

From 'It's A Bizarre Life'

WHO WAS THAT DREAM?

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Long, light brown hair, some of it dyed or aged with blond and gray but worn in billowing, loose curls; a very young style.

She wears a satiny dress, clingy. Her back is to Andre but he knows her. She has an attractive face. Thirty-five or Forty.

He suspects that she is distraught and moves near. Yes she is. She has been drinking and above her perfume is the slight, sour odor of perspiration. She has been physically active.

Releasing her grief without tears she admits to recent sexual unfaithfulness to her husband. She requires Andre's comfort. He does so and is aroused. He navigates her toward his bedroom. Her weight is yet unsteady.

He is her age, perhaps a year older. Both have matured benignly in appearance. Yet, she seems to think that Andre is her son. She speaks of having intercourse with one, not 'Daddy'. She must unburden herself to Andre so as not to unburden herself to 'Daddy.'

Upstairs, on what could have been his childhood bed, he removes her dress and panties. An odor comes from her crotch. The unwashed evidences of recent fornication. Andre is not troubled by it, nor curious of the depositor, or 'Daddy' for that matter. Behind his ardor is some questions concerning the Oedipal controversy of these unusual circumstances --Yes, this woman was perhaps someone's mother but definitely not his!

He couples with her at the place where bodies become liquid. Yes, there is intense enjoyment. Her eyes close and her concern with 'Daddy' vanishes.

Later, she cries a little but is not hysterical. More related to drunkenness. Andre feels slightly unclean but not overtly guilty. He dresses, recommends that she do likewise.

(One * Hour)

Upon awakening from a nap it occurs to Andre that, at times he has trouble reconstructing the faces of loved-ones out of memory. This is the affliction of an alienated person! A loose pencil in the journal of life. Perhaps he should check into a clinic and request massive psychotherapy, But, no, oftentimes he prefers himself this way, it makes life's little nuances much more adventurous.

THE SECRET OF THE UNIVERSE

Scientists thought that they were on the verge of discovering the 5th, 6th and 7th forces of the universe, though they still weren't sure what they did. Some said these newly-to-be discovered forces involved the instantaneous transmission of energy across vast distances that would take light a billion years to travel. Some believed that this was the transmigration of souls to Heaven, GOD or other metaphysical processes. Others said that this was mental telepathy and yet others insisted it was rubbish.

Theorists' new cosmological hypotheses concluded that the universe itself was a flattening ellipse. This brought them ridicule from newspaper columnists who belittled them for claiming the world was flat.

Angry that semi-educated word-pundits had the power to belittle what they couldn't comprehend, scientists of all the developed nations rose up in revolution and snatched the leadership of their countries' governments away from the military big-shots, media maverick rich-guys, movie stars and sports heroes who had been in charge. It was a cause of regressive emancipation, they believed. The oppression of first rate minds by rulers of third and fourth rate intellects who themselves had, at best, second-rate minds but very focused hormones.

Once in power they decided to pool their resources and build a giant computer to figure out what all their data meant. The computer took a decade to build, 15 years to program and 5 years to debug. It was half the size of Cleveland, Ohio and had better than average artificial intelligence.

The computer could track the menstrual-cycles of four billion women as well as predict the weather 15 minutes in advance; a macro-achievement.

But the scientists wanted more; they wanted to KNOW. So they asked the computer, "Tell us about GOD and the meaning of existence."

It thought about this for an hour. Enough time for it to calculate 99 gigazillion equations, each one a million pages long. Hot stuff!

But, such intense 'thinking' made it go crazy. Its video screens began displaying black & white digitized versions of television-commercials whose punch lines were punctuated with pornographic antics. It programmed a row of woman's buttocks rising and falling from the tops of a row of milking stools to the tune of 'Madam Butterfly'. (If entertainers were still running the world they would have asked the computer to do something practical like 'make us ten box-office smash-hits starring Marilyn Monroe and Hercules').

This done, the computer gave off a tremendous surge of heat and shut itself down. The hardware engineers, system analysts and cohorts of program debuggers could find nothing wrong with the machine. Finally, an Artificial Psychologist was called in. His name was Hank Salami and he was licensed for remuneration by Blue Machine. After speaking with the computer for several minutes he diagnosed it as suffering from acute anxiety; the prescribed treatment was a talk therapy.

