

BLIND ITEM

[The song begins to turn in its final movements, the melody faltering out of time with a rhythm that forgets itself, and the dissonance reveals an understrata of static whose presence, now exposed, swells to consume both. Then, like a sucking tide, all fade together, until all that remains is a metallic aftertaste and a voice that tastes the same]

OK that was Heart Plug with a deep cut from their Midnight Floorshow at the Cake Vault EP by the name of “Red Rot Rosaline”. And did you know it’s based on real events? Hyperreal events, no less: a girl who fucked their original drummer all the way to the Brain Injury Unit as the asymptomatic patient zero for an exotic ailment from Vanuatu. Turns out microdosing by mail order can turn you into a real Thyroid Mary. The savage price of augmented womanhood indeed. Crazy that the girl in question wouldn’t even be born ‘til, oh, three or four years after the boys penned that catchy little number (which, *uh*, don’t do the math on that one). But then again maybe our nasal navelgazing frontman has a touch of the ESPN about him – at least enough to know exactly what *he* could eventually get away with and *you* most assuredly would not. So Rosie, if you’re listening as carefully as you should be right now: (in the following order) lawyer up, get tested, and maybe find GOD while you’re at it, uh?

[Sound of church bells and a stifled moan]

You are *still* listening to The Night of the Pink Scissors: Morning Zoo Radio for Nocturnal Animals. The show where it *really* happened, and it’s happening right now, and where it is I, Cassandra Zapruder – so named for my complexcomplex and my all-seeing eye. But you can just call me cZandy. The girl with the not so secret honor of spilling your less than honorable secrets, and I’ll be worming my tender tendrils into your supple cortex from the witching hour all the way into eternity, so you might as well get comfortable. *[The “Bloop”]* And speaking of complex, this next one’s bears the stain of a distinctly Oedipal kind; by which I mean it’s another Blind Item (because no matter what you little clowns say, I refuse believe any of you are even on speaking terms with your mothers).

[Dotmatrix printer whir]

Some choice scuttlebutt found me as I took my missives from my big ornate four-poster bed at sundown this very morning. Turns out the reason seemingly half the maid staff at a certain bar at the crook of a certain riverbend were absent from the big fundraiser last night was because they were getting their teeth measured for “elimination prints” by that pair of G-men everyone thought was just a profoundly ill-judged cover story for a couple of oddly polite chasers. Turns out every single one of their dental records flashed red for a match on a body they fished out of the harbour. I’m not sure what the evidence chain looks like for something like that but, ladies, you all live together, maybe you can try for a family package down at Federal Orthodontic. People are, evidently, beginning to talk.

[Old mechanical elevator cage creaking and slamming shut]

Actually, more interesting, who’s still missing from this equation? Did they find one without at least seven years of untreated bruxism? The teeth of a creature so at home with what they are they are they’re ready to slip into the skin of a victim for the night? Long enough to mimic their mating rituals in the pursuit of something even dearer to their hearts. Tickles the puzzlegame parts of the brain, does it not? Actually another little curiosity crossed my RSS the other night while waiting to find out if my good colleague Seven-Nine Primetime Percolator Pete would finally fumble the vein and get busted shooting up at the three minute mark of *Tie A Yellow Ribbon* (because what else did

you think that song was about?). Buddy I think the bit's gonna outlive you, so kudos, I guess, but then again who can say different?

[*Heavily compressed sample of Lou Reed singing "it's my wife".*]

Anyway, anyway, anyway a listener who has *called it* in ways beyond what many of you bitches wouldn't dream of on nine separate occasions told me she finally brushed up against something just a little bit more real than the piecing together of dissociated knowledge a couple nights back. She was on her way home from her shift at the library (didn't say which one but how many are still functioning at this point?) when her footsteps gained an echo they didn't have before on the little walkway that – I imagine – joins the main building to the carpark. She made a point of not turning round 'til one hand was on her car keys and the other was on the pepperspray she keeps under her jacket (clever girl) but by that point all that was left of her "pursuer" was two little glowing pink circles and so much luminescent vapour dissipating into the conifers that run the length of the computer labs. Not the first girl to take a little lavender scare in and around those hallowed halls of learning, I'm sure.

