Letter from the Editor

Just a few months ago, we reached Broke in Korea issue 20 and the tenth anniversary of the zine, which found me unemployed and hemorrhaging money. I lost four close friends around then who moved away (though one just moved to Jeju). And this issue, things get intense as I’m about to lose five friends moving away (Jen and George, Jaceun and Matt, and Broke’s translation superhero Yerin). I’ve learned over the years that there are always more great people around the corner, and the good friends you lose one year will come back to Korea next year or the year after, at least to visit. And while we might not be so close in touch while they’re away, when we reunite it will be legendary.

This issue is timed for a big music event happening later this month (just turn to the next page or look at the back cover). Korea’s ska scene really seems to have its act together, producing a diverse number of sounds and getting overseas attention. I am pleased that TNGOSKA are bringing great bands here, so I don’t have to. Ryu Jinsuk is the Won Jong-hee of the 2010s.

We’ll see what will happen to the punk scene. It seems like punk has remained static while everyone else has grown; even the new Skunk Hell is committed to serving a broader music community, which both sounds good and also is a bit of a letdown. Regardless, after the closure of Club Spot last year and the loss of so many other clubs, it’s good to see a prominent name like Skunk re-emerge.

Actually these two stories kind of clash for top story this issue. If you ever look closely and wonder why someone gets to go ahead of someone else, yes, there is thought put into it, but it shouldn’t be taken too lightly. Skunk is our top story, but TNGOSKA has the back cover. The way this old-fashioned print journalism works, page 3 is the best real estate, followed by 5, then maybe 4, then maybe 7, then either 6 or 2 (hi!). Thus, the Toasters get page 4 because you hopefully want to seek that out and you’ll come across TNGOSKA on your way.

This is the first issue in a long while I’ve reduced the number of pages rather than expand, and my wallet will thank me. We have interviews with long-established bands and totally new bands, and while continuing our focus on the Daegu scene thanks to Kyle’s contributions, this issue features two Jeju acts as well. Having finally visited Jeju for the first time, I’m fighting the urge not to relocate there myself. Next issue, I hope to start cracking away at the Busan scene, so if you can help with that, what are you waiting for? The great thing about doing this zine is we’re never close to running out of bands to interview.

Though sometimes we miss one or two. For this issue, I wanted to interview John Stocktone, a new band playing the NOSKA Fest, but they felt they weren’t ready, and I hoped to interview Jinyong for Madox, but they just broke up. I almost interviewed another band he joined, #77, Beams, but couldn’t get ready in time before the band leader left for the army.

So, what else is in this? The centerfold has coverage of the Gay Pride Festival this year, which I visited on its opening and closing days. The cover photo reflects this issue’s tongue-in-cheek soft theme as the “gay issue,” which I don’t mean as pejorative or overly supportive. So we have a couple handsome white guys homoerocratically wrestling, and we get a parade with a high amount of straight people marching in support of gay rights opposing religious fundamentalism, so...that’s enough for a gay themed issue, right? Maybe I’ll make the crossword all gay words or something (print night update: I did!).

It looks like I may not have room for the fiction corner this issue, partly due to space, partly due to time constraints, also partly because I don’t know what happens immediately next. I have all sorts of crazy Rapscaiiion’s Den stories lined up down the road, involving cats, cougars, a failed attempt to become a skinhead, a failed attempt to go gay, asexuality, their Sikh sleepwalking roommate (based loosely on a guy in my hometown who totally was down with drinking), and the Den probably burns down or something (update: I skipped ahead to the gay story and got it done!).

I love the idea of punk as a fiction genre yet I dislike most of what’s been done already (and I fucking hate almost all skinhead fiction). Ever notice every punk movie ends in a death and the main character growing up (if he survives)? In my mid-30s and punk is as relevant to my life today as ever. Skinhead movies aren’t much different, other than the fact that the main characters are intended to be unsympathetic because they’re racist, until they reach redemption. How about some fiction stories where anarchism works, or there are skinhead role models, or there are metalheads solving crimes a la Scooby Doo? Being punk doesn’t mean you’re self-destructive, just like being a skinhead doesn’t mean you’re a racist who’s about to get a tragic reality check.

After this issue, I really need to get back to working on longer-form writing projects. I’m now hoping that my next big project will be a legitimate book on the history of punk in Korea, told from my aggressively limited perspective and citing a lot of Broke content. Something to look for in 2016, but in the meantime there will likely be more Brokes. I can’t go too long without putting out another issue or it really fucking builds up.

Yarr, this zine be keel-hauled using a pirated vrrsrsion of yee olde Adobe InDesign CC, ye scurvy dog.

Jon Whiteboi Twitch
Jon: And obviously this place is going to serve a very different set of people, as well as a little restaurant with draught beer. Upstairs on the second floor you can find the Badhands tattoo parlour and Unionway’s headquarters.

I visited Jonghee at the Skunk location for an interview in early June when the sound system was still being set up. Here’s what was said.

Joo: Why did you decide to specifically reopen a venue called Skunk Hell?

Jonghee: Hmm. Uh… I don’t know. For four or five years I really thought we would need a venue to play, especially for Rux. Chono from Unwon and these other friends, they were talking about opening up a new venue so I really wanted to help and support them.

Especially with Chono, we decided to open a venue, not just following the trend, not at Hongdae, or not at Edae, or Inae, or places that are already hot. So we were thinking about other places like Seongsu. Chono was involved at Vflu. Chono was involved with the party planners that opened up Vflu at Seongsu. They opened it at Daelim Changgo. Chono chose the place and was pretty cool to have all these bands playing at a factory. So after making those kind of shows, Chono was thinking “how about Mullae?” Mullae is like a big city where they make all these metal things, you know? It’s like a factory venue, but if you look into that, these guys are all like artists. These old guys, they make things, they make art. So that’s pretty cool. So we chose Mullae. Chono chose to make Skunk Hell.

I asked Chono “so we’re making a venue, what are we gonna call it.” Chono was like “How about Skunk Hell?” And I was like “Uh, Skunk Hell was closed like 6 or 7 years ago,” and Chono was like “I miss Skunk Hell: let’s make it Skunk Hell.”

Jon: I’m interested that you were a bit hesitant though because to me Skunk Hell was a specific time in the mid-2000s. Of course it was the second Skunk Hell so now this is the third Skunk Hell. Jonghee: Yeah this is the third Skunk Hell.

Joo: And obviously this place is going to serve a very different set of goals than the other Skunk Hells. Jonghee: Mmm, it has pretty much same kind of thoughts into it. But I don’t want it to end up the same. Every time we made Skunk Hell, it was Skunk Live Hall, and some random guys made it Hell and we liked it.

Jon: Can you remind me again, when did the first Skunk Hell open—and it was originally Rux Practice Space?

Jonghee: Yeah it was Rux Studio. In the beginning, ’97, Rux Studio, and we didn’t have any place to play our gigs. We went to plenty of auditions, we failed, so we didn’t really have a stage to play. So that’s why we just ended up playing at our own studio. And our first song was called “Skunk” which is meaning the animal “skunk” and not the good skunk. The first Skunk Hell was at Sinchon, if you remember at the trailways, there was nothing there except Yonghee Cheolmoorjeom. Yonghee Cheolmoorjeom was a similar place with Mullae where they sell like metal and plastic. We started at that basement and right now there’s lots of people, lots of shops, fancy shops, at Sinchon.

And we moved to the second Skunk Hell. Second Skunk Hell right now, that place is crowded with tourists.

Joo: How did the name go from Skunk Live Hall to Skunk Hell?

Jonghee: I think it was Mike. He went back to the States 15 years ago. Skinhead Mike. With green tape we made like “Skunk Live Hall” and Mike came up and threw away “live” and made “A” into “E.”

Jon: The original graffiti that you made is still up in the little space leading to the basement door. Jonghee: Maybe they’re too lazy to clean it up. “Cause they know if they clean it up, there’s gonna be another one.

Jon: That might be some of the oldest graffiti in Korea.

Jonghee: Uh, there’s older ones. In Augujeong or Ilsan, places like that, I’ve seen old graffiti back in the early ’90s. Jon: But is it still there?

Jonghee: Uh, probably not.

Jon: You mentioned moving into the second Skunk Hell, you were originally going to go to DGEB, but you didn’t.

Jonghee: That was pretty complicated, “cause when the first Skunk Hell was crowded up with all these people and all these bands—there were like 20 bands—was it like 2002/2003? We needed a bigger venue and we were searching for places where we could make a bigger and better venue. One place was Pink Lady. Was it Pink Lady? Pink Engine. Pink something. The owner died at Hangang—was he swimming? Yeah he was drinking and swimming at Hangang and he passed away. That was the reason they were selling that place really cheap so I was going to go into that place, but the Drug owner, Lee Seong-moon—he was looking out for that place too, so we were just negotiating, and Seong-moon said “How about I give you Drug, and you let me go into Pink Engine…or Pink Lady or something,” and I said “Alright, that’s cool. That’s how we ended up moving to second Skunk Hell.”

Jon: But there was a period when the first Skunk Hell was closed, like when I first came to Korea, it no longer existed. How did that place close? Like did you guys just, eh, move out, and it shut down?

Jonghee: Yeah, we were like, alright we got the new Skunk Hell, we don’t need that place.

Jon: But it still took a while. Like when I first arrived there was no Skunk Hell. I didn’t think you moved from one into the other.

Jonghee: Was it? I really don’t remember. I think there was, I’m guessing there was some problem with the owner of that place, like the owner of the building.

Jon: I remember a time when that street in front of Skunk Hell II was filling up with all sorts of little places with people like us. Right across the street from Skunk Hell was a piercing shop for a while. And then it became a shoe store and everything became shoe stores. Do you spend much time in Hongdae anymore?

Jonghee: No. For two months I didn’t go there.

Jon: The place has changed quite a lot, hasn’t it?

Jonghee: It changes fast.

Jon: Getting back to Mullae, as far as I know, there are still plans at some point to redevelop a lot of this area. So this place still, it won’t be like this in ten years.

Jonghee: Everything changes. I hope this building doesn’t change. I like the owner of this building. He has a pride on this building. I don’t know why, but he’s like “I’m not going to sell this building. I love this building.”

Jon: Maybe we could have another Dooriban here also. By the way, where do you live these days?

Jonghee: Right across the street. I moved to Mullae.

Having a kid these days is really hard. The whole country’s fucked up right now. Worse than the past. You know, if you work at a convenience store, you make 1,500,000. And to live at a place you have to pay 5 million. At least 5 million. Especially if you’re married and have a kid, you have to pay more than 1.5 million.

I went to a real estate and asked “What’s the cheapest place you can get in Seoul?” They said Mullae. Mullae and Nowon. Nowon’s like fasaar up there.

Jon: You did mention that one thing that attracted you to this area was Mullae. Mullae was Space Moon. When I came to the Skunk opening show, they had a show, we had a show, there were all these places. Is that a good thing, or is it going to duplicate what happened when Skunk Hell was open, when there were too many clubs in the area.

Jonghee: It’s only two clubs. I hope there’s like 20 clubs in this street. One of the things that attracted us to Mullae was Space Moon. We were just walking by the street and we saw Space Moon and we were talking about the place. Chono said “Any bands that want to play here they can play, and we don’t care about things that are going on outside of the club. So we went inside and had a look and we talked a bit with the owner— I don’t know if it’s the owner or not. We felt a good energy—they’re like ‘okay, we have our place, you wanna play you can play, you wanna stand there you can stand there.’ they didn’t really give a shit about things, like other things. That’s how we got attracted to this place.”

Jon: This is definitely a nicer building than they have though. There are a lot of businesses in this building. What is the space on the second floor?

Continued on page 6.
The Toast of the Town

Jon Whiteboi Twitch

I don’t know if there was anyone in Korea more excited than me by the announcement that American ska bands would be headlining this year’s New Generation of Ska Festival. The Toasters are a cornerstone of ska music dating back to when it crossed the Atlantic from the UK to the US, and Eng- land-born fromman Rob “Buck” Hingley was the architect of Ameri- can ska in the ’80s and ’90s through his label Moon Ska Records. Moon Ska collapsed in the late ’90s along with the end of third-wave ska, a term I just found out he disapproves of. Anyway, he did not pull any punches in this very interesting interview, which was a real privilege to do.

Broke: First, Bucket. How did that nickname come about?

Broke: “Buck” is a nod to the Pioneers tune “Long Shot Kick the Bucket.” It’s a street handle from back in the old days in the ‘hood on the Lower East Side which was pretty rough and tumble, not a place for the faint-hearted.

Broke: How did you originally discover and get into ska?

Broke: I picked up my first ska record in 1994 upon returning to the UK from Africa. I liked the rhythm. That record was “Boy Lollipop” by Millie Small. I still have it.

Broke: I see you as having bridged the gap across the ocean, from mostly UK 2nd-wave to predominately American 3rd-wave ska. How did ska come to America, and what part did you play?

Broke: When I arrived in NYC in 1980 I was astonished that there was so little awareness about the genre. There had been a NYC ska band called “The Sacred Treasures” but they were done by the time I got there. So that’s why I decided to start the band. The rest is history but we do refer to ourselves now as the American 2Tone band. I am not a big fan of the “wave” terminology. First of all it’s all ONE wave really as the music has been a continuum since the ’50s. People who use the “wave” theory tend not to know too much about the roots and culture of the style.

Broke: Through the Toasters and Moon Ska Records, I think you helped define the sound of ska in the ’90s. There is a lot of disagreement about what that means now, as a style, as an era, and as a scene. How do you define ska?

