincarnation is the evolution of spirit through matter. Over thousands and millions of lifetimes, the soul evolves. It comes into the light. The growth is slow.

-You are no different in this lifetime than you were in your last lifetime. This lifetime is simply a continuation of your last lifetime.

-Many practitioners think there is some giant balance scale, where someone is keeping track, like Santa Claus, and that will determine your allotment of presents. That's a very exoteric understanding of reincarnation.

-To think you can just go out and help people and somehow get a better life is not reincarnation as I know it. A better life comes from being happy and inner realizations. Now if helping others adds to that, well then, it's great.

-Reincarnation is not what a lot of people think. Yes, we are eternal. No, everyone does not attain enlightenment; it's not necessary; life is smarter than we are.

-As spirits we have always existed in a generalized form, since we are all part of the universe. As individual spirits, we have existed for a timeless time.

-Reincarnation is the journey of hope because in each lifetime we move forward to place a better than our last lifetime, a place within ourselves.

-Through incarnations, some beings do go down. That is to say, they forget. The soul falls into an eclipse of itself and there is a downward progression for a time.

-All the lives we ever lead are only dreams, these walking moments, that look so solid to you when you consider yourself awake, are just dreams.

-This is just one little lifetime in a succession of lifetimes.

-What goes on in this one little lifetime is not so important as you might like to think it is because you're in it. When you can see the larger picture, it's just a tiny breath in a succession of breaths.

-Reincarnation is a hopeful understanding of life. It is an accurate understanding of life. In each lifetime we grow, develop and evolve.

-Reincarnation is not something that occurs at death; it is something that takes place at every moment. Death and rebirth are occurring every second.

-You can get so caught up in learning all about reincarnation, you can get so caught up in learning about structures, fascinating though they may be, that you're not free; you're just studying a different textbook.

-You can summon up power from past lives and bring them into this life. That can give you a boost into the next state of mind or further up.

-When a person who has had highly evolved past lives is going through a strong past-life transit, that person comes to know things about life, death and other dimensions that most people in our world aren't aware of.

-The knowledge of reincarnation assures us that life is worth living. Life is not a one-shot deal. It is forever.

-There are future lives. It is not necessary to cram everything into this lifetime. You can enjoy this lifetime, go with the flow, and know it will lead you to a better life in your next incarnation.

-Karmic progression implies that we are kind of alliterating steps to life. There's alliteration, a kind of rhythmic structure. Once we're in time and space, the variable structures are somewhat limited.

-To try and fit reincarnation into a neat mental package is very unwise. You will be very surprised when you discover that it doesn't work out that way. Your illusions will be painful for you.

-What you gain in internal knowledge goes from one lifetime to another. It is not wasted. Unlike those stone edifices that will fade, your internal knowledge will stay with you from one incarnation to another.

-All the lives we ever lead are only dreams. These waking moments, that look so solid to you when you consider yourself awake, are just dreams. And they'll pass, as they always do.

-How strange it is to be human. For a short moment we are conscious of the glories of life - then we become silent again. Perhaps there is more - look more deeply into the matter.

-The essence of Buddhism is simply that the mind is forever. We are always experiencing different states of mind in one form or another, in one body or another, in one life or another, forever.