So anyway, my intrepid girl in the field lives to join the dots another night. I think that calls for a song (putting it politely), and it just so happens tape collective Sissygasm put out Emanations Volume IV today. They're calling it "The Drip" and it has at least one really decent number somewhere around side three which – if I read the tracklisting right (fix your handwriting you dog) – is called *Feral Federal (f)emeral* and it goes a little something like...

[*Audible click, followed by a tape wobble so heavy it turns everything a sickly shade of green for a few seconds*]

Damn it, you gotta keep these things away from magnets! But let's try that again

[*Sound resumes, pitching up a whole sickly octave before an *All Bass* swamp of reverb materialises and fades in and out for a duration of just under seven minutes.*]

And we are BACK here on The Night of the Pink Scissors where it is I, Cassandra "cZandy" Zaprunder: Public Universal Tribune for the Eternally Shrinking Global Village, coming out of my well to shame the universe. And if you're down in the Garden of Questionable Delights this evening, where the Suicide Sunday guerillas are busy killing braincells and dousing themselves in piss to own the cis-libs <reverb>*SOMEHOW*<reverb>, then you might be able to catch a little midnight matinee: Mxtress Aristophani and her kennel of ketamized primadonnas are staging an adaptation of *Thyestes*; Seneca's timeless dramedy of doom, denial, and hereditary fuckups. My shtick, honestly, but even I forgive sometimes. Latin heads might know it better as that interminably unadaptable closet drama designed to impart sage lessons no one ever really learns too well. But they've come up with a clever conceit to counteract these dramaturgical snags, and would you believe they've done it by making it ALL. ABOUT. THEM. SELVES.

[*Theatrical audience clapping overlaid with several "Bababooley"*]

Oh, but this just came in – looks like our bookish little detective might not have been the only one to slip the noose in the last couple days. User *_Xebulba99_* over on the station IRC just dropped this rather intimidating wall of text, for which I'm gonna do my best to replicate how I imagine this sounds [*adopting much higher register*] hi? hi? [*grunt*] ahem...ahem...ahem...ok [*very slightly lower register but more breathy*] hii? [Normal voice] Let's get into it.. ah-HEM...