Broke: I don’t—but what happened in the ’90s was really a schism where you had on one hand seaso- ned bands playing more authen- tic styles (Toasters, Him Skala Bim, Hepcat) and Johnny-come-latelies playing fake punk rock with horns. The mainstream attention garnered by bands like No Doubt and Bos- tones certainly helped get ska into the spotlight however that limelight was hum-rushed by crap bands who had no clue what ska music was and what it meant. But that’s what happens in a consumer society. For example anybody who knows any- thing about food would NEVER eat McDonalds. Those bands were to ska what McDonalds is to real food. There are some excellent bands in the Moon catalogue that never re- ally got a chance but to me were way more deserving artistically than some of the dross that went on to be “famous.”

Broke: Ska (or ska-punk) may have been a big fad in the late ’90s, but the vast majority of ska musicians I’ve talked to saw this as a nega- tive, never earned a cent off this temporary popularity, and eventually found their style of music dis- credited in the mainstream after the fad died. What happened here and where did things go wrong?

Broke: Yep that’s one side of the coin. But I’d be a liar if I said that we didn’t spin that to our advantage. The bottom line is that more people than ever now know what ska music is, however only a few of them bothered to travel back to the roots to discover core artists like the Skatalites, Laurel Aitken, etc. That’s one of the things that was most regrettable about the skaboom of the ’90s. That and the shit bands that is.

Broke: Beyond what was going on in the mainstream, what led to the end of Moon Ska Records?

Broke: The bubble burst really, too many bands trying to slice up a small pie and clambering onto a stage that collapsed under the weight. As far as the label was concerned the main reason for closing was the loss of distribution once the indie dis- count chains like Tower Records and Virgin started offering ska and punk bands. But a big part of the reason was an eponymous rockabilly label that had been around from the ’50s.

Broke: What has changed now, with the rise of Megalith and Moon Ska World (formerly Moon Ska Europe)?

Broke: We had quite a bit of contact with the Stomp records guys. You’d have to ask them what their motivation was. Moon Ska was so named because of Sun. What you might not know however was that we amended the name to Moon Ska when we found out there was an eyepinsonous rockabilly label that had been around from the ’50s.

Broke: What music is considered more party music. The early ska bands.

Broke: Why did you choose the name Toasters? There doesn’t seem to be all that much toasting in your music, especially compared to a lot of other Moon Ska bands.

Broke: It was a nod to the original DJs for sure but also more along the lines of raising a glass. Tongue in cheek which is what the band has always been. Having said that we had some excellent “toasters” (=Jamaican rappers) such as Coolie Ranks, Pablo D and Jack Ruby Jr.

Broke: For a beginner, what are the essential Toasters songs?

Broke: Two-Tone Army was the theme for the Nickelodeon show Karaoke. Don’t Let the Bastards Grind You Down.” was used for Mission Hill. How do you feel about your songs being on both shows?

Broke: Kablam was quite a project. We wrote 80 pieces for them not just for the show but also for the soundtrack of the movie. The studio was like selling out.” I make my living playing and writing music professionally. The Toasters are, and always will be an indie band. Nuff said. I am glad that we can use the income derived from projects like this to keep the band on the rails and touring in a real DIY style all over the planet. That’s what REAL indie music is about, not some snotty nosed idiots with expensive haircuts pretending to be punk rock.

Broke: In 1998 the Toasters joined the Ska Against Racism tour. Isn’t that name redundant?

Broke: not to people who didn’t get it at the time and still don’t. The USA is a country that is still sharply di- vided on racism. When boats full of immigrants came to the coast in the 1800s, the local white people used to refer to them as “skaboom” because of the sound coming from the boats. At the time and still don’t. The USA is a country that is still sharply di- vided on racism. When boats full of immigrants came to the coast in the 1800s, the local white people used to refer to them as “skaboom” because of the sound coming from the boats. At the time and still don’t. The USA is a country that is still sharply di- vided on racism. When boats full of immigrants came to the coast in the 1800s, the local white people used to refer to them as “skaboom” because of the sound coming from the boats. At the time and still don’t. The USA is a country that is still sharply di- vided on racism. When boats full of immigrants came to the coast in the 1800s, the local white people used to refer to them as “skaboom” because of the sound coming from the boats. At the time and still don’t. The USA is a country that is still sharply di- vided on racism. When boats full of immigrants came to the coast in the 1800s, the local white people used to refer to them as “skaboom” because of the sound coming from the boats. At the time and still don’t. The USA is a country that is still sharply di- vided on racism. When boats full of immigrants came to the coast in the 1800s, the local white people used to refer to them as “skaboom” because of the sound coming from the boats. At the time and still don’t. The USA is a country that is still sharply di- vided on racism. When boats full of immigrants came to the coast in the 1800s, the local white people used to refer to them as “skaboom” because of the sound coming from the boats. At the time and still don’t. The USA is a country that is still sharply di- vided on racism. When boats full of immigrants came to the coast in the 1800s, the local white people used to refer to them as “skaboom” because of the sound coming from the boats. At the time and still don’t. The USA is a country that is still sharply di- vided on racism. When boats full of immigrants came to the coast in the 1800s, the local white people used to refer to them as “skaboom” because of the sound coming from the boats. At the time and still don’t. The USA is a country that is still sharply di- vided on racism. When boats full of immigrants came to the coast in the 1800s, the local white people used to refer to them as “skaboom” because of the sound coming from the boats. At the time and still don’t. The USA is a country that is still sharply di- vided on raci-
Ska Fest Regenerates

Jon Whiteboi Twitch
Translation: Patrick Connor, Lim Dyevon

Last year’s New Generation of Ska Festival, held in the freaking street of Sinchon, was a phenomenal experience. I’d call it a success—then again, I wasn’t financially on the line for it. The members of Team New Generation of Ska have made a huge personal, financial sacrifice, all in the hope that they can spark a flame here in Korea. I interviewed TNGO-SKA members Ryu Jinseok (Skasucks frontman) and Jude Nah (Pegurians keyboardist) and Skasucks keyboardist Kim Goyang stopped by for a quick answer too.

Jinsuk: Actually, our aim isn’t just to make one successful festival each year—we made our team to help support the whole scene here in Korea and to make it flourish.

Broke: 2014년의 TNGOSKA 페스티벌 이후 한국 스카는 어떻게 성장했습니까? 여러 성장한 것을 스카 미래의 모습은 어떻게 예측하고 있습니까? How has Korean ska grown since the 2014 TNGOSKA Festival? What are the future results of growth you would predict?

Jude: 작년 이후 많은 사람들이 좀 더 스카에 대한 관심을 갖게 된 것으로 보입니다. 골드 콘서트 클럽에 가기 위해 온 사람들이 증가했고, 오직 NGOSF만을 위한 팀은 아니었습니다. 작년 말 롤링스 다시 돌아와서 The Rollings back here again at the end of this year to play a show as well.

Jinsuk: We plan to have the Rollings back here again at the end of this year to play a show as well.

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Jude: I think that after last year more people have taken up more of an interest in ska. We usually don’t get too many new bands in the ska scene here but recently there are new bands coming out like Stockton. Tone and Respects have started to make waves in the scene. Also lots of people often ask us how to go about making a ska band. Moreover, small and big bands from abroad as well as magazines and websites are writing about our festival which made us very happy.}

Broke: 올해 페스티벌에 참여하는 토스트즈는 어떻게 빚났습니까? How did you book the Toasters for this year’s festival?

Jude: It is probably safe to say that Mike Park of The Bruce Lee Band, who headlined last year’s festival, told Rob about it.

Broke: 올해 페스티벌이 추진한 토토즈는 어떻게 빚났습니까? How did you book the Toasters for this year’s festival?

Jude: It is probably safe to say that Mike Park of The Bruce Lee Band, who headlined last year’s festival, told Rob about it.
Jonghee: It’s basically Unionway’s office. And Badhands Tattoo.

Jon: Is there any concern about the legal problems of having a tattoo parlour here? I did notice on the outside of the building it does say Tattoo. After last year’s Ink Bomb being shut down, are you worried at all?

Jonghee: Uh, no. We don’t really care. You know, right now, the government thing, they’re really complicated. I think I remember when the president were talking about legalising tattoos. Was it like two years ago? She had this slogan that was saying about “saving the underground economy.”

One reason they can’t really legalise tattoos is because of the doctors’ association. The doctors’ association really can’t make anybody, like random people, stab others and get paid. They want everything for themselves.

Jon: You’ve been doing quite a lot of tattooing for the last several years. I remember when you disappeared to Australia for a while. Jonghee: For like a year.

Jon: So that must be a pretty good business to be in, right?

Jonghee: Yeah, I went to Australia to make money, and I made a lot of money.

Jon: I figure that you can’t really tattoo yourself, so who does your tattoos for you?

Jonghee: Uh, a lot of friends. I really can’t tell like there’s too many people on my body.

Jon: Last time I saw you I was pretty surprised by the neck tattoo. So I guess that means you’re never getting an office job.

Jonghee: No, I gotta get more.

Jon: We talked last time about the response from neighbours, like people already in the community, to a punk venue opening here, as well as this place and tattoos. How are they taking it?

Jonghee: The neighbours? We’re doing really good. Especially with the old guys that work at the factories. They wanna plan a party at Skunk.

Jon: Really. What kind of party would they have?

Jonghee: Uh, you know a genre called trot? Especially the owner of [the machine shop] on our first floor.

Jon: Whenever I went to Lowrise or Space Moon I always got the impression that they really didn’t want us here, because they’re machine shop workers, they don’t get money out of us coming here. But it seems like with you you’ve done better with that.

Jonghee: Maybe if you have a few conversations with them, they would love it. I was surprised when we were choosing this building, we warned all these people at the building how noisy it is and how it’s gonna be crowded with people. First with the noise, they oppositely were warning us, “because we are noisier because we make things.” Right now you can hear the sound like bzzzz like that, and they were like “is it gonna be okay if you open up a rock club here? isn’t it gonna be too noisy with all these instruments coming in?” and we were like ‘oh that’s fine with us,’ and they were like ‘if you’re fine, we’re fine’ and that’s it, and all these people that are coming in, like crowded with all these young people, their comment was ‘i feel alive.’ I buy them beer, they buy me beer, we’re becoming friends.

Jon: Speaking of beer. I was happy to see on the main floor, there’s that nice little business that sells draught beer. Who runs that? That’s totally unrelated right?

Jonghee: That was a little bit odd because they came in with us at the same...was it April?

Jon: You’ve had this place since April?

Jonghee: Yeah, I was constructing, making.

Jon: Speaking of that, you mentioned one of the differences with this Skunk Hell, is you’re better at constructing it.

Jonghee: We should be better at making music, but we’re getting better at making all these construction things.

Jon: Speaking of that, you found especially funny, kind of a callback I think, is that railing in front of the stage.

Jonghee: That’s for safety.

Jon: It looks a lot nicer than the previous one at the other Skunk Hell. How is it for safety? How does it make things safer? Is it to keep people off the stage, or is it to keep people on the stage on the stage?

Jonghee: The stage is like a big stairs, and if you push the people in the crowd they trip on the stage.

Jon: It also seems very useful for stage diving too. So, tell me more about how it’s run. Like basically this whole thing is run by Unionway. Do you have a specific job related to the club?

Jonghee: Right now we don’t have any ideas.

Jon: Uh, define that, what do you mean?

Jonghee: Like anything’s good. Anything’s good, and especially the people who are in the Unionway crew, they’re talking about things like “How about making a bar, how about making a coffee shop, how about running a party, how about making it into a gallery,” anything’s good. And we are pretty much filled up with the schedule.

Jonghee: It’ll be on Facebook. Recently we made a Skunk Hell Facebook account. So we’re gonna upload anything that’s gonna happen.

Jon: One thing I found pretty funny at your opening show, of course you guys, the Cock Sparrer cover “England Belongs To Me,” you made it “Hongdae Belongs To Me,” now it’s “Mullae Belongs To Me?”

Jonghee: First verse goes Hongdae Belongs to Me and the second verse goes Mullae Belongs to Me. We’re not especially saying that, we’re trying to say mes. It belongs to us. Mind if I smoke?

Jon: Can you smoke in Skunk Hell?

Jonghee: Legally it’s not allowed, but...I don’t know.

Jon: Another thing I wanted to ask you about was the liquor licence.

Jonghee: Now we have all the licences.

Jon: So you guys can sell alcohol down there. That was the big problem with Skunk Hell II wasn’t it? Like Skunk Hell II?

Jonghee: Didn’t have the other exit. That was the main problem.

Jon: Right, no emergency exit. And it does now actually. Although it leads up to a tiny alley that would not help you escape. So there was no emergency exit so you couldn’t have a liquor licence. So people would bring alcohol in for much cheaper, from the convenience store. But now we can get alcohol here. And not to mention not from you guys only, but from the bar on the main floor too.

Jonghee: We really wouldn’t mind if people bring those into the club. We do wanna run the bar but we don’t have anyone to run it.

Yerin: I’ll do it. I’m a bartender.

Jon: She needs a summer job. I don’t pay well. That was one thing I did at the opening show. I went outside to buy beer because the bar didn’t have change to give me. I went outside, bought a beer, and wasn’t sure if I could bring it in.

Jonghee: We don’t really care. Maybe like for some nights. We’re gonna do Bass Attack, which is drum n bass. We’re gonna do a DJ party. On that nights, there’s gonna be bouncers outside. I don’t know how they’re gonna run it. But I think at that specific night you can’t bring in beers from outside. Especially for rentals.

Jonghee: We really wanna erase Hell after Skunk.

Jon: What do you mean?

Jonghee: Everybody calls it Skunk Hell.

Jon: You just want it to be called Skunk?


Jonghee: We have air condition-
Jonghee: Really want to erase “origi-
nality” to all these artists. Punk bands, alter-
native bands, all these other bands that’s here or there or across the sea. There isn’t any original bands. They’re all influenced from other bands or other people or their mom and dads. So why I told you I wanna erase Hell is because I don’t want this venue to be trapped in punk. Rather than that we can have Jambinai or 3rd Line Butterfly or other musi-
cians, and trot. And DJ things, drum n bass, anything’s fine. If you really don’t wanna care about other things rather than music, you can play here. We’re not forcing you to have a punk attitude. We’re not forcing you to have thoughts that come from other things. If you have your own original passion, passion can be original. If you have the original passion you can play here.

