

Rocky Arredondo Presents...

THE COBRA'S NOSE

Vol. 13

I think different.

10 Dec. 1999

The Cobra's Notes...

Volume 12 of *The Cobra's Nose* had a good twenty minutes or so. Then the complaints started rolling in.

"Excuse me," snipped the recently deposed Entire Foot of in the Know. My new title should be 'King James the Almighty Senior Product Manager Amen'." He went on to assure me he had already begun to amend his edition and advised me to do the same. Which led me to seriously consider changing his name yet again to a curt yet punchy verb-pronoun combo. Then on the way home I noticed Vivian Li's last second insertion of the Rod Serling pic lopped off the top third or so of "Little Willey Style" (if you didn't receive an insert of "Little Willey Style," please let me know). As I was stalled in on Hayden and Shea during Friday rush hour traffic at the time, all the words useful to describe my state of mind were handy and slipped from my tongue like an oyster sized loogie. The next working day, Mr. Flintstone snarled, "What's this 'Barney and Bam-Bam' crap?" in reply to my hearty "Good morning!", Audrey threatened to kick my ass if the quality of the graphics didn't drastically improve like quick, and the reigning Big Toe of in the Know challenged the validity of certain words contained within the issue.

And still an hour until my morning break.

Fortunately, the day picked up almost immediately after when Mom called to announce the arrival of a new Willey to the family, Sydney Amber (yes, that's her on the right). That was the name after all, and it's a good one because the initials spell a word: SAW. That's much better than mine (SCM) because the occasional comedian asks why my parents named me "scum". I also learned of a couple of other names that had been floated around pre-natally, "Hydema," "Touchema," and "Baja." Anyway, Sydney is a cute little thing, seven pounds one ounce at birth, with strawberry blond hair which her Uncle Rocky claims will push down her market value at least a grand. Her head was bruised and conical as she was removed with some sort of plunger at the end of twenty three hours of labor Kelley underwent. The whole process was documented with a digital camera. A feature of the digital camera is a panel on back that allows you to look at the images that have been captured; that's how Aunt Jan showed Pat and me the pictures from the hospital. If that's how she wants to show you the pictures from the hospital tell her "No," but if she approaches you with only two or three photos in hand it's probably alright.



Now, if you are wondering if Sydney's Uncle Rocky is the Rocky in "Rocky Arredondo Presents *The Cobra's Nose*," wonder no more for they are one and the same. Gracious, benevolent Rocky offered *The Cobra's Nose* the use of "a couple of thousand stamps" left over from his days driving the Gatorade Hummer. Not that this should overshadow the magnanimous contributions of his sister Kelley, who provided the stamps with berries on them, or his Aunt Kay (aka "Mom") who went with Daffy Duck, but if he comes though it kind of does. Rocky currently resides in California with Daniel K. Arredondo whose name I'm sure you remember from the credits of the past half dozen or so Wes Craven movies. He is helping with Danny's new house in something like the indentured servitude arrangement that Brett has going with John and Evelyn in Pasadena. The house is at the base of the HOLLYWOOD sign, so look for it next time you see that landmark in a movie or on TV. When I asked if he was concerned about suicides, he assured me they had already taken the precaution of stringing a net across the back property line.

Now a note on the holidays. This edition will probably be mailed somewhere around the ides of December. Frankly, I probably won't be in the spirit of things yet, although I have moved away from that bizarre church and that should help. But as I look at this page in Microsoft Word I see lots of red and green squiggly lines and that's sort of festive. If you are interested in reproducing the effect, I'd be happy to e-mail you this document for a modest fee.

Merry Whatever,

Sharon C. McGovern
Editor, Publisher, Cobra-in-Chief

Sharon's Adventures in Boobtropolis

I think the time has come, though it's never too early nor late, for us all to fall to our knees and give thanks to our Creator for models. Now I won't presume to guess why *you* might be thankful, though I'll bet I could if I did, but sometimes I think if my brother weren't one I'd never get out of the house at night.

☪ The occasion of one of these rare excursions was the "Grunge Gone Glam" fashion show hosted by one of the local radio stations which for whatever reason I have never been able to receive in my car so I feel no compulsion to promote them here. Pat's preparation for the show (aromatherapy, meditation, make-up, hair) lasted much of the day, so the first time I heard from him was about six o'clock when he called and asked me to deliver his after-show party duds. I asked if I could surprise him with my personal selection, and he said, "No. You may surprise me with the following: brown vinyl pants, red shiny shirt, and that thick chain chocker in my bathroom." Then he gave me directions to that evening's fashion hot spot, Chauncy's, and told me my name would be on a list.