[MESSAGE BEGINS] “Ok, so this happened two nights ago when we had that big storm around midnight? It all started when I was at Bible Study with my girlfriends Hannah, Beckah and Lou’Ellen and Mitsy down in the function room over at the Fern Crate on Ninth near the parkway? It was a normal night and we were working through the tough bits of Deuteronomy and it was going super well, everyone was being so insightful and we were just about to break to go downstairs and get more coffee because Lenny the sound guy let’s us use the machine out back and we were getting to the end of verse twenny two when Beckah who was doing the reading suddenly started sounding really weird. Like she was totally fine for the first bit but when she got to the part where he says “for all that do so are abomination unto the LORD thy God” her voice went really weird, like super deep all of a sudden like it was slowed down (and it was also slowed down) and her eyes rolled back in her head and she didn’t talk to us for like a minute and we started to get really worried but then she snapped out of it and was just like “I wonder what he meant by that? You know, Deuteronomy?” And we were just dumbstruck for a second but she didn’t really get it so we just played it off like maybe she forgot about her voice training for a second because she was so moved by it? Anyway we get outside afterwards and Hannah gave Beckah a ride back to her place because they both live on Nixieveltdt by the reservoir while Lou’Ellen went back towards the campus to see her girlfriend and Mitsy walked back with me a little while but then peeled off because her place is actually on twelfth whereas I live the other side of the ravine so we kissed eachother good night there and” [CHARACTER LIMIT EXCEEDED – NEXT MESSAGE] “halfway through the ravine there’s a point when the streetlights from Ninth don’t reach but you aren’t far across enough to see the lights from my neighbourhood yet so all I could see was the big full moon through the trees but it didn’t really reach far enough so it was all black and I could see these little lights off in the woods. I heard there were homeless camps out there in amongst the old broken walls that were supposed to be from colonial buildings so I thought it was maybe the fires from those but these were pink and like a cloud, but moving? And I remembered, too, that a year ago there was a murder in there and someone found a shrine in an old church building that was all covered with blood and there was a book in the middle of it and it was written in a language nobody understood and they’re still working on it at the university tryna figure out what it says. Or maybe that was ten years ago? I think there was a full moon that night too. There was also something about a tune the guy they think did it kept whistling. She said...this was the girl who got killed. She said before she died that she heard it everywhere and she’d look around and no one was there. It would always happen in big echoey places like the museum or that bit of the mall where the lights don’t work and there’s just that one store that just sells picture frames. But then it would also happen somewhere like a cafe or a crowded street and one time she was in a bar and they had a sports game on but it was commercials so they dialled it down and stuck the music back on and through all that noise she’d suddenly recognise something and realised it was the sounds around the room itself coalescing into the same melody as the one” [CHARACTER LIMIT EXCEEDED – NEXT MESSAGE] “I was taking a bath and listening to the new Dottie Applewhite record and was just at the last bit of the A-Side where she has that collaboration with Chelsea Milliner when the storm started blowing in and I realised that I’d left the window open (it was really hot). So I went over to the window and closed it but I realised after that I could see a shape outside that I thought must be my cat because she sometimes likes to go hide in the mailbox so I pulled on clean panties and a big t-shirt and went outside to try and get him but then I looked around and realised he was looking down on me through the window. Back inside I realised my feet were all muddy from the gravel driveway so I went back upstairs and was about to get in the shower when I realised I could hear music, but it was “Pretty Girl You’ve Really Done It This Time” which is the first track on the B-side so someone must’ve turned it over. I went into my room to look and saw a figure standing on the night stand, I was about to scream when I realised it was none other than actor Orlando Brogan. But I could tell it wasn’t really him because his skin was all grey and he’d never let his hair get so greasy so I screamed and ran into my closet. I sat on the floor crying and waiting for him to break the door down but nothing happened, then suddenly there was this mist coming under the door and it felt hot like blood and suddenly this thought got in my head that I should open the door so I did. That’s

when he grabbed the silver cross necklace and ripped my t-shirt clean off before throwing me on the bed and tearing off my panties and exposing my freshly shaved pubis and delicate cock that was already rock hard and” [CHARACTER LIMIT EXCEEDED – NEXT MESSAGE] “Penetrating...” [Normal voice] ahem “...penetrating me on the bed post so I was stuck there he pulled my panties over my face to stop me screaming and they were so soaked with rain and piss and pre-cum that it was like being waterboarded then he cut off my arms and both my legs like he was talking apart a doll and threw my now helpless fucktoy torso onto the bed to finish off his daemonic business but not before yanking the big crucifix off the wall and clocking me across the head with so hard I saw stars and seraphim (also dicks out and rock hard) crying over my terrible fate. After he did that he finished by taking the rosary off the night stand and wrapping it round my cock so hard it throbbed and turned completely red while stuffing torn out bible pages down into my slack and drooling mouth. The police showed up with detectives and a forensics team and one of them contaminated the crime scene by throwing up everywhere. They also got a team of special doctors in but by that time I’d already bled out through the multitude of lacerations in my neck, tits, ass and the pussy he’d put in between my legs with a huge machete. I died at exactly midnight.”

[Slow intake of breath, pause...] Well, then...[slow exhalation] Yeah, no. I’m not laughing. I’m not! Because it isn’t funny, is it? A girl is dead, you ghouls, weren’t you listening? [Speaking directly into the mic] And were YOU, listener? Either way let me know if it happens again. Or should I say when? Because let’s face it you dumb little whores just can’t stop putting shit like *that* out into the world without a clue who might be listening or what you might be getting in return. Because whether it happens today or tomorrow or even never at all, you’re still signing the work order. The clarion call to an obliging stranger with a glinting blade and an *aching* lust to be purified in the estrogenated blood of the silliest little lamb in the flock. Someone to finish the job started by your savage older sister, or your needle-nosed school nurse, or the “quirky” older lady at the mall who sold you your first disposable Polaroid and told you how you could get the next one free. Because when the killer comes waltzing into your room, he’s not gonna look like Orlando Brogan or any of that high-cheekboned set.