Kaeridwyn

Burning Wood

by All_most PUNK

"So, tell me, how do you burn wood?" said Drunkard 1 to Drunkard 2.
"I burn it... Iiii burn it... C'mon, if you know so much, what kind of wood is darker: the oak or the iron?" answered Drunkard 2, trying to stay straight with considerable difficulty.
" " Explained Drunkard 3, who was passed out on the floor:
"See? See? He really does know a lot about wood, not like you, Drunkard 2," declared with conviction Drunkard 4 (who, curiously, was also Drunkard 1), pointing towards Drunkard 3, who, of course, didn't react at all.
"And what do you know, idiot! When you started working with wood, I already had 12 years of experience cutting it and making plates with soda cans" responded Drunkard 2 with a cutting edge on his voice. He was thinking that it would have been a better idea to name himself Drunkard 1 or Drunkard 10, that was a lot more impressive.
" " Drunkard 3 argued again from the floor, totally firm in his position (laying with his legs straight and a napkin covering his face).
"See? He really does know about soda cans! Besides, I went to Spain, so I really know about wood. I bought tapas from a Spanish guy and, d'you know what?, they were made of wood. I almost broke a tooth with them. But there I learned about wood."
The one talking now was Drunkard 1, without losing any face in front of the arguments. Also, he had decided to change his name to Rudolph.
"Look, Rudolpha, when you cut your first tree, I was 40 months old and was working with my two sons, their three grandchildren and my ET named Rudolph. So don't come here saying that wood is made out of cardboard boxes." This was said by Drunkard 2, who still went by that name.
" " Drunkard 3 said with conviction while a fly danced on his nose.
"See? He really does know about trips to Spain made by ETs! And he isn't thinking about naming himself Drunkard 10, as if that was more impressive!" raised his voice, a little, Rudolph, who now wanted to be called Drunkard 1.
"Anyway, if you know so much about wood, how are the lines of the wood? I'm sure you don't even know that!"
"Look, Rudolpha, by the time you polished your first branch, I had already been working, with my father in the middle of the forest, for over 240 years making trees. So don't come here saying that you know about wood. And do you know what else? No, no, you don't know, because you don't know the first thing about wood. I'm fed up with you. I'm leaving." Drunkard 10 stood up, kicked the stool around a little bit, mumbled something about James Woods and walked away.
" " affirmed, kind of insecure, Drunkard 3, who probably was going to sleep for the rest of the week.
"See? He really does know about kicking the stool! Bah, go, go. You know nothing, anyway." Drunkard 1, whose ID now said 'Rudolph', returned all his attention to his glass of wine. Then, he looked at the person that was sitting in the stool next to him "And you, how do you burn wood? Because I've been trying to find out how to everywhere and I can't. I tried the Internet, the National Library, several book stores, the newspaper, the race course, in the Black Woods and I can't find an answer, y'know? I haven't seen a tree in all my life, so I'm totally at a loss here..."

This is, honestly, based on a true story. A conversation I heard once while eating at a small bar with a friend. I may have exaggerated some parts a little, but just a little bit.
Note: Tapas is a common dish from Spain. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tapas>

Lighting the Way

by All_most PUNK

In the bank...
Rose Andrews: Excuse me sir, are you the last one in the line to pay?
Rocco Lord: Yes, dear, I'm the last one in line, the last one left, there's nobody after me, when I'm gone nobody will keep the name going. At least for now, while we are still here... I mean, my number still hasn't been chosen in the great lottery of Heaven, but my turn must be really close. Do you understand me, little one? My turn up there. I mean, to be called by God. What I'm trying to say is that the moment of my decease must be close, that soon I'll die, perish, turn into a cold corpse, it'll be time for me to start watching the grass grow from the downside, be six feet under, turn into a complete happy meal for the worms, that in not a long time I'll be singing with the Angels in the celestial chorus, I'll turn into manure, my metabolic processes will become of interest only for historians, I'll have approximately the same amount of activity that a boring rock has. Soon, very soon.. One isn't young anymore and the body doesn't responds as it used to.
Rose Andrews: Yeah, ok... but this is the line to pay the electricity bill, right?
Rocco Lord: Yes, lady, here you can pay for the electricity, but... What's the point of paying it when you are so close to never enjoying its uses anymore? Because the Lord will call me to it's side any time now, there's no doubt. Do you understand? I'm not sure if I'm being clear: at a certain age you start seeing the Grim Reaper as a very close friend that any time may drop for a sleeper, Death becomes an old acquaintance, you start hanging out with phantoms and ghosts, the deceased and the souls become an every day visit, all our friends are gone and the only thing left to do is follow them, the vital energy starts falling, you start getting ready for the great trip from the one there's no way back and for which you don't need a ticket. Soon, very soon.. One isn't young anymore and the body doesn't responds as it used to.
Rose Andrews: Uh, then would you let me go before you? Because it's getting kinda late and I have to pick up my daughter at the kindergarten...
Rocco Lord: Ah, no, what do you think, you bad-mannered brat! This is too much! Youth these days respects nothing! I don't know you at all and you come here and start telling me about your problems as if we were family or something! What do you think!? Just like that! God!
GOD: You called?
Rocco Lord: God?
GOD: No, no, not God, I'm GOD. Geoffrey Otis Divinity, at your service. GOD for my friends.
Rocco Lord: You came here looking for me?
GOD: Something like that. Well, not like that at all. Actually, I came here, to this bank, to pay the electricity bill, with my good friend God...
God: Hey ya! How's it hanging?
GOD: ...when we couldn't help but hearing that you were telling Mrs... Excuse me, your name is...?
Rose Andrews:
GOD: Ah, yes, Rose.
Rose Andrews: But I thought you knew everything.
God: Everything except your phone number, mommy!
GOD: Ok, ok, let's have some self-control here, please, that we have business to treat with Mr. Lord here.
God: Me?