That was the first idea of making this venue. Let’s let all these people have their own freedom in Mullae-dong. It’s gonna be cheap, renting the venue’s gonna be cheap, it’s gonna have good sound quality, and it’s not gonna be big. If it’s too big then you have to worry about the tickets, and if it’s too small these people coming in. For Skunk right now downstairs if there’s like 30 people coming in. They were crowded with all these people. Right now I don’t think it’s the same time section.

Jon: The thing that’s improved though is that there’s so much more of all types of music these days. Back during Skunk II, back then Hongdae felt really full if there were five venues active. Nowadays there’s probably like—Jonghee: 100.

Jon: Yeah, probably about that. And they all have their own niches and people and they can coexist better.

Jonghee: Now it’s a big market, rather than a cultural place.

Jon: That’s why Skunk and also Drug before it were such important things, because they were so much more rare.

Jonghee: So like the animal Skunk we have to run away again. We have our own weapons. Rather than kill-
ing you we can fart and run away. That’s a pretty cute thing to do. Part and run away. If I don’t like you, I don’t have to take you. I can just fart and run away. That’s why we don’t want this to end up like the other Skunk Hells. We don’t want this venue to be crowded with Nikes and Starbucks and all that. We want this street to fill up with people like us.

Broke: TodayXSpot is the venue that has two pleasant things. It is the X silence and TodayXSpot meaning is the X silent.

Chono: The name came from one skateboard magazine which had a section titled ‘today spot’ to introduce local venues, I just put X in the middle of it. It’s just to introduce local venues. I just had a section titled ‘today spot’ to introduce local venues.

Broke: When I think of Hongdae it’s the place where you can coexist better. Even though there’s probably like—Chono: The Skunk Hell before was like the mecca of punk, but now it seems like the bound-
aries are expanding, each boundary is expanding, each kind of music and culture.

Broke: For me the new Skunk Hell is like a new start at Mullae. It’s gonna have good sound quality, and it’s not gonna be cheap, it’s gonna have good sound quality.

Chono: I’m managing not only Skunk Hell but also Badhands Tattoo Works and Unionway HQ but now I wanna erase Hell is because I don’t want this venue to be trapped in punk. Rather than that we can have Jambinai or 3rd Line Butterfly or other musicians, and trot. And DJ things, drum n bass, anything’s fine. If you really don’t wanna care about other things rather than music, you can play here. We’re not forcing you to have a punk attitude. We’re not forcing you to have thoughts that come from other things. If you have your own original passion, passion can be original. If you have the original passion you can play here.

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I don't get no Respect

Jon Whiteboi Twitch
Translation: Park Solmin, Patrick Connor, Lim Doeyoon
Respects is a new band that popped up and got some good feelings going. After they were added to the New Generation of Ska Fest 2015, I figured we better get to know them. I interviewed Respects drummer/producer Jo Sanghyun.

Broke: Hey ‘respects’ and band 이름을 지었나요? Why did you name your band Respects?
Jo Sanghyun: The title was given by the producer. Our album is called ‘Ocean Blues,’ so we called ourselves ‘Ocean Blues,’ but their songs/genre has no musical meaning. Our album is called ‘Ocean Blues,’ but the word ‘Blues’ has no real musical meaning. Our album is called RespectsMusic, which simply means ‘Our Music.’

Jon Whiteboi Twitch: The band genre is described online as “Ocean Blues” though most people say it is ska. What is your genre?
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Sou Ska Nibble

Jon Whiteboi Twitch
Translation: Park Yerin, Patrick Connor, Lim Doyeon

South Carnival are a Jeju band known for their island music sound. Last year they were one of the few bands playing the New Generation of Ska Festival, so this year we're setting that right. I contacted the band and they gave me their group answers.

Broke: 찾아낸 질문이다. 왜 밴드 이름을 '사우스 카니발'이라고 지정하셨나?
First, why is your band named South Carnival?

South Carnival: 대한민국에서 가장 남쪽에 위치한 제주에서 가장 신나는 '섬 음악'을 하자는 의미에서 '사우스 카니발'이라고 지정하셨다. 그리고 대부분 스카, 레게, 라틴 등이 그 인상이 떠오르는 편이다. 눈에 띄는 것이 우리도 사우스카니발이란 게 알맞은 의미도 담겨있다.

South Carnival: We are called South Carnival because we play exciting island music on the most southern island of Korea. Also, a hidden bonus for the name... most ska bands here in Korea have the word ska in their name—if you say our name fast (and in a Korean accent) it sounds a bit like the word ska is hidden in there (사우스/스카/나비할).

Broke: '사우스 카니발'이란 멤버는 10명인데 어떤 멤버가 있는가? 그리고 많은 인원을 활용하기 위해 멤버가 많지 않은가? 특히 제주도로 투어를 가는 멤버는 보통 멤버 총수를 더해준다고 생각한다. 남들과는 다를 것으로 생각한다. 제주에는 다른 장르로 규정치 않은 장르가 있는 편이다. 남쪽에 위치한 제주도에서 가장 신나는 '섬 음악'을 하자는 의미에서 '사우스카니발'이라고 지었다. 그리고 대부분 스카, 레게, 라틴 등이 그 인상이 떠오르는 편이다. 눈에 띄는 것이 우리도 사우스카니발이란 게 알맞은 의미도 담겨있다.

South Carnival: Two of the members are Jeju-born. Can you tell me about the Jeju music scene? What are your shows like?

Broke: 제주도 라이브 음악 신에 대해 말해달라. 공연들은 어떤가?

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South Carnival: South Carnival perform at Rise Again Festival in 2013.

South Carnival: South Carnival perform at Rise Again Festival in 2013.

Broke: 스키나 레게 같은 라틴/쿠바/아프리카 음악은 모두 한국의 다른 이들이 다루는 문화중에는 생소한 느낌이 드는 것 같다. 제주도에도 같은 이유 아닐까 생각한다. 이곳의 음악은 좀 더 느껴지는 라이브음악을 수용하고 있는 청취인이? Ska/레게와 reggae 및 all Latin/Caribbean sounds seem so alien to, Korea's 'bigger, faster' cultural mindset. Is that the same in Jeju, or is the culture down there more embracing of a laid-back lifestyle?

South Carnival: 제주도 많은 곳이 라이브 음악과 reggae, Ska, African sounds seem so alien to young and creative people here. The water at Seogwipo is the Pacific Ocean, Jeju is an island. If you were born and raised in this kind of environment this 'bigger, faster' mindset is hard to understand. Music born in Latin America and the Caribbean like ska, reggae and Latin music is often heard in Jeju, they are all from hot countries. I believe that all cultures are influenced a lot by the weather. So, if you compare Jeju to other cities in Korea it is a lot more of a relaxed and easygoing culture.

Broke: 밴드 멤버들은 모두 제주 출신인가? 저들은 저마다 다른 분야들에 특화된 사람들을 제주에 많이 사는 것 같다. Are you all from Jeju? These days it seems there are a lot of main-landers, especially Seoulites, living on Jeju.

South Carnival: Two of the members are Jeju-born. Can you tell me about the Jeju music scene? What are your shows like?

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South Carnival: South Carnival perform at Rise Again Festival in 2013.
Broke: And yeah, I'm interested in Korea.

Jared: Sounds like they’d make really fun music. You have Bamseom Pirates frontman Pyha leading the way, backed by the incontinent Taiwanese-Korean Yuying on bass and American drummer Jared. Sounds like a barrel of laughs, but what you end up with is dark, brooding and heavy. If you came looking for more of Bamseom Pirates, you’re gonna be let down, but if you’re open to something new, you’re in luck, though your eardrums may burst otherwise the morning after.

Jared: No it’s all good, haha. Well truthfully we haven’t done too many interviews yet with this band, but it seems that I’m more or less the English voice and they take care of the Korean stuff. Pretty sure Pyha can hang with Japanese speakers though and are free to chime in whenever they want. We don’t have any official rules as to who speaks and when.

Broke: So how did you meet up with Pyha and Yuying?

Jared: At least six years ago when I lived in Florida, my best friend and I actually addressed him as “heya man” for like the first two months because I couldn’t understand how to pronounce his fucking name.

Broke: First, what does the band name mean?

Jared: Gonguri is a Korean/Japanese word that roughly translates to concrete or construction. It doubles as a yakuza slang for disposing of a corpse in wet cement. Pyha has always been into Japanese gangster films so that’s pretty much where the name came from. I thought it matched the sound and looked great on paper, so I was sold from the beginning. Plus it wasn’t already taken.

Broke: Wait, do you actually call him Pyha?

Jared: Naw, ha ha. I’m sure we’ve done it humorously but Pyha is his black metal monicker, so I think it would be pretty awkward. Fun fact though, I actually addressed him as “dude you gotta hear this 13-year-old black metal kid from South Korea.” He played me Pyha’s solo but I don’t remember much about it. When I eventually moved to Seoul I linked up with Yong-jun from Banran and told him I was looking to play doom metal. He put me in contact with Pyha and after our first practice it came to light that I had heard his record years and years ago. Super weird how that worked out, but pretty rad.

Jared: I think at the end of the day we are really focused on writing very primitive, cold, and dark music. So even though Gonguri are a bunch of goofballs, we all kind of agree that humor and comedy isn’t natural for this specific band. We make a conscious effort to severely limit talking on stage and keep the momentum going. One thing I really hate about so many punk and hardcore bands is the fucking barrier and ranting in between songs. For me there’s nothing better than a band just charging through their whole set and not giving the crowd a chance to breathe, so we really try to push that. And like you said, Pyha already has Bamseom and Yuying drums in Sulsa so I think they’re both far without added humor in Gonguri.

Broke: What exactly is Soooodongi by the way?

Jared: Soooodongi is [Yuying] our bass player’s record label which put out both of our releases, not to mention a ton of other shit in a short amount of time. He’s really prolific. It’s also the name of his pet Chihuahua and means “good boy.” Yuying does a show every now and then and called Soooodongi Extreme, and they usually include at least one band from outside Korea.
People think it's funny
But it's really dark and runny

Jon Whiteboi Twitch
Translation: Park Yerin

Truthfully, every time I see these guys play, I feel a grumbling in my intestine. Sulsa, if you were lucky enough not to already know what it meant, is the Korean word for diarrhoea. It's such a plain-language declaration that whatever happens next is either going to be really shitty or a lot of fun. I managed to interview Lee Yuying, the Taiwanese-Korean drummer of Sulsa, about what exactly is going through their minds and colons. He answered in a little Korean and a little English, and Broke's translator team (ie Yerin) managed to put it all back together so everyone could equally not have a clue what the fuck he's talking about.

Broke: Why did you name your band Sulsa?
Yuying: We wanted something cool and fun, but nothing came to mind. So we just decided to name the band 'Ddong (poop)' previously, and then thought 'sulsa' would be better.

Broke: Can you define goregrind for me as a genre?
Yuying: Music made by people who like corpses.

Broke: What is Soondoongi?
Yuying: The name of my first pet dog. Now with one of my relatives because I had some trouble with my grandma over him. But since I really loved the dog, I used the name for my record label in memorial of him.

Broke: Your other band is Gonguri. Which band is better, Gonguri or Sulsa?
Yuying: Better music with Gonguri but better fun with Sulsa.

Broke: Which album do you have the most pride in?
Yuying: Both are really proud.

Broke: Any chance you'd ever tour Taiwan or your hometown?
Yuying: Already have an offer in Taiwan. Really would love to go!
Jeng-iy’s next chapter

Kyle Decker

Jeng-iy is one of Daegu’s oldest music venues. It’s been putting on live shows for almost as long as small music venues have been legal in South Korea, and had been around as a counterculture bar for even longer. Hidden on the second floor of a building tucked back in an alley, it was like a pirate island that could only be found by those who already knew where it was. Sadly, the building of old Jeng-iy was scheduled to be torn down, and is moving to a new location closer to central downtown. So it’s not so much an end as a new chapter.

Jeng-iy was first opened in 1994 by painter and junk artist Choi Jae-Jung. In 1998 ownership passed to Jae-Jung’s older brother, Hyeung-Do. Hyeung-Do was not as artistically inclined as his younger brother but he was a savvy businessman and promoted the hell out of the place. Word spread and in 2001, an older woman named Choi Seock-Yeon took over ownership. Her daughter, an avid music fan named Eun-Gyung, turned it into a live music venue and began organizing shows for all the local indie musicians in Daegu. When current owner Dong-Choon took the baton in 2008 he continued with the shows, and is currently overseeing the move to the new location.

Lit almost entirely by candles with the walls covered in tapestries, it was a good place to sit and brood. The floors sank so much that some spots technically put you in the dance studio on the first floor. It was known to many as the “Jimi Hendrix Bar” due to Hendrix being on the sign.

I was first shown the place a few months after arriving in Korea, and felt awful for every single minute I had not already known about it. I still regret not having spent more time there—and I spent a lot of time there. Frequent live music, good tunes on the stereo (with requests taken), and filled with far more colorful people than the bar and club streets in central downtown, it was a cornerstone of Daegu’s counterculture. It was the bar I’d always dreamed of finding. I met two of my bandmates there. Why I ever let people talk me into going off some point during Food for Worm’s EP; see CD reviews page)

When word got out that our beloved Jeng-iy was being forced to relocate, the Daegu local music scene—waegs and Koreans alike—felt the need to send the old girl off properly. So bands rallied together and, on three or four days notice, put together a final show on Friday, June 26. The final show captured the diversity of the acts that have passed through the venue during its storied history. Old Jeng-iy’s final lineup:

- Summer Coats, a post-rock quintet
- The Plastic Kiz, a pop-punk and garage rock group (just released an EP; see CD reviews page)
- Bullet Ant, a Korean doom metal band (just released a split with Smoking Barrels) that has Jeng-iy owner Dong-choon as one of its members
- Food for Worms, a punk band with Korean and waeg members, myself included
- Classical Wavy, a group of indie-rock foreigners

I had always wanted to play a show there. And now that I finally was, it was the last one. So there was a sadness to that honor. The music went until well after 2am and at some point during Food for Worm’s set the police were called. Nothing was shut down, the band played on, and the venue door was closed which was apparently enough of a compromise.