All the same, that stuff about those old colonial ruins and melodies distantly haunting was a nice touch. Kudos, kudos. Kinda got me thinking there. Got me pondering what really marries dark and rumour-haunted places to dark and lust-ravaged minds? Because, of the former, our little city seems to have a staggering abundance: underpasses ringing ill portents from the mouths of cryptic mosaic figures of a brighter age; the great long, half submerged model boathouse at the edge of the park, its every window boarded and adorned with strange epigrams; ancient bodies of water cut off from the source and too polluted to allow back into the biosphere; the fire-gutted ruins of the Cake Vault where all those master tapes spontaneously combusted that one Halloween ten years ago; the Sludgeland Brewery, bricked up and left to the rats, our resident alcoholics all moved on to piss pale import shit. Fitting, all, but not the determining factor. True, like victims call for termination, these hungry hollows long to be the wombs of more ambitious spiders. But then again we all know that’s bullshit, don’t we? Does the lair need the monster or does the tail wag the dog? One sure thing is that we, all of compromised personhood, be it via dislocated sex or a busted hippocampus and one really bad trip to the DMV seem to find our way to these places. The *wabi-sabi* just too appealing in everything it’s not. Why else would I be broadcasting from the breezy benighted upper rooms of this most *UNDISCLOSED* location? True, these stories often find their violent conclusion there. But where do they begin? Our shameless scribe – the bard (*barred*) – might actually have hit upon a certain ecstatic truth in her breathless infodump, something I bet you bitches hadn’t thought of. That maybe there is a common origin to these things. Murderers are the progeny of bad homes and bad grammar – born in the act, or at best its dress rehearsal. But killers are a cut above on the conceptual register, and as such demand the poetry of parallel: coming into being at the yearning hour, born under fake glow-in-the-dark stars in the softly decorous bedrooms of perspiring

puppyfat victims, conspiring to a final reunion in those deep and terrible woods in the sultry ravines of the soul.

*[As the monologue proceeds, there fades slowly in the track titled “Midnight and Mr Anzalone’s House (Ambient)” from side six of the Samhain Sound Library Tape Collection. An orchestral stab coinciding with the conclusion of her piece terminates all but a distant wind. This, too, ends abruptly, with a single, solitary *bababooney*]*

Alright you fucks what else we got on the docket for the rest of the night? Which is... how long? I don't know. There's no clocks in this room, but I feel Bucolic Barry should have been here hours ago. *[clicking, typing sounds]* Ok, so we know about Bloody Mary's hysteric pregnancy but have we ever had a documented case of hysteric virginity? Maybe her successor. But let's get a little more contemporary. *uhhh*. Switching out roommate's HRT for nicotine patches? Old School but not it. Fucking a cop? Copping a fuck. Oh, this is something new, a disclosure! Remember our little blind item two weeks back about the girl who re-routed the Saint Swithun's Day Dyke March into the fucking ground because the park hire fees somehow magicked themselves into \$1.8K's worth of credit card debt and one or two sweet angora sweaters for good measure? Well it looks like the gagging order is officially expired. And it's not alone in that respect. Seems our unknown stolen valour soldier just got just got positively ID'd as crab bait! That's right! Turns out that body in the harbour is a returning guest on the show! Well, RIP Gwendoline (apparently). Heaven just became a new shorthand for affinity fraud. This one's for you.

[Starts playing “Dies Irae” but because of FCC regulations the only version of it they can use is the shitty Casio keyboard rendition from the opening of “Ibogaine Withdrawal” by Dissolving Yellow Membranes (there follows one minute and twenty two seconds of music that sounds like a demonically possessed garbage disposal).]