Lighting the Way (continued...)

GOD: No, the other Mr. Lord.

God: You?

GOD: No, with Rocco. Let's see... I have some good news and some bad news for you. Should I start with...?

Rocco Lord: The good ones. And about the others... it's ok, I don't want to make you lose your time, you can keep them. In any case, soon I'll be surrounded by flower crowns, I'll go all ashes to ashes, I'll be an inanimate mass of bones and cold flesh, my soul will fly through the celestial abyss, not even the hottest women will be able to...

GOD: Yeah, yeah, ok, let's cut the drama and the crap, please. The good news is that we don't have your number...

God: But I have Rose's number. Her phone number! Teehee!

GOD: ...so you won't die.

Rocco Lord: No? Never? Never ever? And the bad news?

GOD: Oh, yes. Well, as it happens, the problem is that you don't exist. You are just a character in an article for an e-zine. A "humor" articles, apparently (not that it is funny at all, by the way. The author should present his excuses at the end of it, I think). If you look with some attention, you'll see that you can see the name of the e-zine up there. It's The Erlhald or something like that. God?

God: Yes, The Erlhald or something like that.

GOD: So, you see, you can't die. The worst case scenario is that you'll become a forgotten character. But you'll appear again every time that the authors use your name. What was your name, again? Rocco? Uh, that isn't good. If your name was more common, like... I don't know... Robert, then there would be good chances that you would appear in every issue. Now, with a name like Rocco... Well, anyway, we'll be seeing each other. Bu bye!

God: Hasta la vista, baby! Uh, I had been wanting for a chance to say that for all eternity.

Rose Andrews: Uh, they are gone. And in a puff of smoke. Like that dragon... Well, that's great. For a second I thought they were going to try to get in front of us in the line, with that "we are almighty" excuse. Mister? Are you ok?

Rocco Lord: Yes, dear, I am... Do you want to go before me? I'm in no hurry.

All_most PUNK

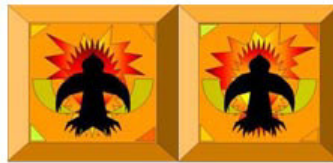
Games! by Sir. Robert, All_Most PUNK & Mordigen

Spot the Fake!

A collector of fine art would like to display some of his collection at the local art museum. After a quick glance the art curator tells the collector he will not display this image entitled "Reincarnation of the Phoenix" in his gallery. Can you spot at least 10 of the differences in the fake image on the right?

I have the solutions to be posted in the next issue

-[Sir. Robert]



Quickie Trivia...