Chauncy's, as it turns out, is way the hell up north, even further north than where I work which is practically polar north. Still, if I had driven straight there without getting lost I would almost have arrived when Pat told me to, but, you know, like that will ever happen. So I arrived about a half hour later than I should have, though without fear of having missed anything because as you may have noticed nothing starts when it should anymore, not even on television.

The line in front of Chauncy's seemed to me unduly long, especially for somebody on a list, so I breezed up to the Will Call window and asked to be let in right away. The Will Call window was staffed by a large woman in full on sassy mode who couldn't find my name on any of her lists, so I hung around her table and watched her hassle and tease the suckers from the line. She put on a good show considering the material she had to work with, and was so in the moment that she seemed to have completely forgotten to research my name as she had promised. Well, "suggested" is more like it. Or maybe, "hinted." What would you deduce from, "Just stand right there, honey"? So I stood there until I heard Pat call my name from behind the rope that cordoned off the backstage area. After I fetched his clothes from the car, he let me in.

☪ Backstage is fun even when it's boring. Once I went to see my vivacious cousin Evelyn in BYU's production of *The Madwoman of Chailot*, and she yanked me out of the lobby and escorted me to the greenroom. I got to meet some of the other actors, but nobody said much because they had to listen to what was happening on stage. Shortly before Ev went on she smuggled me into the audience, where I was promptly busted by this drunk with power usher and returned to the lobby to buy a ticket as if I were some slob unrelated to Talent. (cont. on pg. 3)



Mr Enigma

Daring Bird Rescue

Those of you who know me know I love the birds, boy do I ever. Except that they are noisy, smelly, messy, peevish, and I'm allergic to them, I would probably have one or two in my care even now. Birds are also, bless their little heads, stupid as bricks. Before you start in on me about the amazing gray parrot &c. you saw on *20/20* or Animal Planet, let me point out that those birds were either in captivity or were mere vandals (though I would never deny their considerable natural talents in that field). Of those in captivity, I'll bet those that displayed the most intelligence as humans understand it had their wings clipped. I noticed when my former pet conures Carl and Vlad had their wings clipped their behavior was much more crafty. They would pick the locks on their cage, locate and plunder their seed bag, and converse with me in English. With their wings fully restored they pretty much kept to flying, yelling, and gnawing through curtain rods. I am reminded of a dinner conversation in which my dad said, "It's not so much that birds are dumb as that flying consumes so much mental space." At this, a guest interjected, "Ah, but what a splendid thing flying is!" and triggered the gag reflex in everybody else at the table.

Which is to say a wild desert bird found itself trapped in the crawl space of our IKON building today. (cont. on pg 5)

(cont. from pg. 2)

Fortunately, Talent witnessed the ugly scene from stage, and when her bit was over she removed me from the lobby again and installed me on the other side of the auditorium. This did not deter the usher (I suppose I could call her “usherette” to indicate she was—I’m not even going to broach the question of whether she still is—female, but that would also imply that she was diminutive when she most certainly was not) whom I saw barreling over the back rows toward me like Big Mama Alien and out I went again. Evelyn stopped trying to sneak me in after that (never fear, I did see an entire show at a later date and she was, of course, superb), but we made arrangements to meet after the show for dinner with the rest of the Talent. That was much better than the greenroom, anyway, especially after we moved past the discussion of how many times have you seen *Beaches* and how hard did you cry?



Actually, Backstage with Pat was nothing like that. For one thing, he has never seen *Beaches*, and probably never should. Also, I had caught him hours before the show rather than in the midst of it. In fact, most of the models were still off being primed whereas most of Pat’s natural magnificence was allowed to shine through ungilded. In fact, the only other models around were this Valkyrie type who kept flexing her back muscles, a scrawny kid who was recruited from the radio station’s promotions department when one of the models flaked at the last minute, and this big guy who had three or four make-up people painting him blue. “Oh, he must be the sea monster,” Pat said of the last. Well, okay. There were a few skinny, intense, black clad women prowling around looking as if they wished they were smoking. The skinniest, most intense one who was clearly in charge marched up to us, looked me up and down, and snapped, “Are you a dresser?” The dressers were the husky ladies in severe lipstick so it was an easy mistake to make, but I had to confess I was there in no official capacity. She strode away after shooting me a glance that said, “Stop eating the Talents’ food, then.” But I didn’t.