And welcome back to The Night of the Pink Scissors! Or should that just be “welcome”? Since we've had a proliferation of unfamiliar and distinctly unimaginative names in the chat, wearing proudly their hearts and their IP addresses on their sleeve, which suggests we've had an unexplained uptick in new listeners in the last ten minutes. Weather control also tells me – and my two eyes do agree – that both language and legal literacy has taken quite the corresponding turn downwards. Case *en-point*: “Defamation” (verb): *to defame* or otherwise speak ill of a person to the proven detriment of their financial and psychological wellbeing, which in the case of our sweet Gwendoline, is now something of an irrelevance. *[gavel sound]* Fun fact, there is no legal definition for just being rude, although if there one to be had, well, no one asked you to touch that dial, and I'm told a lot of my competition say expressly otherwise. “Conjecture”? Babe, there's receipts. I'd be willing to entertain the idea that the angora sweater detail might have just been a little local colour but your tortured insinuations about the missing money being a matter of necessity, well... Actually I don't have an opinion on that one to be honest. And besides, the one I'm most het up on right now is “Murder”. Or “Accessory” thereto.

This one is worth dallying with just for a second, because irrespective of personal offence on my part, one does have to respect the level of rationalisation at play here. So, crux of the matter is, this user writes: “Gwendoline not the first casualty of your unfunny show. That girl they found strung up around back of the Pizza Maiden in early February? Just before Christmas you told everyone her high school email address showed up in the logs from a Nazi bulletin board after the host server had a data breach. Then before that you claimed that two girls from the Unicorn Redoubt ran a blackmail campaign to get a bunch of their friends to make false testimonies accusing their ex of rape. Well neither of the accusers have been heard from in maybe months. I don't agree with the people who've been saying this makes you an accessory to murder.” – Ok so wait this wasn't her – “But in any case maybe you should check in on your librarian friend.”

Well, first of all she's a library *assistant*, and second would you fucking listen to yourself? So, sure, you guessed right – two thirds of that unholy trinity were a couple of the more ruthlessly inept enforcers over at the Waco Warehouse. But stop to consider just how many righteously pissed off supporting characters that story failed to mention. Or, at least, how many there must have been once the ex in question went the way of Ophelia, weighted down with a snootful of diazepam and an iron-clad alibi. So many reluctant accessories left fighting the call to level up. As for Circvmcised_V1k1ng1488, oh boy... Vril Energy is one hell of a drug, 'specially if you're boofing that shit. And Lancette says autoerotic asphyxia remains the leading cause of death amongst white supremacists both before and after gender reassignment, accounting for approximately 75% of mortalities under the age of 25! Like, ladies, I know how hard it can get on a double shift. Some of us like to work out a little tension. I endeavour to be the cause of it.

But you know what, fuck it. Actually, fuck it. I know what you're fucking doing, and I can tell you this: I'm fucking better at it. And moreover I'm fucking right. I didn't *kill* anyone by putting their rotten little histories on the air. And you know why? Because the only people listening to that shit already know it, and that's because they're in it up to their fucking eyeballs. Every single one of them is literally already either the victims or the perpetrators of one or another permutation of that exact same bullshit. And further-*fucking*-more I can tell you if I let you keep your sick little *Omerta* about these things you'd all be suffering for it by next week. Because you wouldn't know when to stop, until the inevitable happens, which is that you eat eachother alive. But not before you sow the ground with so much salt not one of us can resurface for another twenty or thirty or fifty fucking years. So, yeah. You wanna know who killed those girls? Fucking YOU did. And you tried to do me in just the same. But I guess you fucked it. Because I'm still here. Only this way now you're stuck with me.