There was a bitter sweetness about the whole thing. Bullet Ant even has a song called “Hendrix Bar” (a tribute to Jeng-iy). Beer and whiskey flowed heavily (some might say too much, some might say not enough, it should) and there was much reminiscing from the bands and patrons.

I spoke with several people who had been dragged there by friends, and spent the evening upset that they never knew about the place before. Old regulars were relieved to hear about the new location going live in August. My goal was to stay as late as possible, and my group indulged in all the memories that could be. I spoke with several people who had spent the evening upset that they had never even heard of the place before. The venue will be a live music venue call Jiha, means Underground featuring an all-new sound system and equipment. The venue will be open on August 1. The top floor is a bar serving draft beers (including Guinness and some craft brews). All the old equipment will be there for more low key music acts. A cafe on the main floor, called Working Class, will serve up homemade sausages, po’boy sandwiches, and BBQ pulled pork. The basement will be a live music venue call 48 (Jiha, means Underground) featuring an all-new sound system and equipment. The venue will host its own shows once a month and can be rented out for shows or used as a practice space. Dong-choon will also offer guitar lessons.

The new location is just a few minutes walk north of Go-Go Vinyl Bag Cocktails, amidst the coffee houses. It’s a much more centralized location than before, but away enough from the madness of the foreigner bar street. I’ve had a chance to visit the new location and, like the original, the vibe is definitely more chill than the other bars downtown. It’s a place where you can actually have a conversation with somebody. Although, with open windows and brighter lights the mood isn’t as dark as it once was. Which, might be better for some, but less preferable for others. Although I will miss the shit out of the old Jeng-iy, the prospect of pulled pork and po’boys before a gig eases the pain a bit.
Jinsuk: I am the owner and the crew includes 13 other people. I pass work to my crew if it’s not my style, and I never involve myself in the works that come directly to the crew. Also after expanding the store, we’re selling merchandise and CDs of Korean bands and stuff from small brands who are living hard in the field of subculture. We’ve got some custom silver, leather, T-shirts and caps. I’m planning to sell used vinyls with ‘PEGurians organ player’ Nah Beom-ju in addition to that.

Broke: There are also a few artists who are active. Some foreign tattooists say my tattoos are very unique. I can confidently say that my tattoos are so unique that there is no one who has the same style. It’s just my art style which I show on skin, not paper. Anyway, if you are interested in getting a tattoo, I want you to decide by pictures on my Facebook page or Instagram. You can search my name “Jinsuk Ryu” on Facebook, or “SUCK tattoo” on Instagram.

Jon Whiteboi Twitch
Translation: Park Yerin, Park Solmin
All images courtesy SHARP Ink

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I like interviewing Ryu Jinsuk. I highly recommend paying a visit, that’s all.

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Broke: How many people are there who love tattoos? Do you think people need to shave their heads or wear Fred Perry shirts and roll-up jeans?

Broke: In general, people are in the habit of looking for a second opinion. How do you deal with problems due to the legal status of tattooing in Korea?

Jinsuk: I don’t worry much, because there are so many people who love tattoos. One of my customers is a police officer.

Jinsuk: Why did you decide on the name SHARP Ink? How is SHARP Ink operated?

Broke: Has the shop SHARP Ink operated for a long time?

Jinsuk: We opened the shop SHARP Ink, which is a tattoo shop, two days later, and it is still going on. I am quite persistent once I start something, so that’s why.

Broke: Why the name SHARP Ink?

Jinsuk: The name SHARP Ink is a nickname, and SHARP Ink is the shop’s name.

Broke: When did you start tattooing?

Jinsuk: I don’t think so. I like tattooing and another serving as a tattoo artist. Why do so many musicians in Korea also work as tattoo artists?

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SPECIAL BROKE IN KOREA OFFER!!

ONE-TIME OFFER!! Part...7? Jeez.

If you want to get a tattoo paid for by me, 만약 브로크 매거진이 드리는 무료 탑두를 원하시는 독자님은 배드애즈타투서울의 배드애즈 보미에게 연락하시기 바랍니다. (offer may be extended in the future.)

A few issues ago I offered to pay for the first idiot willing to get my name tattooed on them. 4회 전에 원하시는 분에 한해서 무료로 저의 이름을 타투로 새겨드리는 이벤트를 진행한 적이 있습니다. That...didn't work out, thankfully. 다행히 아무도 원하지 않았습니다. And then I heard Yuppie Killer is offering a free tattoo? 게다가 이젠 여피킬러까지 무료타투를 제공한다니요!

P: I've been offering this free deal for a few years now, and Bomi's been doing well enough through my paying along, even designing her own new Broke logo for issue 17. So I figured why not grill her on tattooing? Here's what she said.

Bomi: I'm really not a good artist and I've always wanted to have a career in tattooing. So...welcome to the one-time offer...part 5. 그래서.. 결국 이번 한 번뿐인 무료타투 이벤트를 진행합니다. 이 멋진 무료타투 -I reserve the right to use it as an image for the next issue of Broke in Korea. 브로크 매거진 독자들을 위한 한번뿐인 스페셜 딜!!파트5. 사람들아 쪼옴!!!!

P: By the way, Bomi. 브로크 매거진이 더 나은 logo를 사용할 수 있도록 제안 받았어요. 이 멋진 무료타투 -I reserve the right to use it as an image for the next issue of Broke in Korea. 브로크 매거진 logo를 사용할 수 있도록 제안 받았어요. It has to be somewhere on your body that you're comfortable with the following rules: 대신 다음의 법칙을 따르셔야합니다.

Maximum cost 50 000 won, so it won't be huge. 5만원 상당의 타투를 할 일요?

Bomi: I really loved it and that's how I got the name Badass. I disagreed. I'm clearly not badass anyway.

P: I don't have many tattoos yet. I'm not really good at names. When he gave me the idea “Badass Bomi,” I asked my husband, because I am not really nice stepped in to teach and guide me. With his help I ended up starting tattooing independently and opened Badass Tattoo Studio by Ewha University in 2013. I always have been drawing, but I went for majoring in cartoon. I studied university for history. But after four years I got back to drawing again for majoring in cartoon. I studied political cartoons and made four cute cartoons for small newspapers for a while but I realized it is not meant for me. So...welcome to the one-time offer...part 5. 그래서.. 결국 이번 한 번뿐인 무료타투 이벤트를 진행합니다. This one's not for my name tattooed on them. 4회 전에 원하시는 분에 한해서 무료로 저의 이름을 타투로 새겨드리는 이벤트를 진행한 적이 있습니다. That...didn't work out, thankfully. 다행히 아무도 원하지 않았습니다. And then I heard Yuppie Killer is offering a free tattoo? 게다가 이젠 여피킬러까지 무료타투를 제공한다니요!

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Promoters, let’s talk...

Jon Whiteboi Twitch
Every week around Wednesday, I spend up to an hour, sometimes more, combing through all the weekend’s upcoming shows to post to the Korean Punk and Hardcore Facebook page. We originally started doing this back when three shows a week sounded like a lot, but these days twice that would constitute a light week. This has always been a labour-intensive, thankless job, which is why it’s changed hands between about four of us many times over the years. But hell, if it can get just a few more heads out to shows, that’s good—you can never be sure when the next Jesse will come along.

So when promoters cares so little about doing the minimum work to promote their own show, it makes it a lot harder for me to help out. It’s a roots punk scene, with many of us old enough to remember a pre-Internet time when the best way to find out about upcoming shows was to go down the street and find posters up. Nowadays, printed posters aren’t really used anymore, and everything goes across Facebook. It sucks, but to rebel against this is to drive a stake through Facebook’s heart. It’s absolutely best to have your show listed on Facebook, and your page page, is room for an image. It’s usually banner-shaped, but if you add a standard poster, it will be cropped attractively. The poster personalises your show and gives people an idea of what the show’s about. I’m not going to get into what makes a good poster right now, because for SNS it could just be a block of text on a white background and serve its purpose.

The big problem I see with so many promoters—and many people I highly respect are guilty of this, including The Valiant, 999 Family, and Skunk—is that they make a poster, upload it to one of their pages for a dozen or so people to “like,” and that’s it. How do you expect everyone to find it? How will it reach everyone and grow?

Create an event

The Facebook event remains the surest way to reach potential customers. Your created Facebook page can be shared, indexed, and linked, and people can RSVP. I usually find that the number of morning customers going to my show is roughly around the number of people who RSVPed they would definitely go, many who do that don’t go, and a roughly equal amount who don’t RSVP will show up.

Invite people, but not too soon
Back when Crazzy Gideon was the backbone of the KP&HC strategy, he’d invite—bomb thousands of people at a time. Me, I’m not as popular as Jesse or his salesman persona, but I can still load up an invite list, and if you promote shows then you probably can say the same. If not (which is fine, because not everyone has the same Facebook friend request acceptance threshold), you can ask for help spamming invites. But—and this is important—don’t start this stage too soon. When I create a Facebook event page, I start with the bare bones. At that stage, I probably don’t even have a full band list. I’d invite members of the bands playing or working at the venue, and there may be some organic exposure due to RSVPs and likes. But I won’t Crazy Gideon page the until the basic details are in place. Once they are, watch there suddenly be 700 invites sent out.

There are two ways your Facebook event can fail—invite too early or don’t invite at all (or send invites on Thursdays to a Saturday show). There’s one ‘bar in particular (let’s call them 밤바람) that tends to create an event, send out all the invites, and then presumably fill in the details after. So when I get the invite, I have a look, and there’s nothing to see so I ignore it. Worse still is when no invites are sent out at all. Your event page receives organic exposure if people start RSVP’ing or liking the event. Then, it is advertised to their friends, and perhaps fill in the details after. So when I get the invite, I have a look, and there’s nothing to see so I ignore it. Worse still is when no invites are sent out at all. Your event page receives organic exposure if people start RSVP’ing or liking the event. Then, it is advertised to their friends, who may also increase exposure or RSVP themselves.

If you’re worried that people will unfriend you if you send too many invites, rest assured—I’ve never unfriended someone for inviting me to anything, even if I don’t click anything. By having the invite, it means I can go to the Events tab on Facebook and see all upcoming events I’m invited to. So, I have an easily accessible database of upcoming events, and your event is included. You have my permission to send me an invite, even if you don’t think I’ll go.

Print band names for copy/paste
It’s too easy to just make a poster with all the details on it (well, it isn’t—it’s always easy to miss one of the important details of date/time/price/venue, and posters are a bitch to edit after you’ve published—but that’s for a separate article on poster design), but you also need to have the information in text form, where it can be copied and pasted. You can’t run your mouse over a poster and highlight all the text, so it needs to be written out as copyable text. I don’t know if this matters to anyone else, but when I’m writing up my advertisement for your show, I really don’t like it if I have to spend a couple extra minutes writing every band name out in two languages. This is especially unforgivable when we’re talking about festivals with 20+ bands, and ailments seem to be the worst offenders.

The people who volunteer their time to promote your event need to have this information to be easily shareable, so don’t fuck with our time and commitment to helping you. It is not necessarily because we can’t type in both languages, but we have limited time, patience, and maybe even in some cases our keyboards aren’t bilingual or something.

The KP&HC standard is “한국이름/English name (genre%).” If you do something slightly different, like reverse the language order, I’ll copy and paste it as is. If you have the names all in English, and they’re English names anyway, I won’t add the Korean names. If you have a Korean name I don’t know the romanisation of, I’ll be googling the damn thing. And if I don’t find a standard English name, I’ll make something up, and it might be intentionally, hilariously wrong.

Hotlink band pages
Something cool happens when you start typing on Facebook—incomplete words get an autocomplete thing going with words related to your friends or like list. So if you type “Dead...” it might give you the chance to autocomplete “Dead Butts” or “Dead Galdaks.” As long as you’ve liked the page, you can link it in your text, which is incredibly useful for people who want to know about the band (the alternative is just to include the band’s genre in parentheses, but both are great).

Some band pages have names that don’t fit the KP&HC standard mentioned above—“Billy Carter (센터 카테르)” and “조建材 Huqueymsaw 희사이” are the two worst offenders. I don’t know the romanisation of, I’ll make something up, and it might be intentionally, hilariously wrong.

Advertise on KoreaGuide, Dolndie
There are a number of websites for submitting shows, but the two main ones are Dolndie and Korea Gig Guide. I’m not sure what everyone’s show-monitoring habits are, but these days I typically start on Facebook events then go to KGG and DI (if I find a show on either of those sites, I try to hotlink to the event page). If you want a Facebook event page in case I wasn’t invited), there is also Indis-treet, which I don’t really understand but sometimes has shows the other two don’t (plus bilingual romanisations of Korean bands, like Reogseu for Rux), and there’s GigGuide.kr which seems to be an inferior ripoff willing to use KGG manager Shawn D’s daughter’s image to advertise, and also slam bands like Nice Legs for no reason.

There is no obvious way to submit a show to KGG for listing: about half a dozen people have admin privileges but we tend to be pretty lazy about everything except what we have a stake in. If you want to get your show on KGG and DI, all you have to do is ask me or Jeff from WTMM.

Dolndie is much easier to work with, as you can sign up on the site and submit shows yourself. You can also edit information about bands as well. The site has a lot of problems (including multiple entries for the same show) but is all around the best source for upcoming shows.

Get bands to promote too
Hotlinking band pages is passive in promoting shows: if a band is playing a show, it’s in their best interest to get more people out to see them. You should make sure that all participating bands share your show on their band page (maybe not all at the same time, but spread out to be nice to get them to Crazzy Gideon their friends into your invite list.