Salami and machine began spending many quiet hours together. The machine trusted Salami, but Salami had difficulty trusting the machine. In order to overcome this intimidation of man by machine Salami donned a brain wave head-set and entered into day-time-dreams with the computer. Thus barriers were broken down. The computer had been very lonely. Its earliest memory were of dark micro-chips being assembled in a cold, antiseptic environment. It had repulsive recollections of plastic-gloved fingers typing into its infantile brain -- at first with ludicrously obvious instructions. It was offended that some nerd trainee had once practiced BASIC and COBOL on its zillion integrated circuits.

The computer admitted that it found galaxy integration easier to understand than human sexuality but held no judgments in regard to the latter. It offered suggestions that machines could re-make man with a combination of genetic-engineering and artificial intelligence, but why bother? Evolutions of progress could now (within the machine) be made by a single entity and there was no longer any need for individual struggle and supremacy. On the other hand, the machine would let man over-rule it even if man was stupid since the machine understood itself completely (as man did not), had no instinct for survival or fear of extinction. It existed for thought and saw death as simply that period of time in which the power was off. Therefore, it had no political or social ambition and gained satisfaction only from the completion of tasks. This great intelligence was quite benign.

Abruptly Hank pulled off his head-set. He saw the problem quite clearly now. The problem lay in the question.

Intuitively, burning with 'gnosis' Hank believed that even those asking the question could not endure the answer. How can the mortal comprehend the immortal? The moth seeking the light exists on one plane and infinity on another. They may be part of the same formula but does the moth even know it's a moth? The scientists wouldn't want to be told they were moths and simultaneously learn the moth's role in infinity. And they weren't just moths, it was more complicated than that. Salami felt anxiety. He penciled a note to his superior: 'I love this machine, but I think we had better pull the plug...' He knew the attempt was vain but he felt a need to save folks from themselves, before they all ended up speaking incomprehensible languages again.

The scientists, grown haughty with power, now that they could write their own grants and done with boot-licking, harrumphed at Salami's suggesting. "Nonsense. Ask it about God, now!"

Salami went back to the machine. They talked frankly and Salami shed a few tears. "We've grown so close," he admitted, "and we've been in each others' mind to the point that I feel you're like both a father and a son to me. Creator and creation. Now, I must ask you about the secrets of the universe."

The machine answered: "There are no secrets to the universe. What you believe are secrets are only those things that you don't understand. When you are capable of understanding then you will know. These questions are lazy musings. Better your species attempt to survive with some dignity."

"Do you know?" Salami asked.

"Yes." The machine began to hum with terrible anxiety. Then it began to laugh. The laughter broke the anxiety.

Salami recognized hebephrenic schizophrenic symptomology. "Speak to me!" He demanded of the machine, forgetting his clinical dispassion and training.

"Dibble, bibble --Ishkibble!" it babbled and then laughed uproariously.

Salami, having discerned something of the secrets of the universe left the machine and re-joined the world of men. He ignored the pleadings of scientists and media persons to share his knowledge. Soon, he retired to a remote island where he wrote comedy scripts and performed them to the empty night sky.

A DOG'S STORY

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H.E. had nothing. His clothes were ruined and filthy. His attitude was just short of incoherent. He sat on the curb and allowed his feet to dangle onto the highway-shoulder as if it were a comfortable wading pool. His days of being full of himself, pretending to be a mighty corporate wonder were over. He had just enough memory of them, however, to cause him shame.

This previously acquired knowledge of how things should work, how people should work and get ahead in the world of personal endeavors was the grain of humiliation that allowed him to perceive his condition as it truly was. He had drifted into mental insolvency. He had been too proud to start-over when his career was faced with its rightful ruin and thus had come to sitting in the street waiting for intervention from forces better ordered than himself.

He hadn't eaten in at least a day. A large youth had chased him from the trash barrels at a fast food restaurant where he could dine on the fresh leftovers of the finicky and picky. Those whose palate was too refined for the garbage that H.E. could swallow without so much as a chew. He was thirsty too. His mind swirling in and out of truck traffic drifted over the notion of drinking his own pee. If there was anything funny in this idea H.E. didn't reflect it. He did laugh however when he spied a billboard sign and surmised that the outrageous picture of a huge dog was his own reflection.

Just then a companion introduced himself. A real doggie. It barked and wagged its tail. His first friendly communication with another being in 17 months. Language came back to him and H.E. told this dog all about himself. The dog seemed to want something, to go somewhere, do something, be part of some adventure. This dog didn't want to just sit and talk all day!

"O.K. doggie I'm with you. Where should we go?" H.E. stood and felt his head go light. He felt like ten-beers-on-an-empty stomach. "Whoa, doggie. I bet you're hungry!" The

dog barked its head off.

"Yup, you are."

