

Aunt Jan, Aunt Evelyn, Aunt Toni & Uncle Scott, and My Mom Present...

# THE COBRA'S NOSE

Vol. 29

Somebody set up us the bomb.

25 April 2001

## The Cobra's Notes...

Yesterday I took Time On-Line's Phobia test and thought I did exceedingly well, answering "yes" seven out of eight. Then I clicked on the "SUBMIT" button and read the following message at the bottom of the page:

**If you answered yes to any of these questions, contact your health-care provider. A phobia is hard to bear but is treatable.**

That message scared the heck out of me. I went back and reconsidered the questions. Maybe I don't really elaborately or excessively avoid human contact. I answered "no" to a couple more questions bringing my total down to five. I feel the path to mental wellness under my feet. But honestly, don't you think the diagnosis is a little harsh? Even *Cosmo* doesn't come right out and call you nuts. "Self-loathing loser," sure, but they trusted that I would take care of the problem on my own.

There are resources all over the web that can give you all sorts of insights, and every now and then I get that itch. My very favorite to date is the IQ one. I'm too modest to disclose the number, but suffice to say it was two above Patrick's. Others tell me what kind of a person I am, which is an Experimenter (Dominant Introvert Abstract Thinker) like Indiana Jones, Introverted Sensing Thinking Perceiving like Archibald "Harry" Tuttle in Brazil (excellent), a Crafter like Chuck Yeager and Michael Douglas (ew!), and an NT Rational (when I told Patrick that, he thought I said "irrational" and laughed; when I told him I said "Rational," he laughed harder).

I took The Purity Test and it ruled that I might find nuns a corrupting influence. That was a long time ago, though, and boy-howdy, those nuns better watch out for me now. The Purity Test is an offering from TheSpark.com, which has all sorts of revealing tests, like their own IQ Test (I was ranked "primate," which sucks, but some people were squirrels), a Greed Test (49% greedy), The Ass Test (five percent ass, don't ask), The Gender Test (woman), The Bitch, Slut, and Sex Tests (I did splendidly, and no, I will not clarify).

TheSpark.com has a new feature, a dating service actually. And it makes sense; they've compiled all this data, questions I've never thought to ask anybody, but the answers of which would be really helpful to have when evaluating a potential mate. Like, do you believe in self-determination or fate? And, does Canada suck or what? (the options for that one are "yes" and "yeah") So I filled out the questionnaire, found a picture of myself to send (the only one I had on the computer was Xena and me at Universal Studios, but I understand it was a big hit at the photo kiosk), and even gave them my Yahoo e-mail address. Then I erased it all because it made me nervous.

I'm slipping.

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



Mania Rombauer's depiction of St. Martha of Bethany, the patron saint of cooking, slaying the dragon of kitchen dread (from the 1951 edition of *The Joy of Cooking*).

## Cobra Cooks! Really!

Some of you, though not nearly enough of you, have called me at work and remarked that I sound a little preoccupied; but that's only because I am. Some of you, too many of you, have exploited this condition (I'm looking at you Lauren and Sister Melanie Calkins) to jerk me around. Not that I blame you, but isn't it a little like shooting fish—and really big fish, like tuna—in a barrel, guys? Anyhoo, Mom called me in the middle of a Flash tutorial and started saying something about a houseguest. Oh, yeah? And how she was going to be staying over Easter. Hmmm. And how would that impact Easter dinner? I don't know, Mom—why don't you just let me take care of it?

That took me by surprise, too.

"Are you sure?" Mom asked, with a tremor in her voice.

"Yes." I paused, "Don't you trust me?"

I still don't know where that came from. I pulled the phone away from my ear and stared at it while Mom sputtered unfounded protestations of faith in my (cont. on page 4)

# Blue World

## So Very Touched

A few months ago, I bought Mark Knopfler's most recent cd *Sailing to Philadelphia* and showed it to Patrick. After opening the jewel case and looking at the picture of Knopfler with his receding gray hairline cut short, his black sports coat with an immaculate white shirt open at the collar, sitting on a crate, hunched over a guitar, Patrick said, "That guy has no rock left in him at all." And that was before he learned that Knopfler sang a song with James Taylor on the album.