And if this is tldr, here are these tips in brief:
1. Make a poster
2. Create a Facebook event
3. Invite people
4. Type out band names
5. Hotlink band pages
6. Roll out information over time
7. Advertise on KoreaGuide, Dolndie
8. Get bands to promote too
Gay Pride vs Christian Wrath

Jon Whiteboi Twitch

This year, the Gay Pride Festival in Seoul came as close to civil war as Korea’s seen in probably a few decades, with gay celebrants and their supporters outnumbered by hordes of Christian protesters.

The opening event had to be scaled down and moved online, ostensibly due to fear of MERS. Of course, that didn’t stop the Christians from showing up at Seoul Square en masse. Even at the last day of the festival, the date of the Gay Pride Parade, the Christians greatly outnumbered the parade participants. I was there on both opening and closing days. My experience at the first day was wandering around the Christian protests putting on my best face and getting pictures. That night when I went through the files and examined their signs, all I felt was building rage. On the last day I observed the Christians a bit, then found a high perch to watch the parade go by. I was up on a subway vent of some kind about three meters up, and people in the parade marching by would wave at me and cheer. I was the one on parade. I spotted so many of my friends, Korean and foreigner, all straight, some with their SOs, that I jumped down and joined in. The parade made it all the way to the end, a great improvement on last year’s interrupted parade in Sinchon, especially considering the increased and better-organised Christian opposition this time around.

I’ve noticed over the years that there are a lot of misconceptions, myths, and outright lies going around about homosexuals, homosexual practices, and homosexuality, both among the ignorant religious zealots and the increasingly partisanised counter-protesters. So, let’s address some of the things I noticed throughout this event.

Think of the children!

A lot of Christians brought their kids to the protests, and I’m talking young kids mainly in early elementary school. Because at that age, the best thing a dad is to introduce them to a topic they have no opinion on and indoctrinate them with fear and hate.

Finally I saw one dad carrying his daughter on his shoulders in the parade itself, and I actually said aloud, "Finally, a good parent!"

I don’t know about the rest of you, but before about grade three or four, I couldn’t care less about girls. Didn’t like them, didn’t want to touch them. Point being, none of us were heterosexual. We weren’t gay, we weren’t really anything yet. Eventually, all of us matured and went one way or another (or a third option, or all of the above). But the point is, at that age, it’s really toxic to force one sexuality on children before you know which sexuality they will develop into.

Some protest signs called on the mayor to “stop homosexual inclination.” We might as well stop lefthandedness, the Coriolis effect, and free will.

Gay stuff has no place in sex ed

This is an ongoing problem. After Tennessee’s “Don’t say gay” bill died, Korea’s Ministry of Education passed pretty well the exact same thing.

Yeah, the idea is that if you teach kids about it, they’ll try it out for themselves. The same argument could be made for masturbation, but each successive generation has discovered that on their own as well.

Obviously gay children need sex ed, and obviously straight children need guidance in coexisting with them. Sex education is not a how-to lesson, but imparts valuable life experience.

The mayor is gay

Pretty sure some posters claimed this. The mayor is straight, and has a wife named Kang Nan-hee. He has at least one son of adult age.

Can queer create the next generation?

That was one fundamentalist’s poster, in English (above). I don’t know why we should care about this. Should we all also rally against the right of infertile and sterile people from marrying? If you’re past menopause, you’re out to pasture?

Stop gays from adopting

Usually the argument against gay adoption is that kids need a mother and a father in other words, a nuclear family. Not everyone gets that life, not even kids in a heterosexual environment. Gay adoption beats being raised by a single parent, growing up in an orphanage, or being in a nuclear family with an abusive parent. For a country with such a reputation for sending orphans overseas (still happening today), you’d think gay adoption would be seen as a better choice.

Homosexuality dishonors ancestors

Okay, certainly if you go back a couple generations in any culture, you won’t find much acceptance of homosexuality. Then again, in Korea’s case, they might also hate all this K-pop, or Christianity, or plastic surgery, or women in the workforce, or use of Hangul. So let’s leave them buried in their countryside mounds.

We must uphold traditional values

What are traditional marital values in Korea? Did a man and a woman meet, fall in love, and get married? Was chastity prized before marriage? The answers to all four of those points may surprise you. So unless you want to go back to men and women living in different parts of your mud-constructed huts, maybe this isn’t the gong you expected and obviously straight children need doctors and nurse practitioners as well.

Homosexuality is not a human right

This was on many posters, as if homosexuality is a human incarnation that deserves or doesn’t deserve rights. Or like the “human rights” of homosexuals are the right to unprotected anal sex, spreading disease, and converting your children. No, they countered, the true human right is to be rescued from homosexuality (which we will get to soon, oh yes).

LGBT people are people, and they are thus entitled to certain human rights.

Setting aside the imaginary “right” to a hedonistic lifestyle with lots of anonymous sex, they are entitled to protection from violence, from discrimination at work, from being fired or evicted where they live, from being forced to be virgins, forced to marry, or deprived of economic, social, and cultural rights.

This is not about the right to butt-sex with your underage son, French Minister of Human Rights and Foreign Affairs Rama Yade put it to the UN, “How can we tolerate the fact that people are stoned, hanged, decapitated and tortured only because of their sexual orientation?”

This is a thing that is happening in the UN. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon himself has supported a shift toward gay rights, and the Christian protesters did not spare him their wrath.

We must oppose North Korea

We must oppose North Korea’s myriad of activism or civil rights movement happening in Korea, the far-right nutbags come out with their reminder “OMG you guys, attack from North Korea is imminent! These activists are weakening our state and/or supporting the North! That blackest of black tactics as white supremacists naming their movement “Rock Against Communism” while sieg-heiling a dead Austrian enemy of state.

In 2011 when the UN General Assembly voted on LGBT rights, a guess which Korea was in favour, and which was opposed? Think hard, fuckboy. One country is believed to execute gays: you should move up there—other than their opposition to Christianity, you might like it.

We must oppose gay marriage

I’m sure Korea’s gay community would be thrilled with gay marriage, but more basic rights and acceptance in society are bigger priorities. Korea’s gay community isn’t yet fighting in earnest for gay marriage, so Christians can calm down on this one for a few more years and focus more on basic rights as discussed above.

Koreans support Uganda

This was on a leaflet passed out at the opening day protest. Apparently because Korea is a traditional, moral country, with the majority of citizens support Uganda’s “kill the gays” bill, even though it’s costing up to 400 million USD of support. Despite the fact the bill was largely masterminded by evangelical pastor Scott Lively, who is looking at trial in the US for his role. So did Uganda resist American control, or did they play along with it?

Now we get to a bill that’s explicitly Christian-inspired legislation that mandates corporal punishment for homosexuals?

96% of Koreans oppose LGBT

This number is far from accurate. All we know is that Korea is rapidly becoming more accepting. According to Pew Research, in 2007 a total 77 percent of Koreans thought homosexuality was unacceptable for society. In 2013, that number shrank to 59 percent. Sorry Christians, your 96 percent figure is way off mark, and...
I hate anarchism and tattoos, just like saying you’re punk. And like we are? Does that make me the un-Christian of you to do that.” So, we didn’t bring homosexuality to Korea. We brought Christianity. Sign you want to play the anti-imperial card here?

Christians suddenly un-Christian? And like we are? Does that make me the un-Christian of you to do that.” So, we didn’t bring homosexuality to Korea. We brought Christianity. Sign you want to play the anti-imperial card here?

We oppose it because we love them
This was the message that the Christian protesters tried to give. I’ve never been to a white power rally, but I suspect if I had, nobody would be saying “We oppose non-whites because we love them.” Own your hate, dude. You don’t get to use the L-word when you’re screaming passionately, putting on mass performances, holding up hateful signs opposing human rights, and physically trying to block people marching.

No love, only lust and addiction
It was commonly claimed that LG–BT’s are incapable of love, only lust or sex addiction. I guess heterosexuals are clear of those things, or if they aren’t, it’s more forgivable (as long as it’s the guy, not the girl). BTs are incapable of love, only lust or sex addiction. A high enough proportion of gay conversion therapy victims select either of those options.

Admittedly, if you’re somewhere in the middle on the Kinsey scale, you might be able to be nudged down a notch or two, and I’ll give bisexuals the benefit of the doubt that they are fully capable of committing to lifelong monogamous relationships (if you can abstain from pursuing everyone of the opposite sex, you should be just as capable of abstaining from pursuing everyone of both sexes).

Gay people have icky anal sex
There are so many holes in this statement, I want to run a train on this shit. First, gay people aren’t all about anal sex, just as straight people aren’t all about PIV sex (actually, probably even moreso). Likewise, there’s nothing two gay dudes can do to each other that a straight couple can’t do. Is a straight guy who likes anal with girls less straight than a guy who only does PIV? My vote is for no.

Anal can and is done by heterosexuals, and scientific evidence correlates it with higher IQs. And also, it’s enjoying a resurgence among Christian youths (saddleback!), who are so obsessed with vaginal virginity that they consider anal sex a safe alternative, and are more likely to have unprotected anal sex (because bringing a condom means it’s premeditated). And we go back to the whole thing about how HIV spread in the ’80s with no sense of irony. Way to go, abstinence-only sex ed!

Lesbians kissing transmits AIDS
I shit you not, someone had a poster that said “No sex” and then showed two women kissing, then linked it with AIDS. First of all, the message is clear that they’re anti–sex in general. Secondly, kissing is highly unlikely to spread HIV. Come to think of it, how does HIV transmit between women?

This actually has happened, and the cases are such medical anomalies that they get noticed. Aside from the obvious answer of sharing needles, through sexual activity the only way to pass HIV along to a lesbian partner is through over–vigorous use and sharing of a sex toy, in which blood is drawn in the vaginal cavity that can permit transmission. Obvi-ously, women are safer from HIV infection with female partners than with heterosexual male partners.

AIDS costs taxpayers money
I know it was disproven that this was a problem. I don’t remember all the details, but one thing I recall is that the population of poz people in Korea is low on gay, high on the nonmonogamous heterosexual aejossis who are okay with sex workers. So that’s a whole load of social problems to tackle before you get to gay people.

The Pride Parade will cause AIDS to mutate and combine with MERS to create a superinfection
Actually, this one is true. I breathed the same air and now I am HIVMERS–positive. Anal sex! Raahr!

Why do I care? Other than this issue has become a cultural litmus test, it’s also clear that opponents are sex–negative and want to scale back sexual health, as seen in the opposition to Planned Parenthood in the US limiting not just safe abortion but access to contraception and cervical cancer screening.

Anyway, enjoy your death trap, Christians!

Christian gatecrasher physically removed from parade.

Quick, someone give Ellen an HIV test!

Crazy Christian yelling at us. Who cares.
Jon Whiteboi Twitch

Eleven years here and I’d still never been to Jeju. Granted, it took me like five years to visit Gyeongbokgung, and I still to this day refuse to admit I’ve ever set foot in Gangnam, but Jeju was that last frontier.

Maybe it was because of all the propaganda. One of the Natural Seven Wonders of the World, as appointed by quite a sketchy organisation. Is the world really that low on wonders that some Korean island makes the cut? Hawaii of Korea: hey whoa, I’ve been to Hawaii, so pardon my derisive laughter. Island of Peace, if you can ignore the naval base being forced on the island with much controversy that gets underreported.

I’d tried going to Jeju once before, back in 2012. My parents were visiting and I booked a ferry going from the Yeosu Expo site to Jeju. Morning of the trip, the ship was at the dock, but at the last minute it was declared unseaworthy.

“It looks totally seaworthy to me,” said my dad in disappointment.

Years later, my older, balder, fatter, wiser self might look back and say “Whoa, Al! How do you know this ship isn’t operated by a crazy cult?” Or something similar.

I put it off long enough, but earlier this year my close friend Tyler Brown (read about him in the CD reviews, or last issue’s interviews) relocated there for work—he’s a bartender at the excellent microbrewery Magpie. He encouraged me to visit before the busy season started, and I did nothing.

Then I got my new job and had two weeks before it started. Not enough time to go back to Canada, and I didn’t feel like going anywhere else abroad, so I made a last-minute plan to visit Jeju.

This issue of Broke spotlights two bands with Jeju roots, something I hadn’t intended, but their interviews show a different attitude to life that’s totally alienated to those of us cemented to the big city life.

So, my impressions of Jeju? The hype soured me, but what I ended up actually seeing surpassed my expectations by far.

Yeah, the government typically oversells things. Come to “attrACTIVE Korea,” a country that is both attractive, active, and Korea (you can thank my time in the government that one never was approved).

“World Design Capital—Design for All,” not counting those six people we had to kill to build a brownfield zone that would remain inactive for six years.” “Island of peace, just ignore that area we’re evicting to build a naval base.” And they did as expected overshell Jeju. It was not a tropical island paradise. It was better.

On arrival, the climate was great. My entire time there it was never as hot as Seoul nor as polluted. We had some rain throughout and it came heavy on the last day, and it was always overcast, but that ocean breeze kept us comfortable always.

My first and last nights were spent in Jeju City, where I got a hotel room for W60 000 right by Magpie Jeju, where I could see the sea from my window (and get a better view
from the roof). The area is transforming, and I’d need more visits to understand better, but I was stumbling distance from the sea, and even closer to Magpie Jeju.

Jeju’s Magpie location is unique in that they serve quite good fried chicken, only more recently introducing pizza, and also that the vast majority of the clientele are Korean. For me, the highlight of going to any Magpie is visiting Tyler.

My second day there, Tyler had the day off, so we rented a car in order to explore the island. The original plan was to get a scooter, but apparently due to a university holiday the whole fucking island was booked out. Anyway, with much work we found one car rental place that could rent us a car. Price was W40 000, with an additional W20 000 for insurance. And since the tank was low, I put in W20 000 more, but the amount of gas we used up driving all over the island was probably worth less than W2000.