Pat showed me the clothes he was scheduled to wear, plus favorite outfits of Alyssa (the second prettiest model in the show) which would just about fill your pants pocket. Then when Alyssa and the rest of the models arrived, Pat escorted me out to the public part of Chauncy’s, where I would drift aimless and alone for the next two and a half hours.

This is a part of the narrative where I’m really tempted to bitch to high heaven, but as I’ve got that on the agenda for later in the article, I’ll keep it short here. Chauncy’s is a former stable. Backstage was, and perhaps this is fitting, where the stalls were, and the public portion covered the exercise yard. The acoustics were everything you could expect from a colossal tin box, and the entire joint was filled with artificial fog. If you wanted respite from the fog you could go to the smoking area, but if you left through the front door you were warned that you would not be readmitted. There were some booths and bars to peruse. I had my photo taken by an extras placement agency as a goof. They actually phoned me here at work last week, but I told them, “What?! And leave all *this*?”



Hey, while I’m on the topic of extras, I just got a hot scoop from Lee who might be one in a Canadian film with a working title I promised not to disclose, so I’ll just call it *Porn, Porn, Porn!* If it

is within the recent tradition of Canadian filmmaking, especially those movies with provocative names, it will be explicit without being erotic, presenting sex as a horrifying though compelling procedure. (Feel free to call me for a list of examples.) One can only hope Lee’s costume will include a dog collar and that this film somehow gets a decent release in the States. (cont. on pg. 4)



Brazil


“My complication had a little complication.”
For more holiday classics, please turn to page 5.

Infringement? Never

As long as we’re discussing the movie industry (let’s just pretend we were), now might be a good time to have a short discussion about copyright infringement. This is a practice *The Nose* wholeheartedly embraces, but which is frowned upon by copyright holders such as Universal Studios®, employer of my favorite cousin-in-law (top five, anyway) John Murdy. Because he has a cool job (designing theme park rides, of all things) and has been treated well (though he once participated in a primate kidnap scheme and demanded a cappuccino wagon manned by festively dressed flunkies be installed in the office), he is loyal toward his company to an extent that would never occur to him if he worked for, say, IKON. As a result he is bothered by the flagrant theft of words, images, lyrics, and music too if I could figure out how to manage it by unsavory hacks such as myself, and has pondered summoning up Universal Studio’s lawyers to deal with the problem. Normally, this wouldn’t be a problem, but as *The Mummy* did well earlier this year they now probably have the resources to follow through so maybe I had better take the precaution of disincluding certain items from the Jensen-Murdy edition of the newsletter. Now here’s the part that requires your cooperation—if somebody from that camp happens to ask you if such and such a thing was left blank, blotted out, or removed by force, you say, “Yes! That *was* odd, was it not?” And you will be believed because, let’s face it, last minute Cobra Corrections are hardly unheard of.

Thanks in advance for your cooperation. ©©©©


(cont. from pg. 3)

 Back to the stable. Blah blah blah the band with the guy from Tool, blah blah fat belly dancers, blah bad art, and cue the Fashion Show!

Unlike the Fiducia show (please visit their website at www.fiduciacollection.com, and no, Pat isn't really shaped like that the photo was stretched), the clothes had color and drama. Everything Pat wore was shiny, particularly the rude word stitched onto one of his shirts. Everything the girls wore was scanty and tight. Four businesses were represented, including Buffalo Exchange which I thought was odd because they are a second hand shop so whatever you buy there was insufficiently cool in the opinion of the previous owner. But they did have the flashiest segment of the show.


It started with a couple of fashion roadies positioning two fake rocks (one shaped like Camelback mountain, the other like a phallus) on the stage. Then Pat and a female slunk down the catwalk, where at the end Pat chained the female's hands, led her back, and attached her to the phallus one. Remember the big blue guy from a few paragraphs back? He stalked about and menaced her while the rest of the models immersed from Backstage and struck poses. And that scrawny kid? He had the model moves down pat--the blank stare, the swagger, all of it--and he acquitted himself with a good deal of élan, exceptional in a model, wonderful in a civilian. I think there could be Gap ads in that boy's future if he applied himself.

After the show I got to go Backstage again, but the food was packed away and the models were tired and cranky so the appeal was somewhat diminished. I had had it with that evening anyway, and drove home with images of me watching cable and wearing pajamas dancing in my head. Usually that would be the end of my fashion reportage, but this event had a sequel of sorts the following Saturday night.