[*Sounds of cZandy getting up from her chair and pacing the room, then we hear her sit down and very quietly go "blehh". There follows several seconds of silence broken by a sequence of sounds at oddly stilted intervals. Respectively: the call of a loon, a toilet flush, a voice saying "Does our man still wear pink socks?" and a pan lid clattering to the ground and spinning around for a comically long time.*]

God fucking damn it, if you pull a mic drop that good you're entitled to a little dead air. Because I know that's *you* texting me, *Greg*. And besides, the IRC is sitting at an unprecedented [0] active users, meaning even those literal hyaenas have a better appreciation for dramatic silence than you do, and you're my goddamn producer! Although, yes, I'll agree (hypothetically) that does seem a little sus. I mean, sure, we're in the red-eye part of the night by this point, but I also know not one amongst you can sleep when there's still bullshit you could be getting yourselves involved in. Any more than you could ever just decide to tune me out. So let's see what my omnipotent patron has to say, or had do say, oh... eight hours ago. Shit, wait, Beth?

[*fumbling sounds, head bumping against mic, a muttered curse*]

Ok, no I can work with this. Looks like we're moving on to our next segment, where we're going from call-out to call-in (although technically this a call back). Whatever the case, it seems like my good friend from the library has another bone to toss our ever curious way [*speed-dial bleeps followed by dial tone*] so let's find out if Meangirl Detectives LLC are about to crack what you bitches have been too busy hashing out your own confabulations to bother even pitching the question, that is: who, or perhaps *what* is really picking off these dames? Present company (that's you) excluded. Your little kill list hypothesis has some rather cute connotations, but if we're breaking out Old Ockham's Boxcutter on this one then my verdict favours the supernatural. Maybe a tragic lover. A girl ghosted so many times she decided to flip the script, but deleting her bio

accidentally wiped the whole twenty one grams. Becoming singular: a rabid metamorphous hunger – a poly-ghoul casting a thousand evil eyes across penumbral bar, and digging everything it sees.

[*Dial tone continues, louder and more insistent*] Or maybe it never was ('til it was): we're talking tuplas, listener. Picture the scene: a million stabbing paintbrushes to the corporeal canvas, each trying to summon the perfect object of loathing, and slashing the end result every time the pigments assemble themselves into a collective self-portrait. But the debris doesn't die on the cutting room floor, for it returns as dreams, and then as so much night-borne vapour, growing before the coming storm. Maybe that's why you're all so quiet, it's getting savage out there even for your tastes. I can see it now. The Fern Crate's doors hanging open, the music's off but the disco lights still whirr in silent pirouette, a drag brunch turned final supper. Down in the Garden of Questionable Delights the missing person notices clustered around the doorways are bleached and peeling, falling away to expose the WANTED posters still pinned up underneath. Meanwhile the Unicorn Redoubt is finally getting a chance to play the fortress it always fantasised about becoming – sentries guard the door while the mother of all house meetings debates what to do with so much knock-off Kool-Aid. While those survivors still out on the street are hunted down one by one by the wretched chimaera of weaponised dysphoria: a shambling morass of happy hour shadows and needle scars.

[*Dial tone ends with a muffled click*] Ok looks like I'm handling this one solo. But that's ok – I think I got there myself. You see there's another theory still; a third possibility that insists upon itself. And since riddles are our forté (even for those who missed out on the more lucrative neurodivergences), let me put it this way: When is a doll not a doll? Think low effort ersatz hologram. A tawdry carnival mask, dumped in the river once the fireworks fizzle out. A Raggery-Ann voodoo simulacrum with a plastic smile and a closet full of bitter secrets. Have you guessed it yet? I'm talking about the lowest of the low, the wet-winged butterfly bursting from the squirm of garden variety pick-me faggots. Tuning in to get turned on because he's not one of us but has an idea about what he could be had he not made that his first victim. That's right. Seems our long term listener has just turned first time heavy-breathing creep. Kicking off the kitten heels to adopt the missionary position, knife in hand and drooling holy napalm. [*"Zadok the Priest" plays, breaking into an airhorn sound at the crescendo*]