As soon as we had that car, I slowly got my driving legs back and we plunged into the depths of Jeju. The island itself is quite flat generally, with some prominent landmarks sticking way out. Unlike Hawaii, where the center of the island often is inaccessible and you get stuck in traffic following a ring road all the way around.

So the first thing we did was hit abandonments. A resort hotel construction site that was never completed, now filled with bird shit. A closed down circus tent, where I whipped out my UEey the Clown costume. Another abandoned resort. What a fuckin’ productive day! I spent the following two weeks editing pictures.

The scenery was also colossal here. On my last visit to my hometown I rediscovered how much I loved nature and how much fun it is to probe and explore, which isn’t really possible in Seoul, even with all the great mountains and with their young growth. I realised that if I’d stayed in Edmonton I’d have never gotten into urban exploration, and probably would have continued with exploring ravines and gotten into bouldering. That sort of thing is apparently readily doable in Jeju, and looking at the landscape I’d love to have more time to try that out.

After the abandoned circus we approached Sanbangsan, a big mountain peak that juts up into the sky with a Buddhist temple at its top and a grotto in its... belly button. But no apparent ways to do so. It was a magnificent sight and we stopped the car numerous times to get out and have a better look.

Driving was a pleasure. It could be that it was Jeju instead of Seoul, or if could be that I was on four wheels instead of two, but after a decade of scootering around mainland Korea, I was unused to simple courtesies like cars not merging in front of me, or not turning into my lane while I’m there, or honking their horn at me to remind me that they’re fucking tailgating me.

South of Sanbangsan we met up with Andre, my other foreign friend living on Jeju who runs the Korea File podcast. He introduced us to the local cat population as well as (unintentionally) the parents and extended family of many of his students. We spent the night in a hostel apparently run by a hippie woman, and in the morning by the time Tyler and I got up. Andre was gone, off to work.

Breakfast was served early, and our time with the rental car was limited, so we both woke up around dawn. With time to spare, we headed down to the harbour. While I was taking pictures of the scenery, Tyler suddenly pointed out the orange buoys drifting in the early morning currents off shore, Haenyeo.

After all the hype I’d heard, there they were, not enshrined in a museum, but adrift in the harsh early-morning currents. Ageing, elderly women going out for the first catch of the day, a lifestyle they’d known their whole lives that went back centuries, but now is on the verge of dying out.

Back at our hostel, which turned out to be owned by a woman originally from Seoul, we talked to the other guests there. Those two girls finally from Seoul, we talked to the other guests there. Those two girls had managed to rent two scooters which they were driving around the island. They were both in their 20s, attractive Korean girls, one who was a jazz violinist.

I slowly realised throughout this trip that Jeju is the perfect place to go if you want to meet cool Seoulites. Seoulites who moved to Jeju to try to open businesses, or Seoulites just on vacation—you’ll meet a whole bunch who are just cool, courteous, and laid back here. Jeju is where Seoulites go to be cool.

After I was gone, Tyler texted me bragging that a car full of girls had picked him up in the middle of nowhere and offered to drive him where he needed to go. “This would never happen in Seoul,” he boasted.

“Yeah, but I bet they were from Seoul,” I retorted.

This being my zine, you can probably guess how right I was.

Anyway, my last full day there, we had to get the car back to the rental shop by around 2:30, and Tyler had to start a shift at Magpie at 4. We hit the coastal road aimed toward Jeju City on the far side of the island, and had quite an adventure along the way. Roads barely big enough for our sedan, giving way to gravel paths giving way to highways. An unexpected hyanggyo (Confucian academy) where we pulled over for ten minutes so I could explain to Tyler the workings of Joseon Confucianism. Cozy unknown resort villages, and a beautiful landscape over by a windfarm. A long-abandoned water treatment plant.

Jeju was way more affordable to visit than I thought, and listening to Tyler, way more affordable to live in. He keeps telling his friends to move to Jeju, and I’m surprised that it seems like no one has so far. But I would give up all the comforts and conveniences of Seoul to spend a year in Jeju.
Differences between Koreans and foreigners 3: punk edition

Bob O. Meech-Yin

I consider myself an expert of all the world’s cultures, having gone to a weekly gathering of Koreans and foreigners in Gwangju for several months now. After The UFO Times published my last article, some people agreed with most of what I said. Others might think that I didn’t know what I was talking about.

I want to beat the same dead horse again to reduce misunderstandings between Koreans and foreigners, who naturally have nothing in common. I also aim to promote cultural awareness by making sweeping generalizations about Koreans and foreigners and contrasting the anecdotal differences I’ve collected over the past few weeks.

Did you know? There are 196 countries in the world today. But, there is only one Korea. Therefore, my countrymen are vastly outnumbered by them. Thus, it is important to carefully separate “us” from “them” so we may make sweeping generalizations about the Korean people, and everyone from every other country in the world as one overwhelmingly homogenous bloc.

Recently, I attended our weekly language session, held in a bar where everyone was drinking heavily. This night I was drinking soju, the national drink of Korea. My juniors pour me a soju, making sure my glass is never empty. I watched the world-famous female model Kim Ji-young advertise a soju brand on TV. She moaned seductively and showed off her S-line. Her gyrations provoke TV viewers to think of soju and drink it more and more.

I definitely say that Koreans have an immaculate virtue, which foreigners cannot think of. A junior communicates respect by taking care of seniors by pouring their drinks. The seniors meanwhile feel happier to know that their juniors are willing to serve them. Later, they will show more appreciation to their juniors. I think the unqualified respect shown to older generations provoked TV viewers to think of soju and drink it more and more.

One of the foreign males that night included a man, a Canadian who is in a music band from Seoul. He told me he doesn’t listen to K-pop. However, he considers himself a musician, which is very strange. Doesn’t he know K-pop is the national music of Korea? Nonetheless, he invited me to come to a concert with his band, Yuppies Killer, playing in the bar later that night.

Although I had my own plans to continue drinking soju all night, I had to accept his proposal because I didn’t want to disappoint him. Hence, I can say that Koreans are greatly generous and compassionate and we have open minds about all things musical. We tend to sacrifice our time to help our friends. However, my observations tell me that westerners are individualistic, and all of them like to play and listen to really drunken loud hardcore music.

I vaguely remember the rest of the night, through a drunken haze, with a very short set performed by Yuppies Killer. Yuppies Killer consists of four amateur musicians. However, their lack of talent and their rude stage presence showed me that this kind of music is inappropriate for Koreans, who more are concerned with purity and decorum. I felt that non-Koreans are able to express their feelings freely by shouting, moshing, and drinking.

I felt awkward by their rude stage manners between songs. In Korea, musicians are respectful to audiences, bowing and speaking in honorifics. However, this foreign band uttered profanities that no true Korean would ever use.

They introduced one song, “Rob Ford Rides Again,” which is disrespectful of a successful politician from Canada. However, Korean people are obedient and respect our politicians. I believe that this is why we prefer K-pop, true Korean songs about melodrama and ballad.

Further, I watched so many times that foreigners on the dance floor were never reluctant to mosh, even with strangers they did not know. Worse, I feel a little bit angry when a stranger whom I have never met at a social event bumps into me lightly.

On the other hand, during the song “I Wanna Die (Mississauga)” one young white girl was knocked to the ground, and foreign members of the audience stopped their violent dancing and helped her up to her feet. I thought that Korean society has taught them how to be kind and considerate of those around them and that a desirable tradition in Korea has affected him in a more positive way.

A group of elderly Korean men arrived and sat near the stage. They did not like the music and demanded to the venue owner that the band stop. The owner smiled and offered them a round of free drinks. I sensed that they felt uncomfortable by the music, so I went onto the stage and pulled the plug on the amp. Immediately, the band and its five fans who had been rudely standing to block the view became upset, so I threatened to call the police.

I think that Koreans are more polite and respectful to the old. I also think foreigners should learn from Koreans about how they treat the geezers with courtesy. We should be more attentive to the old who have more experience listening to good music. They are worthy of being loved and revered whatever they are.

Afterward, I discovered that foreign women are easy, but not as easy as I thought. When I tried to touch a black girl’s hair, I feel the comfort of her long hair. For example, foreign women usually do not like to have their heads touched. However, Korean women might feel odd resisting my advances. Therefore, they let me paw at them passively and reluctantly. I assume that the different reaction comes from feminism.

Western women think that they are equal to men. On the other hand, Korean women want to be protected from men, even though women’s rights have been tremendously raised. We have a female president!

My exploration of Western culture ended around 1am, and then I went to the local massage establishment for a massage. Next time, I must write about the difference between Korean and foreign women in bed. Sounds interesting! Doesn’t it?

The writer used to watch every-on-white lesbian pornography until it was made illegal in America. He once spent over a week in America visiting relatives in K-Town. He has touched the hair of over three black people. His e-mail address is freddddy@hanmail.com.
Believe it or not...black metal edition

Very
Underground music has always been a gathering point for misfits of all walks of life, and in the last 40+ years there are all sorts of wild stories that accompany the music, some of which are comical and some self-parodies.
Below I’ve listed a series of bands—three are absolutely real, two are fake and one is basically unverifiable.
Can you sort fiction from reality?

(1) Kamaedzitca — Three ideas. Slavic paganism. Straight Edge. National Socialism. One Band from Minsk, Belarus. Over the last 14–15 years they have been making extremely catchy (and surprisingly well-produced) pagan/black metal. What is also surprising is that they are not without a sense of humor—one of the few times they have sung in English was an uncharacteristically playful song “Straight Edge Sport” which devolves into a strange series of poorly constructed English statements about weightlifting... But I honestly have no idea how they honor the gods without mead.

(2) Silencer — Black metal has always been famous for excellent displays of mental unwellness, and this band is the exception. Member of the group Nattramn has only personally revealed himself to the world in a photo of his face covered in bloody surgical tape obscuring all details with both of his hands wrapped in surgical bandages with pig feet coming out. Not to be accused of being a mere dramatic showman and nothing more, he was institutionalized after slashing an axe into a five-year-old girl’s head (failing to kill her by mere millimeters) and then attempting to commit suicide by police. Another fun story is that he used to send his finished recordings to the record company wrapped in bloody bandages.

(3) Attack — You may recollect a story circulating in the mid 2000s about spraypainted swastikas being found in raided homes in Iraq with white power slogans. But you probably didn’t hear it was done by an ex-Navy SEAL who would go on to later be convicted of murdering a pedophile in Detroit in 2009. But before that he was able to grace us with a surprisingly tame hatecore (white power hardcore) album, though not unsurprisingly talentless.

(4) Qzyylbash — We’ve heard of Christian black metal, Christian anarchism: there is even ‘Taqwacore’ for Islamic punks. But what we’ve all been waiting for... unabashedly Muslim Black Metal. Qzyylbash is one-man Shite black metal run by a guy whose stage name is Naderus. It’s named after a group of militant Turkish Shi’ites. Naderus defends the project saying that music was never frowned upon in Shia Islam, and says that his music is inspired by Middle-Eastern politics and he merely wanted to express his own ethnic and religious nationalism. The music is somewhat disappointing as it is fairly typical low-quality ant music which has now somewhat enshrined him in Russian black metal circles as... very weird, but somewhat legit, though the music is rudimentary and unremarkable.

See answers under the crossword.

More Playing in Traffic

Jon Twitch
Last issue, I introduced three of my favourite techniques for getting a scooter through heavy traffic, or making difficult turns, or cheating red lights. This included the run-turn to get you through an empty red light, the 7-turn to turn left when that isn’t allowed, and the reverse seven turn which takes advantage of traffic signal sequences to go straight through a red light. All three are a lot of fun, based on zones of safety, and since writing it I’ve witnessed other Seoul scooterists using the same tricks. I bet they didn’t come up with those fancy names though—which really make the manoeuvres easier to visualise and pull off.

But I forgot a couple, and wanted to include them here for posterity.

The 7-Turn
There was already the reverse-7 turn, but the 7-turn is even more obvious, less crazy, and probably more useful.
Essentially, the scenario is this: you’re approaching an intersection wishing to turn left, but left turns aren’t permitted—I don’t know why they wouldn’t be permitted, but here we are.
This one is done on a green light, because otherwise a 7-turn is best.
You have to go into the intersection, veering right possibly into or over a crosswalk, and you stop in the oncoming traffic lane. Then you just turn your scooter to the left, and you’re facing the direction you need to go. When the light changes, you’re free to proceed in your chosen direction.
Just be careful of a light change while performing the 7, because cars to your right waiting to go might not figure out what you’re doing. Be especially wary of buses and fellow scooters.

British-style
This one is the only non-turn-related technique.
One of the greatest parts of driving a scooter is lane-splitting, where you essentially cut through traffic jams by driving between the lanes. But sometimes the lanes are packed in too tight, or there are too many asshole SUV drivers, or the cars are all lined up adjacently, making it hard to whip by without striking their mirrors.
Rather than split lanes between cars or hug the curb where you may have to contend with buses, taxi passengers disembarking or taxis lined up, or just crazy cyclists riding on the wrong side of the road, you simply start in the lane in the center of the road.
That’s right, you can drive on the center line or a little bit to its left in case it’s got too much of a bulge. Then you can zip past segments of non-moving traffic, always careful to watch your oncoming traffic. This trick works best when the only red light ahead is for a crosswalk, because you won’t be caught by surprise by cars turning left into your lane. Always stay close to the centerline so you can’t get caught by the right side.
I call this one British style because British people drive on the left side of the road, and it makes them more comfortable if you do that here.
All these tricks are good not just for saving minutes off your drive, but also for distancing yourself from heavy traffic.
What You Say!?!?

Jon Whiteboi Twitch and 나선생님
So many new releases worthy of translation. I decided audiences would benefit most from knowing what Billy Carter, the Kitsches, and Dead Gakkahs were saying.