I was irritated and dismissive on Knopfler's behalf. In an age when rock has elder statesmen, and a lot of them are not nearly as embarrassing as had been predicted, I wanted to assert Mark Knopfler's prominence in their guild. He belongs there. As the singer/songwriter/lead guitarist for the band Dire Straits (the DS song and video "Money for Nothing" hit the airwaves just as MTV was gaining prominence and helped make the album *Brothers in Arms* an eighties phenomenon) and sideman for the likes of Van Morrison, Bob Dylan, and Tina Turner, his music will be heard on classic rock stations forever.

On the other hand, and it kills me to admit this, Patrick has a point. Although Mark Knopfler has impeccable rock ability and credentials, that isn't what made his music unique and isn't what is going to make it last. What will is the sense of space he conveys behind the notes he plays, the way his songs become environments—music that sounds like a cloudy sky, blue and backlit by stars.

For instance, on Dire Straits's third and best album, *Making Movies* (produced by Jimmy Iovine). The first song, "Tunnel of Love," begins with Roger and Hammerstein's "Carousel Waltz" on a wheezy old harmonium with guest pianist Roy Bitan (from the E-Street Band) playing counterpoint below. The sound is soft and distant, as if its source its source—the carnival—is hidden in a glen. Then the organ holds its final note while the piano abandons melody to repeat an escalating three (cont. on page 6)



Rock A'plenty—Mark Knopfler During the Alchemy Tour

On Wednesday afternoon I was awakened by a pleasant nap by a call from an unfamiliar area code (does anybody know where 435 is? Kolob, maybe?, with the following listing on the caller ID box:

CHURCH OF JESUS C

Normally I let calls from solicitors go to voice mail, but I was curious to know what, or who, they wanted. This time, it was Patrick (hahahaha!) and he wants to know who turned him in, by the way. I told the guy to try again on Friday, and drifted off only vaguely worried that Patrick might retaliate and tell him how much I've missed Mormonism, and maybe a couple stake missionaries could drop by to cheer me up. Fortunately, that won't be necessary (*at all*, Patrick) because the next day I had an experience at work that satisfied any cravings I may have had for to partake of a Relief Society meeting. Don't get me wrong. Cosmodemonic remains as secular as ever—Easter treats notwithstanding—and the Toastmasters meeting to which I am referring was not conspicuously religious, but neither on balance are most Relief Society functions.

Dictionary.com defines a toastmaster as, "a man who proposes the toasts and introduces the speakers at a banquet." The organization Toastmasters is dedicated to imparting these skills to its members, though unfortunately without the banquet or alcohol. Three Cobra subscribers are members: Maestro Toe, the incomparable Amy, and Lovezap (who stops at McDonalds on the way back from the meetings and buys me hash browns, which I think is charming and, to be perfectly clear, **should be emulated by more of you as I get peckish around 9am**). So I'd heard a few things about Toastmasters before it came to visit our humble workplace, like Maestro Toe frequently ditches the meetings, and if you need a quick joke or thought to begin a speech, pay attention to bumper stickers as you drive. "For instance," Amy said gravely and cupped one hand over the other, "one I noticed on the way in. It read," she cleared her throat, "I wish I were just like Barbie—that bitch has *everything*." You laugh now." In return, I told my mother's story about how she saw two bumper stickers on a car, one of which said "ASU" and the other "Women make great leader's: your following one now!" You see, Mom thought that the ASU part undercut the improper form of "your" vs "you're" and just made those alumni look like illiterates rather than the whole of our gender (she's a U of A grad, you see), and I guess it's also okay with me as I graduated from the U of U, and I think this is one of those anecdotes that you just have to be there for to appreciate because while I was telling it Amy inched closer and closer to the hallway entrance and by the time I finished she was gone. Anyway, I figured an hour listening to my fellow Cosmodemons quote bumper stickers didn't seem to be a bad way to not do my job, and with the kind support of my gracious boss, I was allowed to attend.

The afternoon before the event, a young woman from the Tempe office arrived and asked to see Lovezap, who as it turns out is the president of this branch of Toastmasters. He accompanied her and several cardboard boxes to the Presentation Room, and at the end of the day, Amy (cont. on page 5)

### Caller of the Month

So I get this call from a magazine salesperson who says, "I would like to speak with Topper's Boss...I don't know how to pronounce his last name, but it's spelled, 'PhD.'"