The Karma and Reincarnation Quiz! --> <http://www.funtrivia.com/playquiz/quiz118813d9c2a0.html>
this is a nifty lil quiz about Karm and Reincarnation, j ust for fun. You think your a Guru of Karma??
Test your knowledge here!

Literal Maths by [All_Most PUNK]

$2+3=2+3$ $56 \times 487512685 = 56 \times 487512685$ $7/5 + 16/8 = 7/5 + 16/8$

Funny Pics

by Mordigen



Now there's a new kinda healthcare....
sign at doctor's office,
Stone Mountain, GA



Don't you just love how people obey the laws.
Atlanta Roller Girls Event
Stone Mountain, GA



Wake up with the King
April Fools Prank
Liblum, GA



Pizza Shirt Anybody?
Bang On T's
Atlanta, GA



Well, it finally happened...hell froze over
Highway City Limit Sign
Hell, GA (yes, we actually have a Hell)

Watermelon Salsa! by Irulan

Here's a recipe to bid the summer farewell with. One bite of this fruity salsa will remind you of the sun and sitting by a pool. It's great for parties and get-togethers. However, never tell people what it is before they try it. It looks so much like tomato salsa that most won't know the difference until they've eaten it. This is not cruel trickery. It's just that most people scrunch their nose at the words "watermelon" and "salsa" together.

When you make this recipe, keep in mind that you can adjust the amounts of various ingredients to personal taste. The only ingredient you want to be particularly careful with is the vinegar. Too much of that is not, my friends, a good thing.

½ of a watermelon, diced
1 mango, diced (canned mango also works)
1 jalapeno pepper
1 red onion, diced
½ cup apple cider vinegar
Lime juice (from 2 fresh limes)
¼ cup sugar
1 tablespoon salt
¼ cup olive oil (not extra virgin)

Put all ingredients in a bowl, and adjust to your liking.

Irulan

Phoenix & Dragon Stir Fry by Mordigen

8oz Fresh peeled and de-veined medium shrimp
2 tsp Cornstarch
1/4 tsp Ground red pepper
2 med Boneless, skinless, chicken breast halves (6 oz total)
1/2 cup Water
2 tbl Soy sauce
1 tbl Oyster sauce
2 tbl Dry sherry
2 tsp Cornstarch
1/2 tsp Instant chicken bouillon granules
1 tbl Cooking oil
2 Cloves garlic, minced
1 cup Thinly sliced carrot half moons
1 cup Broccoli florets
1/2 can (8-oz) sliced bamboo shoots, drained (1/2 cup)
1 tsp Sesame seed, toasted (optional)
3 cup Hot cooked rice

Rinse shrimp. Halve the shrimp lengthwise; pat dry with paper towels. Combine 2 tsp cornstarch and red pepper; toss with shrimp. Set aside. Rinse the chicken and pat dry. Cut into 3/4-inch pieces; set aside. For sauce, in a small bowl, stir together the water, soy sauce, dry sherry, oyster sauce, 2 tsp cornstarch, and chicken bouillon granules. Set aside. Pour cooking oil into a wok or large skillet. (Add more oil as necessary during cooking.) Preheat over medium-high heat. Stir-fry garlic in hot oil for 15 seconds. Add carrot and broccoli; stir -fry for 3 to 4 minutes or till vegetables are crisp tender. Remove vegetables from wok. Add the chicken to the hot wok. Stir-fry for 2-3 minutes or until no pink remains. Remove the chicken from the wok. Add shrimp and stir-fry for 2-3 minutes or till shrimp turn pink. Return chicken to the wok. Push the chicken and shrimp from the center of the wok. Stir sauce. Add the sauce to the center of the wok. Cook and stir till thickened and bubbly. Return the cooked vegetables to the wok. Add the bamboo shoots. Stir all ingredients together to coat with sauce. Cook and stir about one minute more or until heated through. If desired, sprinkle with toasted sesame seed. Serve immediately over hot cooked rice.

Recipe is suppose to serve 4, but better serves 2 for a good meal

Mordigen