Billy Carter – 봄 (Spring)
This song was a favourite on the Billy Carter album, and it turns out the name was not deceiving: this song is about seasons.

헤이 갑어가는 봄의 하얀 꽃이 나를 보며 웃네
Hey, a white flower of walking spring is watching and smiling at me
The scent of winter that went by is now over there
The wind of this troubled world is now over there
The wind of this troubled world is now over there

지나가버린 겨울의 향기는 이제 그만 저기 곳으로
The scent of winter that went by is now over there
The wind of this troubled world is now over there
The wind of this troubled world is now over there
The wind of this troubled world is now over there

나의 발은 흥겨운 춤을 추며 너의 곁을 넘어가네
My feet dance with joy and pass by your side

Dead Gakkahs – “Summer Never Comes Again”
Season coincidence aside, this was the one Dead Gakkahs song with the most Korean lyrics—all their other stuff was in English.

People that weren’t noticed in the first place
사람이 없는 점이 약간 있는 우리들의 미래

Our future that is increasing countlessly
들어보지 않아

Rip and shreds innocent victim

래린은 빈손으로

Kitsches – Life Cycle
I won’t lie, I chose this song because it was mostly in English. I wanted to know what the Korean parts were about, and it turns out this is what it was. Honestly, I don’t know what PLC stands for.

Same daily routine
Same life story

Same daily routine
Same life story

Same daily routine
Same life story

Same daily routine
Same life story

Same daily routine
Same life story

Same daily routine
Same life story

Same daily routine
Same life story
The Plastic Kiz

Dancing With the Moon EP
MIRRORBALL MUSIC
Kyle Decker

The Plastic Kiz have been my favorite Daegu band since I first started finding out about Daegu local music. I’ve been going to their gigs for well over a year, and they finally started recording their stuff resulting in the five-track EP “Dancing With the Moon.” I bought it directly from them at one of their gigs (because that’s the best way to buy music). The most interesting thing about the album is how different it sounds from their live shows. It took a couple of listens to fully process how I felt about that. The Plastic Kiz have always had a garage/punk sound to them. While the shows lean more towards garage, the cleaner production values on the album loses some of the grit from their live sound. However, the cleaner mix on the album allows for more subtle flourishes. I’ve heard these songs many times before, but usually in small basement venues and on the street. So, as a long-time fan it was like hearing the songs for the first time.

The band has a youthful energy that, while not lost entirely on the album, really makes live shows a must to hear the differences. Since the band is only a three-piece, the album allows them to explore more options. The synth bit on “Shinning” is predictable yet never derivative, unlike close friends Billy Carter and the rest of Korea’s blues singer-songwriter stable, whose blues is informed by hard rock. I might liken them to Big Sugar, but wait they’re from Canada so that probably won’t work for you.

This album, while less “fun” than Billy Carter’s, succeeds in that it hits a wide emotional range, from the intense numbers like “Crossroad meet the Devil” and vengeful “Dirty Woman” and “Witch” (Korean or English version) to the tender “We Are More Than Just Lovers” and album-closing “Come play with us” and the mournful “Run Away.” The 13 songs, most of which are over four minutes, make for a completely satisfying listen.

Of the whole album, “너가 없으면 좋아” is my favourite: fun drums, energetic guitars, and some sassy and sultry vocals.

“One more thing I appreciate: this album corrects the punctuation error in the band’s name, removing the possessive apostrophe in “Johnson’s.” The grammar nazi in me thanks whoever did this!
My biggest problem with Billy Carter is how infrequently they record. By my count, this is their second EP ever, after what, five years together? Their first album was released right as they evolved from a two-piece acoustic band to include a drummer, the only recording sans percussion, and this album comes out now that they’ve settled into that three-piece configuration. That’s just not enough to represent all the great music they’ve played since the beginning.

The album starts with “침묵 (Silence),” which is probably the highest-volume song on the album. It comes off as a little bit less quintessential Billy Carter, and I wasn’t sure what to make of the Korean-language vocals—though normally I prefer Korean bands singing in Korean. I don’t like the song, but I think it would work better as a harder-rock-influenced song in the style of Wasted Johnnys.

Fortunately, after that, the remaining songs give me exactly what I want out of Billy Carter. The second song “Lost My Way” brings out the personality in Goyang’s voice framed by Jina’s vocals. This song is driven by a rockabilly sound, only this time the singer (both Goyang and Jina taking turns again) is trying to get someone else to go home, almost as if this song is talking to the singer of the earlier track. They’re so strikingly similar, I find myself mixing up the two songs on listening to the album. The song ends with both singers hollering for you to go home, and then they say “열정 (bye)” and the album is done.

Maybe because there are so few Billy Carter recordings, this one feels like that much bigger of a deal. More people need to hear Billy Carter’s psychedelic blues sound, and they should be getting grants to tour overseas stat. I think the band, and its growing fanbase, would benefit from more Billy Carter recordings in the near future.

I previously referred to the Dead Gakkahs as “easily one of Korea’s loudest and angriest bands,” and while they certainly are super loud, I’m wrong. There’s just something about this album’s songs that intertwine melodic, garagey/psychedelic feel, and the song whines through some heavy distortion and a compelling scalping chorus. Not singalong material, but still quite intense and their instrumental best song.

The album ends on “개구쟁이소년 (tadpole?),” a sillier song bracketed with non-musical vocals that sounds intense but is lots of fun.

Great band, great album: promoters need to book them and other bands need to take note of how they make such authentic sounds.

I’m having trouble figuring out a lot about this album, as the liner notes weren’t properly printed. It seems to be produced by Reboot and Wolly Bag, and executive produced by Davis H&M. Anyone, these guys are a simple, fun band offering a five-song EP which leans a little more toward garage rock than punk, not that that’s a problem.

The album starts with a 1:50-long instrumental intro, which is a conceit that many Korean bands do which I think could be done away with. It’s an inoffensive start to the album, but it’s the equivalent of waiting downstairs while your prom date finishes putting on her makeup upstairs. I came off sounding negative about the opening track on Billy Carter’s five-song EP, but at least that was a genuine song.

Once you reach track 2 and the album actually begins, I see four quality energetic songs that get the job done well. Oddly the band I want to compare them to the most is Look and Listen, though mainly on some coincidental similarities between Look and Listen’s “Superman” and Reddot’s “Superhero,” despite some major genre differences.

I don’t have lyrics of the songs in the liner notes, which is increasingly seeming inadvisable, and the band doesn’t seem to have a Bandcamp presence. These guys are clearly a new band to watch, and I wish I managed to interview them in time for this issue of the zine. Next issue, for sure, hopefully they’ll be more ready for my interrogation.
Why ‘90s ska sucks

Jon Whiteboi Twitch

Don’t get me wrong, I discovered my love of all music only after being exposed to ska. In the ‘90s. But so much of it now hasn’t aged that well, to the point where I’m uncomfortable showing off some of the old Moon Ska and Stomp Records releases I still inwardly cherish.

Ska in the ‘90s was often labeled as third-wave ska, the next evolutionary step following first-wave Jamaican ska and second-wave, or 2Tone British ska, but what that means differs from person to person. To some, it’s ska-punk, the musical movement that soared into the mainstream and stayed there until it wore out its welcome. To Toasters lead bucket Rob “Back- et” Hingley, it’s not a thing at all (see page 4). But the term, despite having rightfully lost all its goodwill, still stands for an era when ska was first proliferating in America and there were enough bands that they could influence each other and create a distinctive sound.

And a lot of it was really corny. Even a lot of the great bands released some pretty embarrassing stuff that our kids could use against us.

Ska Puns

No, I’m not missing an extra “k” there. Ska puns ruined a lot of band names, some alright, some great. Just a few bad examples: Bim Skala Bim, Skavoozie and the Epitones, Isaac Green and the Skalars, Skanic, Skavenjah, Skarface, Me-phiskaphelles. Okay, that last one is actually pretty badass. But the others, it barely even makes sense what they are. Though I will say Skatalites a pass because they’re grandfathered in. This also frequently extended to album names, especially compilations, but rarely song titles.

Pickitup!
The war cry of the ska band geek, this was originally a call to action for the band to play faster or the audience to dance harder. Then, sometime in the ‘90s, it became something more like ska 삼주일 and really wore out its welcome.

Bad Toasting

Toasting is when a singer makes any kind of vocal sounds over an instrumental song, probably best compared to beatboxing or scatting. Traditionally it can be improvised or rote, but in the ‘90s it became one of two things: either non-vocal “chk-chk” sounds or “hu-hu-hu” vocalisations often mixed in with calls to pick it up. There are a lot of great classic toaster, and a lot of white kids in the ‘90s who sounded like they had a stutter or the hiccup.

Here are some of the bands that define my musical tastes.

Rude, Rudy

Two other words that singled you out as inherently lame. “I’m rude! Hey rudeys!” It was a coded language that was supposed to create a unifying culture, but just functioned as a huge “kick out” sign on the whole ska scene’s back. Originally it came from rude boys, the Jamaican gangsters who terrorised a democratising and urbanising Jamaica, and thus had many ska and reggae singers singing about them. What it’s in common with frat boys “skanking” is debatable.

Gangster Imagery

It might be more on the Canadian band Kingpins for this one, but there was a bit more of a fixation with gangsters than necessary in ‘90s ska. The original ska movement had songs about gangsters because those were the movies they watched, but ‘90s ska kids just felt powerful wearing their first suits they hadn’t been forced into by their parents.

Suits

Suits were one of the big things that defined ‘90s ska. While they were present in the ‘90s, that was because all musicians dressed up, even a young, dapper, clean-shaven Robert Marley. And 2tone, I don’t know, British people. In the ’90s, wearing a suit became the default statement, especially to those of us coming down after grunge. I remember going to my first punk shows and not thinking twice about all the Mohawks and spikes, but my first ska show, there were guys in suits, what’s happening?! I knew the third wave was dead when ska bands started playing in casual wear.

Frat Boys in Cheap Suits

At ska shows, there’d always be one or two obnoxious frat boys who’d show up with his new oversized Value Village suit, his running shoes, his “ruder than you, whatever that means” attitude and terrible dancing, and it’s probably these guys who ruined suits for everyone.

Skanking

The word “skanking,” referring to dancing to ska as “skanking,” was never not obnoxious. The frat boy kicking your shins and yelling “I’m skanking!” was trying to be Bart Simpson using the word “bitch” just because that technically is the right word for a female dog.

All-white Bands

“Reggae is black, ska is white.” That was the consensus that mainstream listeners reached in the 90s after overexposure to the worst ska bands America had to offer. Ska bands with black members such as Fishbone and Hepcat fought an uphill battle explaining that, yes, ska comes from Jamaica and predates reggae. Otherwise, there was no shortage of all-white ska bands to convince the idiots they were right.

Checkerboard Patterns

In 2tone, the checkerboard pattern became a staple of racial unity (at least among the palest whites and the darkest blacks), but in the ’90s it was more like hobo code for “this band probably has horns.”

Horns, Always Horns

Granted, it would probably be cool if this were interpreted the other way, with band members having actual horns (looking hopefully in Meaphiskaphelles’ direction). But for the most part, it was widely accepted that every ska band had to have at least three horns: sax, trumpet, and trombone, and if any one of those was missing, the band was incomplete, never mind the fact that most horn riffs were played in total sync, so you couldn’t hear the trombone from the trumpet anyway.

Band Geeks?

Ska in the ‘90s gave band geeks a rare opportunity: the chance to be cool. Knowing how to play the trumpet would’ve gotten you beat up a few years earlier, but suddenly you could be in a ska band! Being a lifelong nerd myself, I’ve got no problem with our socially challenged individuals getting on stage in bands, but showmanship wasn’t celebrated, resulting in so many bands with so many members all performing at once, and nothing was happening. Maybe the guitar- ist was radical and the singer suave there was a cute girl playing bass (drums in Korea), but then you had the A/V club standing on one side of the stage lamington up the place. We’ve moved past that.
The Correct Answers to Verv’s Black Metal Challenge

Verv

1. Psychic power
2. Market watchdog
3. Teacher industry
4. Exec
5. Bona
6. Curve
7. Bimonthly Bootfuck
8. Lesbian ___ ___
9. ___ Maya
10. Ass toy
11. Exec
12. Hairy gay
13. Bondage
14. Geller
15. Bondage
16. Secret gay
17. 10 in the
18. One of the Avengers
19. Light touch
20. Phone software
21. Mimic
22. Raised platform
23. Gay pianist
24. Lion sound
25. Sotto ___
26. Gay in Jamaica
27. Gay pianist
28. Unprotected anal
29. Teacher industry
30. Digital screen
31. Psychic power
32. Market watchdog
33. Exec
34. Human
35. Homosexual
36. Gay person who has sex in public
37. Gay pianist
38. Something only white people like
39. Teacher industry
40. Unprotected anal
41. Exec
42. Exec
43. Exec
44. Exec
45. Exec
46. Exec
47. Singer-songwriter Jason
48. Exec
49. Exec
50. Ejaculate volume
51. Exec
52. Bottom’s partner
Oh fuck!

There's a concert at Monkey Business (RIP), but downtown is a labyrinth of riot police buses cordon-off whatever protest is going on this week.

Starting from either Anguk Station (upper right) or Gwanghwamun Station (lower left), can you get to Monkey Business in Seochon (upper left)?

Based on a true story.

Illustration by Paul Odds
I'm at a cybersecurity startup in Y eventual free-for-all where our site was banned. I heard that someone was after me. It pissed off a lot of my friends.

Anyway, months later I was talking on the phone with this girl, who I could never bring myself to confess to, and she knew my identity-theft problems. One celebrity I'd been having conversations with was Accomp- sionary sex with naked men, because this was 15 years ago.

Me, I discovered the growing won- ders of the Internet, where people would publish directories of contact information for celebrities, including e-mail, phone numbers, and mailing addresses (usually PO boxes or agents).