Thank you, thank you very much. ☺

# "HAIL, BUTTOCKS!"

Eye of Fatima, formerly Magi, cannot let the buttocks go. We were talking about the remake of *Bedazzled*—I liked it but he was underwhelmed. I went on to say how terrific Brendan Fraser was in it, and how I was developing a real weakness for...

"Hold it right there," he said. "I get my kicks above the waistline, sunshine."

Then he started to explain that he was quoting from "One Night in Bangkok," as if I didn't already know. But what he wanted to make absolutely clear was his absolute and unimpeachable inability to recall whether Fraser's naked bottom was featured in the movie. I don't recall myself, though it does seem like the kind of thing that would make an impression. At any rate, in the interests of harmony, the staff of **THE COBRA'S NOSE** hereby believes formerly Magi currently Eye of Fatima's protestations that he has no interest in (male) rumps in general, and endorses his antipathy toward Michael Douglas's specifically. Unfortunately, the staff of **THE COBRA'S NOSE** does not get off so lucky, as it has been permanently scarred by its exposure to said ass, which has been making regular appearances in movies since Douglas's debut in 1969's *"Hail, Hero!"*.

While there never has been and never will be a shortage of bad movies, "Hail, Hero!" is one of those happy few which push through all the way through badness and come out good. Start with the title. I'm not making that punctuation up, just look at the video cover to the right. When I got my own copy of "Hail, Hero!" in the mail and saw this picture I nearly wept with joy. It captures perfectly the hubris of the film which is so thoroughly undermined by fuzzy headed sentimentality that the radical ambiguity it so clearly hopes to achieve gives way to an ineptitude that is cute as a button. Clearly, it portends change—storm clouds that are either gathering or dispersing, a sun that is either rising or setting, militaristic title lettering in flaming pink, a haircut that foretells those of tennis greats Billie Jean King and Martina Navratilova, etc. The behearted flag is wrapped around his nakedness like a bed sheet, exposing sloped shoulders and a swan neck. "He is the future of heroism," it proclaims, "and he is going to get his weenie ass pounded into the ground."

The movie opens with Douglas's character Carl Dixon playing toreador to a truck load of migrant workers. After he bravely stabs the truck's radiator with a stick, the workers cheer and shower him with rotten cabbage leaves. The scene effectively establishes Carl as a world class ninny given to pointless gestures, and I hope makes clear why "Hail, Hero!" must, simply must be viewed in the presence of as many vicious tongued critics as you can assemble to catch every bizarre nuance of Carl's odyssey. For instance, the reminiscence of a WWII vet under a clear blue sky in which he asserts, "It was a day just like this one; it was raining." Will the sight of horses, sheep, cattle, and ducks fleeing before Carl's approach (see photo, left) inspire charges of bestiality? Yes, but to be fair most lifeforms would flee (see photo, left). Will the family dog's appearance when Carl calls out for "my trusty steed" make any more sense after repeated viewings? No, but it does get funnier.



The mystery of "Hail, Hero!", apart from "why was it made?", is why did Carl enlist in the army at the height of the Viet Nam conflict when he was a protestor and protected from the draft by his collegiate status to boot? "I signed up!" he chirps to everyone he meets, drawing nary a flicker of interest. He tells his mother, but she seems to have enough trouble remembering who he is to process why he might be there. His father is too preoccupied by his son's shaggy wig (Chewbacca had a more convincing 'do) to pay attention to why he is back in town sporting it. He sits Carl right down and gives him a trim, blowing away pieces of hair with little puffs of breath, all the while explaining real men do