 Pat was rather smitten with Alyssa, so when she asked if he would meet her and a bunch of other models at Sanctuary he said alright, and asked if I would like to go along. I said alright because I was curious to see models at play, but I felt a shudder of trepidation at the thought of the venue as Sanctuary is notoriously hard to get into. Celebrity PR agents with invitations have been denied--would I have a chance? Fortunately, I didn't get the opportunity to find out because Alyssa called and said the models would meet us at Axis-Radius instead. Axis is where Pazport performs on Tuesdays, and Radius is connected to it, so this locale seemed much more friendly and accessible to me, more Cultural Hall than Studio 54. Pat also seemed comfortable with the change, so away we went.



Scary Monster

 This is the part where I gripe for a long while.

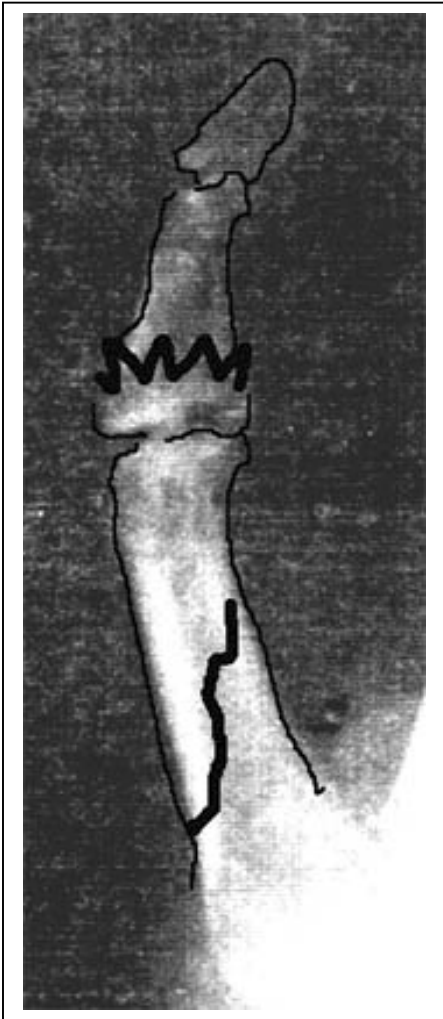
Parking stank. We had to stop in a grocery store lot a couple of blocks away and trudge through the cold November air. And it was like in the *fifties* that night. Then we had to wait and wait in a slow moving line to get into the place. "This would be much quicker if Audrey still liked you," Pat hissed. Audrey is one of the Axis bouncers who used to like me but now we seem to be estranged. I don't claim to understand the terms of any part of our relationship, but Pat may have been onto something there. At the end of the line we had to pay double the normal admission fee, not that we usually *pay* at all because we are usually on a *list*. But at least they asked to see my driver's license. When Lee took me to a club in Toronto, I made a point of packing my driver's license. Lee frowned at it and shook his head. "You won't be needing that," he said.

Inside with the teeming mass was no better. You'd think after the line people would be overjoyed to be inside, but the ambiance was kind of like the crowd at Disneyland on a super busy day--lots of stupefied customers too invested in the idea that they are having fun to think of admitting otherwise combined with the occasional giddy couple burning through their ranks. Like Disneyland, there were lines inside too. Of these, the longest and most onerous was the one that led from Axis to Radius, because Radius was *horrible*, packed solid with witless drunken zombies and nothing to breathe except artificial fog. Sparkling from among them was Alyssa, and the sight of her did wonders for Pat's mood. And not a minute too soon. As there wasn't a cute model waiting for me, I thought I'd amuse myself by researching the line to the restroom, and taking comfort in the fact I wouldn't need to stand in it any time soon. Though I was beginning to regret the Coke I had ordered.

I lost track of Pat and Alyssa as a result of this expedition, and having tired of swimming against a current of bodies stationed myself at a corner that seemed a promising lookout point. Then this tall guy backed into me, stood on my foot for a good thirty seconds, then turned around, put his hand on my ass and simpered, "I'm sorry." I drew myself up to my full height (which in heels is quite a lot), gave him a look that made him quiver, and in a steely voice proclaimed, "Sir, you most certainly are!"