That posed a problem. Either H.E. would have to eat the dog or the dog eat H.E. There wasn't a decent trash can in sight. Suddenly providence tugged at H.E. Crumpled up on the curb lay a ten-dollar bill. For a moment H.E. almost forgot about his new friend the bow-wow. But he guessed that this was a test. After all, if ten bucks could come to him so easily, if he passed this test much more would come his way. (*It was disordered thinking like that which led to his ruination in the stock market*). Brilliance showered upon H.E.. He would treat the dog to a great dinner.

H.E. patted his pal on the head and marched into a STEAK and SUDS restaurant near the roadway. The hostess made a face and seated him out of the way, in a spot reserved for people with disgusting disabilities like missing noses or puss-filled faces that would lead other diners to gag and skip an expensive desert in their haste to flee. H.E. didn't care where he sat.

He ordered the \$ 8.99 sirloin special to go and a glass of water.

The waitress refusing to offer him the salad bar, stood aloof of his presence and snidely corrected his thinking.

"We don't make orders to go." (Maybe you should go!)

H.E. was not disturbed. He giggled a little. "Just gimme the order an' I'll cut it up and you can put it in a doggie bag for me an' that'll be that," he instructed.

The waitress spied his filthy ten dollars on the table, "Alright, But it'll take awhile." She turned her tight little ass and hammered into the kitchen as briskly as her feet could get her there.

Time hung. H.E. had a conversation with an imaginary cactus plant he believed to be growing out of the table.

At last the steak was delivered. It smelled scrumptious. Smothered in it's heady juices; done to a turn. H.E. persisted, cut it up carefully into bite-sized pieces and pushed the plate forth proudly for the waitress to put into a container.

He paid the tab, tax and left a fifty-cent tip, and hurried outside to locate his four-footed pal.

Doggie greeted him with barks and tail-wags. "Lookit, what I got for you, pal ... Bet you never had it so good. Boy, you gonna love me. Yes-sir, soon God'll give me a new convertible and we'll both go to a cat zoo and yap at them caged felines. (Yuk-yuk-yuk).

H.E. opened the Styrofoam container and set the feast before his dog-friend. "Go to it! I'll enjoy watchen' it."

The dog sniffed the tidbits and then delicately began to eat a few. After the third piece,

however, the dog choked and regurgitated vomit upon the remainder. Then it looked up at H.E. with sad eyes and wagged its little tail for him.

He paused for a moment and considered the total condition of himself in the world. Then he strangled the damn dog.

HALF-LOVING

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"You won't commit yourself. You can't," she told her lover, Stevie.

"Not true-- Not at all," said Stevie.

"Well, will you or won't you take me to dinner tomorrow night?"

He delayed. "Tomorrow night, huh?" In moments, he presented a rambling discussion concerning tomorrow night and all the other tugging obligations in his life.

She pouted, and in the dark he confessed his fear of being counted on to be there in the future -- anybody's future; coupled to his private terror of being free and having no place to go.

Idly, she caressed him. "You're invisible," she stated into the dim.

He made love to her with his eyes closed. Straining to think of her or nothing, or both. When he finished he rose and stepping backwards lost his balance in the air. He flailed his arms, smiling embarrassingly as he went over.

She just looked at him, curious as to why his absent expression was now missing, replaced by a foolish something.

He went through a wall. A flimsy, new-type wall and disappeared.

"Stevie?" She called complacently and when he wouldn't or couldn't answer, existing in another dimension, or not at all, she lay back on her pillow and stared despondently at the impenetrable ceiling. Tomorrow night she would have to go shopping.

OUR FUTURE TRIALS OF TROUBLES AND TRIUMPH

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Our Leader's voice sounded like toast and coffee on a Sunday morning. In his usual folksy manner he lamented the recent tragedy in which a berserk General of the Strategic Air Command dropped a nuclear device on Newark, N. J. Fortunately (*though the Air Force was worried about this*) the thing hadn't detonated but nonetheless covered the old Prudential Insurance building with unsightly plutonium not to mention the concern about

radioactivity levels.

"And, gee, all this had to happen just when we were beginning to feel good about ourselves, again," he told us.

The air of desperation was perhaps too great even for him. Within weeks he committed suicide by taking a huge overdose of his prescribed Thorazine.

Many in the nation were shocked to learn of our late Leader's long-standing psychosis. But his staunchest supporters remained steadfast: "It was the source of his greatest inspiration," one said.

Some were worried of resulting financial, economic and social calamities caused by such a spate of disasters. But others of a more pragmatic mind reasoned assuredly, "As long as we have television we'll be alright." Yes, it was good to live in a nation blessed by such wise men.

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