And judging by the dearth of compelling counterpoints I'm guessing his divine reckoning is now almost through. Almost, I note, because in case you hadn't noticed, I'm still here. And, shock horror, listener, this gives me pause. Sure, there's somehow still a decent amount of self-preservation left in me to squander, enough at least to hold me back from teasing my coordinates on air. But then again I'm not exactly hard to find, am I? I mean, Christ, there's an antenna growing out of my head. We have a website. The mayor was here one time. I know the stakes – one way or another it seems inevitable. And the sequence that keeps playing itself in my mind is this: maybe I hear a noise, stick my head out the door to look down the long, unlit, dead factory corridor, listening for portents of my undoing. Or maybe I go out to the rooftop to smoke, cast my eyes across the vacant lot between me and the woods and the city beyond, and scan the treeline to where a static figure stands spotlit and malign. All night I see that reaper fast approaching. But yet somehow he never comes a-knocking for real. And, listener, I think I know why.

Because the only way to kill me is to cut me off at the source, to cull my whole raison d'être. And you were doing a pretty fine job of it until you realised the last name on that list was your own. Because then you'd have to do something you're downright too chickenshit to even contemplate. And so every night we dance this dance again, 'til dawn threatens to burn your ass to dust. And that's when you discover once more what you knew all along, and shed so much blood to prove otherwise. That even the very worst of us is better than you! [*phone rings*] And... GOD DAMN IT GREG!

[Fragments of conversation faintly heard, footsteps out the door, the ensuing silence broken only by a now audible wind. After a moment cZandy returns, sitting down heavily.]

Ok well that was weird – that wasn't Greg at all, it was my friend at the library. She said she was still there, which is crazy since not even the most committed cataloguer is burning the midnight resin this late (that's just me). But there was something else that was weird. Maybe more than one. Putting them in order is something she'd be good at but she's not here so I guess you get to hear me try and figure this one. First off is that I didn't even ask. In fact that whole time we were on the phone it was like she couldn't hear me. Like she was having half a conversation with someone else. Or maybe we had this conversation another time and I guess I forgot. Was that it? It can't be, because the sound was wrong, too – echoey, but not like an inside echo, more like an echo from nowhere. Or maybe it was like the voice I heard was the echo of something else. And she spoke like that for a minute, stuff about the library, stuff about her girlfriend. Stuff I couldn't quite make out. And then she said something else. And she kept talking like she was about to move on to yet another thing but then stopped, confused, as if she didn't understand what she'd just said. But it was in that moment that it seemed like she was speaking to me for real. And what she said was "keep away from magnets". And then the echo came back, and it had a distortion with it this time. Like a black wind. And then an error tone like none I've ever heard cut in and the line went dead.

Well if anyone can tell me what THAT was all about feel free to write in. Or maybe I'll swing by the library later, find out for myself. That's if it's still standing, and if I can remember where it is. I'm sure I'll figure it out, though, because I couldn't tell you where home is either. But I know that exists, because otherwise where else would I be coming from every time I myself back here? When I clock-in at midnight to haul my ass up six flights of stairs to find a tattered leather-backed chair, a live mic, an open terminal and a hard core of select motherfuckers haunting my IRC. Ready to pluck at the strings of infamy for another night. I have to be somewhere in the spaces inbetween. And maybe that's where you are, listener. Somebody's gotta be keeping the lights on.

UGH! Whatever. These are questions for tomorrow night. 'Til then, I know you know what time it is...

[Fade in: "Amazing Grace" played on the bagpipes].

Ladies and misc., this has been The Night of the Pink Scissors where optics are optional and dawn is never a total certainty. So, hey-ho and fuck it! Here's to the whole wretched crew. Give it up for _Xebulba99_, Lassie O'Donahue from Sissygasm, maybe Ilsa Thot (maybe not?), the girls of the Fern Crate Theosophical Society, Gwendoline, my lawyer, Library Assistant Beth, The Killer – *uhhh* – the maid service (every horsetooth one of them). Uh, Me! Agents Tillinghast and Dimitriou [*blows a kiss *mwah**], Greg probably, the ghost of the old sound engineer at the Cake Vault, the ghost of Irony, the real Orlando Brogan, that whole line of doomed daughters from the house of Pelops and *all* those wonderful people out there in the dark. I'm done. Operator Dead – Post Abandoned. Fuck you.