not grow their hair, though apparently they do cut and style it. Carl has a more rewarding conversation with his grandfather's grave, then sets out with his trusty steed and his horse to (aaarrg!) skinny dip. I'm warning you now so you will have a chance to cover your eyes. The sight took the incomparable Amy by surprise and she declared she had been rendered sterile by it. A lawsuit is pending. It's ugly, both the amazingly-flat-and-shapeless-in-one-so-young-heinie and its effect on loved ones, so do be cautious watching this part of the movie. You will know it's (relatively) safe to look when you hear the sound of two girls giggling, or when the screams die down from those who peeped, or when Carl proclaims himself to be "a beaaaauuuutiful warrior." He has put on his plaid boxers by then, and will soon say to one of the girls, "You have a great body. Want a cigarette?" (Did I miss something?) Shortly thereafter, the other girl will say, "I think you're freaky!" and jump into the water fully clothed. Which is too bad, because she misses out on Carl's story about the girl he used to know who would rather eat manure than peanut butter. It's a riot. Then, suddenly overcome by nostalgia, he rushes off to the cave where he and the girl used to sit around in the nude and raise mice, also nude. And then, something remarkable happens: Carl meets a character even more inexplicable than himself. (cont. on page 4)



Hail hero, hail hero, child of the sun  
All covered with flowers still having your fun  
Hail hero, hail hero, birds in the sky  
Are building their nests in the rafters close by  
Hail hero, hail hero, child of your fate  
Come into the kitchen don't stand by the gate  
And show us your wisdom before it's too late  
Hail hero, hail hero, let me see you smile  
You both gone for so damn long,  
I wish you'd stay awhile  
And the swimming hole is still up yonder  
waiting for a carefree boy to come  
And the old mill creek still sings its warning  
Dancing through the meadow in the sun

—The "Hail, Hero!" theme song written by Gordon Lightfoot. I don't think it requires any explication.

(cont. from page 3) Miss Mirabel's is a withered hag whose main occupation seems to be smoking pot, with a sideline in digging the mummified carcass of a human baby out of the cave wall. She keeps it in a flower box with holes poked in the top, and when Carl sees it he decides he simply *must* have it. She takes a toke and says, "Well, I like your dog," then points to a cougar skin Carl has wrapped around himself. They hammer out a trade and Carl turns to go, when she puts a claw on his arm, squints at him and croaks, "What do you use to clean your private parts?" She cackles when Carl says, "What?" and replies, "I recommend acetone and yams. Drives the spiders crazy." If you have any idea what she is talking about, please keep it to yourself. Anyway, Carl invites her to dinner then leaves.

The dinner is for his brother Frank's birthday. Frank is played by made-for-TV movie ace Peter Strauss in his first film, and he threatens to spoil the fun by bringing gravity and authority to his role. Although Carl has spent the movie slandering his brother, and the audience is supposed to understand that the slander is justified by a crude remark Frank had allegedly made years before, Frank is the only one who looks Carl in the eye and calmly asks him why he is being such a dipwad. Carl crumbles immediately, as he does before anybody who exhibits a shred of dignity or logic, but fortunately their conversation is interrupted and he frolics off to a nursing home to annoy some old people and the movie is saved.

You must realize I can only give you a taste of "Hail, Hero!", and no, that's not nearly enough of this miracle of absurdity. Just when you think it's running out of steam, or that it might begin to make a particle of sense, BOOM! Here comes the mural Carl paints on the barn with flowers and horsies and planes dropping bombs, or BANG! It threatens to turn into gay porn (again). It doesn't stop, and it never lets on how nutty it really is because against all odds, this is a movie that shouts Prestige Project. Theresa Wright, one of classic Hollywood's most respected actresses, came out of retirement to play Carl's mother. Five time Oscar nominee and Tony winner Arthur Kennedy plays his dad. Michael Douglas as the son of a big movie star took the lead and was nominated for a Golden Globe for his trouble. Is that enough for a mention on A&E's *Biography* show? Nooooo. They'll get all tough with the likes of Rasputin and Hitler, but when profiling Michael Douglas, they falter. Remember that if you are tempted to believe that show has an ounce of credibility. And remember the name "Hail, Hero!" the next time you are out looking for movies to rent, or if you think you might run into Michael Douglas socially, as Rebecca P. dreamed she did after seeing it the first time. She imagined, "He bit his lip (in a Molly Ringwald sort of way), blushed red and changed the subject like some kind of professional." Let me know if that happens. ■



Setting back the cause of parasites for decades, a still from the set of "Hail, Hero!"  
(And you see what I mean about that wig?)