No I didn't. And lame as that would have been, it beats what actually happened which was me giving the lowest button on his Polo shirt a nasty glance then slinking away. I tried to think what Dorothy Parker would have done in that situation and came up empty, so I thought "Dorothy Parker was a bitter alcoholic who died alone" instead. But that brought scant comfort. Fortunately Pat found me right about then and things took a turn for the better.

It seems while I was being manhandled Pat was working the room. Shalom and her family were entrenched in the VIP Lounge, and after Pat caught her eye, he and Alyssa were granted admittance. Shalom has been extra gracious towards Pat since she's seen him stepping out with Alyssa, I'm not sure why. (cont. on pg.6)



(cont. from pg. 2) I could hear it scurrying around and crying out and generally creating a pitiful impression. Audrey stopped by my desk and listened for a while before she said, "Gee that's annoying. How long before it dies, do you think?" Byron could hear it all the way in Tech Support, but he thought it was a snake. HAHAHA! Dork.

Lest you think I was callously sitting by listening to a fellow creature suffer, I had made inquiries to the General Manager about a rescue effort but he assured me it was impossible.

Fortunately, the word "impossible" is not in Mr Enigma's vocabulary unless it's in reference to something he doesn't feel like doing, and those cynics among you who assumed that he would only take interest in a defenseless little bird as a sacrifice to his Dark Lord would be wrong wrong wrong. He made his way up to the ceiling tiles, perhaps through levitation though I've been unable to confirm this, shoved a couple of them aside to give the bird plenty of room to negotiate its escape, then shooed it out of Tech Support into Receiving and through the big delivery doors to freedom! Then he toured the entire building to make sure everybody was aware of and impressed by this feat, and that it would be receive adequate mention in the various newsletters in circulation around here. (Don't worry, this one is best and most exclusive.)

And, AND Mr E did all of this with a broken wing of his own, so to speak, having smashed his pinky in a Thanksgiving Break football game. As you can see from his actual X-ray (left), it was a rather serious break, affecting both the lower and middle portions of his *sinister filange dinkius*. He took off the wrapping and showed me the raw flesh, which was swollen and purple. It looked like the hand of a really fat guy, with the nail looking to be about the size of this O. He may have been a bit defensive about the damage because I had said nary a word about the folly of recreational sport when he attacked my awareness and appreciation of football. "You don't even know what football is," he sneered. While the second accusation certainly is true, I *don't* understand an activity that so aggressively courts injury, the first was out of line and I told him so. "Football is the one with the spheroid," I retorted, and hope that settles that.

But anyway, that may be the last we see or hear from that bird for a while. Though if I know anything about its genus, and I flatter myself that I know this much, it's one of the group that gets shall we say amorous on the entry way patio a couple of times a year. Or even more likely, one of those that fly smack into the glass doors then flap away like the drunken bat in *Love at First Bite*.

That kills me, every single time.



The Darkest Evening of the Year

The winter solstice marks the moment when the year goes into turnaround, the subsidence of the encroaching night. Celebrations of the event embrace the idea of the lengthening days to come in defiance of the long, disproportionate evenings. Specifically, Christmas recalls the birth of the Redeemer, son of God and the light of humankind, in the midst of Roman oppression and the slaughter of the innocents. The best movies set in Christmastime, which are in order of their creation the 1935 version of *A Tale of Two Cities*, *It's a Wonderful Life*, the 1951 Alastair Sim version of *A Christmas Carol*, *Brazil*, and *Batman Returns*, employ seasonal dichotomies of darkness and light, despair and hope, loss and redemption, to echo and amplify the inner and external conflicts of the characters.

These films are crowded with doppelgangers, wishful projections of different, better lives—Sydney Carton reflected in Charles Darnay, Selena Kyle in Catwoman, Sam Lowrey in the superman of his fantasies, and the world in which George Bailey had never existed. In these alternate realities, the characters aspire to erase past wrongs, to be reborn in a superior incarnation, one that is loved and secure, and which is a potent force for good—Sydney sacrifices himself for Charles and his family, George contemplates suicide to save his family and business from financial ruin, Sam tries to rescue his



dream girl, and Catwoman avenges her own murder. True to the stories' Christian origins, the characters efforts meet with mixed results. You could argue that they meet their most narrowly defined goals, but George is still poor, Selena and Sam are still nuts, and Sydney is still dead. That's why these Christmas movies resonate in a manner similar to the original Christmas story. As well as that begins, and ultimately ends, there is the little matter of the trials and crucifixion in the middle. So rent or revisit one or more of these titles this season, and join in the rage against the dying of the light.