(cont. from page 1) abilities. It was a dark moment. Not only had I been snotty to my gentle mother, I had committed to produce a major family meal and after that remark could hardly call her back and admit I didn't know how to bake a potato. Fortunately, "Sharon is planning a meal" is as hot as the gossip about my life gets, and the next day I received the following e-mail from my benevolent Aunt Jan:

Understand you're planning to cook for Easter. May I be of assistance in planning? Don't want to presume that you need assistance, just want you to know I'm here for you.

A personal visit from St. Martha of Bethany would not have been more welcome. I poured out my ignorance, and it filled quite a number of e-mails, all of which were answered with patience and understanding, and frequently with unfamiliar words like "jicama," which is an edible root. I also had some pretty severe limitations to disclose regarding my innate cooking ability (none), preparation space (almost none), and the fact that every time I try to cook meat I set off a fire alarm. But gradually I developed this notion about lots of pretty, easy to prepare foods in pretty dishes and went with it. I received instruction on massaging red potatoes with butter, salting and peppering them, then baking on the oven rack until they are "about the consistency of your upper arm" (which in my case is rock solid from all those pushups I do—I kid).

I embarked upon a grocery shopping frenzy (as always, I recommend your neighborhood Basha's). I'm telling you, I must have made two trips. And I got so eager about the whole food prep idea that I actually bought an avocado and made Aunt Jan's Salsa/Dip Sort of Avocado Thing, featured in Vol. 27. I even added an ingredient: celerno. Wait, that's not it...but it's one of those leafy herbs, and it costs \$44 a bunch. You know the one. Anyway, it's *fabulous*, especially when it's three o'clock and you haven't had lunch. I hunched over it and wolfed it down, pausing only to slap Patrick and Sophia's hands away. And yes, I cut the avocado all by myself, having received private instruction from my beloved Aunt, with additional advice from her friend Honorary Aunt Jan.

I prepared on Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning, and it all went pretty well except for one thing: by the time the banquet was ready, I was tired and grouchy and sort of wanted everybody to get out of my house and leave me alone. In short, the discovery that I actually could put a lovely (honestly—it was multicolored and healthy) meal together was followed hard upon by the fact that I am a *miserable* hostess. Once again, I lamented to my Aunt, who replied:

Crankiness is the greatest hazard for even the most accomplished chef. My biggest problem is that I only clean the house well before company so I'm already exhausted even before I start cooking. I find the consumption of my personal bottle of wine during preparation to be the answer.

As Patrick will attest, Aunt Jan's "biggest problem" isn't one I share. The apartment always looks great, apparently due to the efforts of elves or other magical creatures. The solution to crankiness on the other hand, sounds extremely promising, and therefore shall be known as the Cookin' with Cobra Tip for April. I will try it and let you know how it went. Or someone else will if I don't happen to remember how it went.

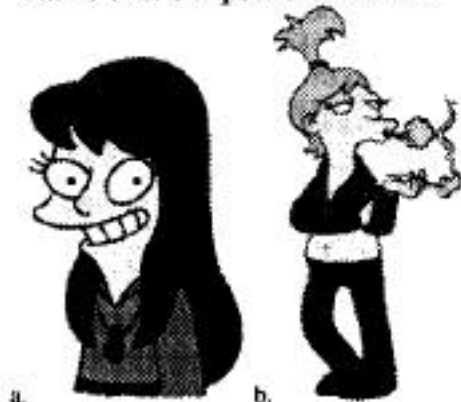
PS I remember the real name of the herb now: *cilantro*. ■ Y

# Ghost, Interru--

Okay, I didn't write it. But as Vol. 29 turned out to be on the wordy side anyway, I thought I'd put in an ever popular **Cobra Cwiz** instead. Best of luck.

OOOOO

Name that Simpsons Character!



f. In July of 2000, St. Gobain purchased what business?



Worst Cobra Cwiz ever.  
Answers on Page 6

(cont. from page 2) whispered that it looked like it had done up like a school dance. When I saw the crepe pineapples hanging from the ceiling and the posters showing tropical beaches the next morning, I could see where she got that—but the tables and chairs arranged in two blocks with an aisle down the middle gave me a shiver of as yet unformed recognition. I surveyed the crowd: nearly all conservatively dressed women ranging in age from about thirties to about fifties; friendly but the tiniest bit furtive, duty bound to mix even though all their instincts raged against it. Clearly they had been conditioned to engage strangers with the purpose of making them feel comfortable. As the stranger, however, watching them gird up their loins to come over and meet you because they have to, twitching and giggling throughout the encounter, then fleeing as soon as possible to their real friends is worse than being ignored. I understand insecurity, *believe me*, but it's also hard to be on the receiving end of this charitable courage. Luckily, I was sitting next to Amy who as treasurer had her ledger out, so most of the people who approached were there on business and the deadbeats kept their distance.