(cont. from pg. 4) And nobody is interested in what you think this proves about the nature of women, Mr Enigma.

Pat was briefing me on the situation as we ascended the stairs to the VIP Lounge when we were detained by the bouncer at the top who said, "PASS." "I was just in there!" Pat protested, whereupon the bouncer scrutinized Pat's hair (which has been rather distinctive lately) and waved us in.

☞ For those poor saps who have never visited the VIP Lounge at Radius, let me tell you, it's *much better* than the stockyards below. It's a mezzanine sort of affair, an L shape from which you can observe the dance floor below, and to the right the DJ's booth and the hired dancers' pen. Light is filtered through fake chunks of amber lodged in the tables and lamps and gives the joint the homey ambiance of Plato's Cave. And while the place is crowded to be sure, you don't feel that awful press always on your skin.

Which is not to say some habitués weren't taking up more than their fair share of room. I'm thinking specifically about a leather skinned person who was acting in an unofficial capacity as table dancer. Shameless perhaps, but not atypical it seems, for a good number of women with truly impressive bosoms of dubious origin were in attendance that night virtually the same in dress and behavior. I felt as if I had entered Boobtropolis dressed as a Christian missionary. So I wasn't unhappy when I heard last call, though I would have been ecstatic if we were still trapped in Radius.

Home is little better lately, as Pat had more or less granted Alyssa full girlfriend status. As fellow models they exchanged some personal professional specs. I'm not clear on why Pat then shared them with me, but I shared them with Pam (who is the only person who regularly avails herself of the 800 number, *you guys*) out of envy and dismay. In a reflective voice she said, "Five seven, 105 pounds, 32C...Drug addict, implants, eating disorder." Which I don't believe for a second, Alyssa, if you ever happen to read this, but that is why Pam is my Good Friend.



Super Creeps

The Scrawny Kid & Pat's Shiny Bottom

☞☞☞

End Nose...The muse of newsletters lives in my apartment complex's hot tub. Well, "lives" is an exaggeration, but she's there an awful lot. The first few times I saw her there I cursed and marched back to the house to sulk. Then I decided to be tough and see if I could drive her from the vicinity. I've had some success with this method in the past. Usually with men. Frequently whilst in the middle of a joke. No luck this time, though. In fact, I gave myself a cramp from sitting up straight and sucking in my gut. So the next time I went out, I was wearing my super jumbo blue swimsuit the one with the skirt and plenty of room for my gut. Also, as it was designed for the all over plus sized woman (I am selectively plus), it sort of gives the impression of breasts. Unless the top part gets wet, then it gives the impression of squashed Nerf softballs. Anyhoo, she was in the water when I arrived, I could see her red hair bound with white ribbons flowing over the air pillow under her neck. I took a breath and settled into the water, careful not to let it hit higher than my ribcage, but then the skirt billowed up to the surface so any semblance of cool I may have aspired to was lost instantly and forever. The muse (though I didn't realize she was a muse at the time) hardly seemed to notice. She stretched every limb and said, "This reminds me so much of the primordial soup from which sprang all life." (Scott Rowley has also mentioned the primordial life that might inhabit the hot tub, but that is because he is jealous.) Which is a far cry from typical hot tub chit chat among strangers, which in my experience begins with, "Kind of a cold night out tonight, huh?" and goes nowhere. In fact, I was more reminded of meeting Veronica at the bus stop several years ago, which led to an enduring friendship. I patted the suit skirt down against my now distended belly and sank down into the tub. I found that if I sat at just the right angle to the jets, the bodice portion assumed a flattering, if unconvincing, shape. And we struck up a conversation. But the extraordinary thing is while we talked I felt compelled to start making notes, which was awkward the first time because I left the tub and stumbled back to my apartment as if in a trance, leaving a trail of wet footprints and horrified looks in my wake, but thereafter I took the precaution of bringing a notebook with me. The spooky thing was while I was writing she would comment on what I was writing. Like when I jotted something down some Pam quip, the muse said, "She's going to be mad if she doesn't see her name before page six again," or in response to some Mr Enigma behavior, "I used to get that sort of crap from Poseidon all the time, by Zeus." Now the hot tub is more than a place for me to relax and pity those who don't have one of their own, but to contemplate and celebrate you, my genius subscribers, and hope you all have a joyous holiday season. ☞☞☞☞☞

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Cobra in Chief



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Use them.