The meeting was conducted by President Lovezap, and Maestro Toe led the Pledge of Allegiance. Then came the thought of the day, clearly the product of a FW e-mail, which began, "Nostalgia just isn't what it used to be." If you want to read the rest, wait a week or so and I'm sure somebody will forward a copy to you. There was a joke (also making its way to your e-mailbox, I'm sure), and the visitors (myself and President Lovezap's Boss) rose to introduce ourselves and were presented with a gift. Then the talks began.

About a minute into the first one, I finally made the Toastmasters-Relief Society connection. The decorations were a little light-minded for a Sunday service but would have been ideal for Wednesday evening Homemaking Meeting, and the chevron arrangement of the chairs was precisely as it would have been at either gathering. There wasn't an opening song or prayer, but the Pledge is sort of a combination of both. The thought wasn't from *Especially for Mormons*—the source LDS types turn to when they blow off their thought assignments as the woman admitted she had—but would have been considered appropriate. The joke was mildly blasphemous and violated a couple of commandments, so it probably would have been skipped unless Sister Melanie Calkins was on hand to tell a more raucous (and funny) one.

But the talks I've heard dozens of times in RS meetings, the first about how the speaker overcame grief over her mother's passing through a passion for scrapbooking, and the second about difficult choices regarding childbirth. I don't mean to trivialize the women's experiences. They were clearly affected and sincere. Still, their flutey delivery, their well timed self-deprecating jokes, their perfection of a technique in which a tear is wiped away with out compromising meticulously applied eye make-up were *familiar*, as if they had been designed by the emotional blackmail program installed in the brain of nearly every RS functionary I've ever encountered. I sat listening to them, defenseless. If the first woman were selling scrapbooking materials, I could have understood her motivation for invoking her dead mother in a public arena. It would have been a tacky thing to do, but I wouldn't have to kick myself for thinking the story was better told on *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* the other day and could have used a few monsters. Oh, the guilt! This woman's mother died! Oh, the anger! What does that have to do with my Thursday morning at work? Oh, the guilt! The second woman prefaced her story by telling us she had never revealed the following to most of her family and closest friends, and concluded by warning us never to judge. All I could think of was, "what an odd thing to say to a room full of people equipped with score sheets, expressly here to judge your performance." Oh, the guilt.

The meeting was interrupted for a tour of the building conducted by Muffin. I've seen the building and cannot bear to look upon Muffin, so I stayed behind to chat with Amy. She admitted that this particular meeting was more emotional than the norm, though not entirely unusual. So maybe there was a fatal conjunction this week between the Church reaching out to one of its prodigal sheep and a reminder to another why she strayed, and why she should stay away for good. ☹️

(cont. from page 2) note refrain, gradually louder and faster, then with a grace note at the beginning so when the first guitar chord and drum beat are simultaneously struck the time signature has been changed from 3/4 to 2/2. The change in music matches the change in scene—it's as if you've crested the hill and the carnival is laid out below with all its light and sound and excitement—then Knopfler's descending guitar notes pull you headlong into it.

"Tunnel of Love" was the song that got Knopfler his first soundtrack gig, for Scottish director Bill Forsythe's *Local Hero*. The movie tells the story of a Texas oil employee dispatched to Scotland to buy a coastal town with huge oil deposits just off shore, but who falls so hard for the town he almost can't complete his mission. The lure of the town is part of Forsythe's idea of human commonality, and his Celtic-centric belief that all hearts lead to Scotland. Forsythe's countryman Knopfler musically echoes the sentiment by clarifying the relationship of American country music with its own Celtic heritage, and by hiring Scottish Garry Rafferty to sing the "American" pop song ("The Way It Always Starts") he wrote for the movie. The soundtrack foretold future collaborations with country music legends like Chet Atkins and his participation in the Appalachian influenced Notting Hillbillies, but the most wonderful part of the album is the middle third where music follows the movie's hero in and out of a celidh, between the cozy indoor playing of folk band The Acetones and Knopfler's adaptations of that music in which you leave the room, hear the ocean and, somehow, the aurora borealis. *Local Hero* is one of his most beautiful accomplishments.

You could get rude at this point and say that it's because Knopfler doesn't sing on the album. While it's true that his voice is low key to the point of no key, I'm not persuaded that that's a bad thing. Rock has a unique tolerance for uncommon voices, and Knopfler's unemphatic grumble is the ideal vehicle for his prosy lyrics. A former schoolteacher and journalist, he has a knack for telling detail that doesn't depend on a lot of drama. For example, his evocation of empathy and distance in "Hand in Hand" from *Making Movies*: "As you'd sleep, I thought my heart would break in two/ I'd kiss your cheek, I'd stop myself from waking you/ But in the dark you'd speak my name/ You'd say, 'Baby, what's wrong?'" Then on "Skateway" from the same album—which will be the theme song of the TV show based upon my life—his voice swells and breaks with vicarious joy. Aung Zebe is absolutely correct in stating *Rollergirl* (whose character was appropriated and desecrated in the awful *Boogie Nights*) is pop music's equivalent to the heroine of Wallace Stevens's "The Idea of Order in Key West," creating "her own world in the city."

This past weekend, I heard Dire Straits on the radio two times, and both times the song was "Walk of Life." Now I like "Walk of Life," and I'm happy for all those who are getting residuals from it, but believe me, there's so much more to Knopfler than his riff driven hits. Ask anybody who's heard the first shivery guitar notes over a sonorous electronic hum on "Private Investigations" (from *Love Over Gold*) and suddenly felt as if the air had gotten cooler and strangely calm. Or if you happen to have bought (and kept) *Brothers in Arms* in the eighties, skip past the hits and spend seven minutes with the spellbinding title track. Just go out and buy *Making Movies* and listen to the elegance which he imbues ordinary heartache, and the dignity he finds in self-sufficiency. He creates a world and you just have to listen to step into it. So listen. 🎸🎤🎸



No rock left at all—But how bad is that?

## End Nose...

I've found a new on-line test to keep me busy the past couple of days. It's the Harry Potter Wizard Quiz, and I do better on it than anybody I know. This is a comfort because I've become dissatisfied by the results of the other tests. I know psychological evaluations are not supposed to be competitive, but my lovely and talented cousin Evelyn was compared to Gandhi, and that's pretty dang cool. St. Janet of the TP (though she predicted she would be grouped with Attila the Hun) ended up being in a category which included Dana Scully and Mr. Spock, and which comprised only four percent of the population. And the incomparable Amy was labeled a "Healer," part of only one percent of the population. Night Stalker was in a bigger group, the Protector Defenders, but the description sounded really noble, heroic even, and made Crafter sound positively effete in comparison (please don't tell Chuck Yeager I said that). As sort of a reality check, however, in a perusal of back issues of **THE NOSE** (I've begun cataloguing the nicknames Muffin has picked up in the past couple of years) I happened upon an article about the last time testing mania swept Cosmodemonic, and how one of them judged Mr Enigma to be tops in sanity and balance. Maybe the next wave of quizzes will award me that title and all the dubious remarks that came with it.

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Use them.

Now I'm going to turn my attention to the future. For instance, Evelyn reminded me yesterday that Beltain is coming right up and neither of us has a man with whom to romp in the moonlight. I'm sure she'll find somebody, but I might need some assistance, so if you know anybody suitable for the job, please contact me using any of the means to the left. Or maybe those Spark.com guys could fix me up. I was also thinking of maybe finding some Morris Dancers to help me welcome in the holiday, but then I noticed that May first falls on a Tuesday this year, so I will probably greet the dawn in my usual fashion—driving to work and muttering curses.

Hey—did you see *The Clair*? Did Wes Bentley look fine in that knitted cap or what?

Have a good month.

**Cobra Cwiz Answers:** a. Alison Taylor b. Brandine c. Fat Tony d. Grandma Van Houton e. George Bush f. Norwood Coated Products g. Comic Book Store Guy