Anyway, I switched to sociology, where I rebelled from my Mormon upbringing. This lead to a very rich and exciting life—indeed, she had once been the local media, which had messed up her life badly in those days she had rebelled from her Mormon upbringing and was frantically looking for Wicca, something her pundit dad would sometimes rant about on the CNN news—my neighbour's daughter is practicing devil worship, that sort of thing.

So I registered on Hotmail as her dad, and worked my way down the celebrity e-mail list, welcoming any celebrity I found ironic enough to wish my "daughters" a happy 13th birthday.

The only, only bite was an Ameri- can political pundit, let's call him Hurry Limburger. Hurry wrote me back before my session was fin- ished (back when a computer lab visit was about 45 minutes; I had to, and she knew my identity-theft problems. From our school's Internet lab, I bypassed the siteban, went to the message board, and posted something along the lines of: "If there's someone in your region who's going to fuck up and get every- one banned, do your community a favour and kill them."

Identity was fucking fun to play around with, and I quickly adapted to the online environment, by which I mean I innovated new ways of abusing it, and others through it.

I found one common feature where a website would have a little "Tell your friends about our site" box, and there'd be three fields: their e-mail, your e-mail, and a place to enter a personalised message. So, I quickly began assuming the identity of one friend, and messaging a second friend with confessions of undying love ("also, check out this wicked weblog, or 'blog' I found!"). It pissed off a lot of my friends.

Anyway, after a few months with the new lab I heard that someone else had used my computer to send out threatening messages, and the FBI was contacting our computer teacher. I assumed it was that one kid who sniffed glue, but we had no proof, so life continued on, albeit with more security precautions.

Several months later, Pestilence and I decided to log in to Ancient Anguish on Telnet, and found our usernames were unaffected by the IP ban. Our computer teacher came up behind us and said "Ugh, Ancient Anguish. They're the ones who called the FBI on us." At that moment my fellow horseman and I re- alised that the FBI had been looking for we. We were in Canada, so well out of their jurisdiction, but still, I outwitted the FBI...by not knowing they were after me.

This was an age when humanity was only starting first to go online, mak- ing the first steps into an entire new unexplored dimension of existence. It was a very small niche of the tech- savvy, nerds, and the anti-social. We didn't take it very seriously: it was just a way to talk to other nerds in other cities and you could say any- thing at all, because it's the Internet—what are you gonna do about it? In a very short period of time, one of us was accused of sexual harassment and another was subject to an FBI manhunt (well, technically...).

All four of us horsemen went to the same university and took computer science. However, one by one we all dropped out until only my best friend, the original wizard—molester, was left. He graduated, got a com- fortable job, and I believe he still works there today. He visited me in Korea with his new-wife, and got to know the scene here, before having two kids of his own and growing up. The others, I don't talk to anymore.

Computer science was a bitch. Socially I stood out from the start as the artsier one, and I'd glaze over whenever conversations went over to hardware (I still have the same browser history of the back row of computers, though looking back, by now I was in a pretty good state, this was because all four of us were in the same geographical region, knew each other in real life, and would often be playing sitting next to each other in the same room, while every- one else was anonymous and iso- lated by geography. Gradually our online force expanded and even our younger sisters joined in (somehow we all had younger sisters).

I also built up a reputation as a troublemaker, which hit its apex when my best friend sexually ass- aulted a wizard (wizards being in-game moderators). He issued the salacious command "jeans Athena," which prompted some- thing along the lines of: "You plant both your hands in Athena's back pocket, pull her forward, and plant a big kiss on her face." The wizard freaked out and cried rape, lead- ing to our entire freenet connection being sitebanned. From our school's Internet lab, I bypassed the siteban, went to the message board, and posted something along the lines of: "If there's someone in your region who's going to fuck up and get every- one banned, do your community a favour and kill them."

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I've learned how to behave.

Well it had been a rough couple of weeks. I don't know how we managed to avoid eviction by our jerkass hippie landlord, but any way, now there's a room in the basement none of us are allowed in, and the electricity bill that arrived today was suspiciously high.

Anyway, life goes on. Just like the song says. I spent my time writing in journals, Charlie pretty well slept all day, and Darwin chronically struck out with girl after girl at a rhythmic rate, while Vas couldn't get rid of them fast enough. And our other roommate Abdullah continued to drink our beers, but only while sleepwalking. I felt bad because I think it's against his religion, but the other guys call me racist for suggesting that.

So yeah, we finally got the Den back in order, and Charlie and Darwin even finally pitched in and did the dishes. I was sitting on the couch trying to write out an idea for a gay horror comedy I had, with Charlie and Darwin chattering in the background about what the fuck ever.

"Hey Darwin, you know what a plate job is?" Charlie asked while using a dish towel to dry a big white saucer.

“No,” said Darwin, his arms hard at work in the sink.

"Yeah, these were the days back before there was Urban Dictionary. You kids today make perversion

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"Hey Darwin, you know what a plate job is?" Charlie asked while using a dish towel to dry a big white saucer.

“No,” said Darwin, his arms hard at work in the sink.

“It’s when you put a plate on somebody’s chest and try to take a dump on it,” Charlie explained with a guffaw.

Yeah, these were the days back before there was Urban Dictionary. You kids today make perversion look easy.

“Then what?” Darwin asked, handing Charlie another plate to be dried.

“What do you mean?” Charlie asked.

“Well, what do you do with the plate?” Darwin asked, getting a little irritated. “Do you just throw it in the dishwasher?”

“I’d imagine you’d at least scrape it off before you put it in there,” Charlie said, his voice a little deflated.

Darwin rinsed harder; I could actually hear the cloth scraping the plate from one room over.

“Don’t know man, you really need to get laid,” Charlie sighed scornfully.

Oh boy, here we go, I thought, putting down my journal. No wait, better pick it up and pretend to be concentrating on writing.

“What do you think I've been trying to do?” Darwin retorted through gritted teeth.

The plate in his hand banged down and I could hear water splashing out of the sink.

“I swear, man, I don't get no love.” Darwin sighed. “I should just go gay.”

The tension was temporarily interrupted by Vas coming in through the front door, slamming it behind him and locking it, like the cops would after him.

“There you are,” I said. “How was your doctor's appointment?” Vas didn't say anything as he gingerly bent down to unlace his creepers.

“Hey Vas, Natalie B called you,” Charlie said from the kitchen.

“So did Alice,” I added.

“Alise C?” Vas asked mumbly, “If she calls back, get rid of her.”


“Get rid of her too,” Vas said as his second creeper thumped off his foot onto the floor.

“What should I tell them?” I asked.

“Say that I came out of the closet,” Vas answered, stumbling to his right.

A few people came over, and we had kind of a party, but nothing too crazy since it was Monday night.

Sitting out back, I saw one punk kid pouring out a bit of his beer onto the wooden surface of the porch.

“Hey, don't waste that,” I said. The punk turned to me and gave me the toothed grin.

“Oh yeah, here we go,” I thought, sitting down in the basement.

Around then, Vas came outside and joined us, the first time I'd seen him since he came home earlier.

“Hey Vas, how's it going?” Charlie asked.

“Good, guys,” said Vas, sounding like he was back to his old self, then a second later... “It's good to finally admit it. I'm gay.”


“That's right, I'm a total flam ing homo,” said Vas. “I went for
“So, gay people are filthy and disease-ridden?” Darwin retorted.

“Well, I figure, I’m not having sex, right?” said Vas. “So if I’m going to be celibate for a whole week, I could be a heterosexual loser, or I could try something new and be a gay dude who’s sexually inactive. Just as a social experiment.”

“That’s stupid,” retorted Charlie. “You can’t just convert to gaydom just like that.”

“I think it’s brave,” said one of the punk girls whose name I didn’t remember. Melinda/Belinda, something like that? “And kind of a turn-on.”

“Hey Vas,” said Darwin slily. “Yeah?”

“Get over here and gimme some lovin’,” he said, and the two of them started dry-humping, grinding their crotches into each other’s legs, and really going a bit too far.

“Careful, guys...” I said, sucking air through my teeth.

“Why, you homophobic?” Vas asked, bouncing Darwin on his knee.

“You can’t just...become gay arbitrarily,” Charlie pointed out, signaling his seriousness with an uncharacteristically big word.

“Well not?” asked Vas. “You’re still considered heterosexual even if you’re a virgin, right? What’s the difference?”

“Yeah, this is more action than I’ve gotten since high school!” added Darwin.

“Come on, Owen, join in!” said Vas. “These are always more or less to fuck.”

“Yeah, thanks,” I said. “I think I’ll at least wait for your STD tests to come back.”

Around then, a girl came out of the house complaining that someone—wasn’t possible in the wash-room again, so Darwin and I went in to sort it out. Turns out it was Pickled Owen, who was passed out bent over the bathtub, ass sticking in the air. Guess he must’ve gone to throw up, but passed out first.

We decided to just shove him in and let him sleep it off in the tub, so I grabbed him by the belt and Darwin got him by the legs, getting his head down close to Owen’s ass. “Hmmm, I’m starting to get ideas,” Darwin chucked, “gay ideas.”

“Cut it out, you’re making me jealous,” said Vas, stepping around us so he could get to the toilet.

As he unzipped, Darwin abandoned me and the other Owen.

“The way we cross streams?” he asked Vas.

“Sure, pull up,” said Vas, lifting the lid so they could both piss. As I lifted Pickled Owen’s legs over the side of the tub, I had to lift the stem of the sound of their two urine streams hitting the bowl.

“You’ve got a right todger there, soldier!” Darwin remarked, staring at Vas’ dick.

“Yes,” said Vas. “So, that’s your ward, Doctor?”

“I never really seen another guy’s before,” said Darwin. “I mean, in real life.”

“What about locker rooms?” I pointed out. “Didn’t you work at a swimming pool before?”

“Yeah, but it’s not like I was checking out guys’ packages in the showers,” retorted Darwin, shaking it off.

Anyway, morning came, and it was like Normandy in our living room, punks draped all over every available surfact.

Sometime around noon, I was the first one awake, and I crept into the kitchen to get something to feed the cat that had been under our porch. I’d heard it crying last night, so I wanted to put out some food. I got a saucer out of the drying rack and poured milk on it to bring outside for the cat. Just as I picked it up to carry it to the porch, Charlie rolled out from some hidden corner.

“You better not be feeding that damn cat,” he grumbled.

“What, this?” I asked, caught red-handed. “It’s cereal.”

“With no spoon?” Charlie questioned. “And, served in an ordinary plate, rather than one of the many clean bowls we have? And, not least of all, with no actual cereal?”

“Well, I didn’t want to use up all the clean dishes,” I retorted.

“If I see that cat again, it’s getting a boot to the face,” he threatened.

Darwin and Vas came out together, Darwin’s arm around Vas’ shoulder. “Hey guys, it’s official!” he enthused. “We’re going out!”


“That’s right, this guy is my boyfriend,” Vas said, patting Darwin on the stomach affectionately. “We officially spent the night together.”

“This is really crossing the line!” Charlie raged, storming toward the washroom.

“Yeah, but nothing actually happened last night, right?” I asked them, still trying to balance that saucer of milk. I knew this was a joke, but dammit, I just needed to hear them say it.

“Oh, of course nothing happened,” Vas said. “I don’t want everyone thinking I’m easy.”

“Yeah, but we’re otherwise totally gay for each other!” Darwin added.

“Alright then,” I said, “kiss.”

Darwin looked like he’d been electrocuted. “What, each other?”

“Yes,” I said. “Prove it’s real.”

“I totally would,” said Vas, except we haven’t had breakfast yet, and Darwin totally has the worst morning breath.

“Come on, lover boy,” said Darwin as they both nudged past me into the kitchen. “How about breakfast in bed?”

Suddenly, Charlie burst into the room, a paper plate in his hands holding a small, deformed tuber of poo.

“Out of the way!” he exclaimed, elbowing past me and spilling out most of the milk in the saucer.

“What’s going on?” I asked.

“Pickled Owen just made breakfast for that cat, soft-servin’!” Charlie hollered, making for the balcony door.

I followed Charlie out back, where he set the plate down under the porch where the cat could see it.

“He won’t eat that,” I pointed out. “He’s not a dog.”

“Bon appetit, you beast, have some corn schnitzel,” Charlie gloated, wandering back inside.

I grabbed a snow shovel that had been leaning against the porch since winter, and used it to scoop up the plate and its cargo which I dumped into our compost heap.

When I went back inside, Charlie and Darwin were sitting around in our labyrinth of couches, wherever there was room among the remaining sleeping punks.

“What, you’re gay?” I asked Darwin.

“Freshening up,” Darwin said.

“How long are you going to keep this going?” Charlie asked.

“I don’t know,” said Darwin. “But you know, gay marriage is legal now, so...”

“Okay, this is starting to bug me,” Charlie said. “Darwin, you’re not gay.”

“Well, I am in a gay relationship with another guy,” said Darwin. Vas snuck up behind Darwin and cupped his bosoms, causing Charlie to sigh.

“What, you don’t approve?” Darwin said accusingly. “Homophobe!”

Anyway, this routine kept up for a few more days. The other was Pickled Owen, who was passed out while the other was jumping in. Both Vas and Darwin refused to deny it was a sham, and they spent the following couple nights sleeping over in each other’s rooms. I could hear them up late, giggling and fucking around, but clearly no, where the fucking. Could it be possible they were really gay? Or at least one of them it, while the other was joking around? No, no way.

On Wednesday night, Charlie brought home a new guy, a normal looking dude about our age who was quiet and kind of demure. Once we were all around the dinner table, he introduced everyone.

“Guys, this is Ryan,” he said. “Ryan is my gay friend.”

“Okay,” Charlie said, putting on that fake gay smile he’d developed. “Nice to meet a fellow colleague.”

“So, are you single?” said Darwin.

“Do you do threesomes?” I asked.

“Yeah god no,” said Ryan. “Mostly I just hang out at others’ hot pool with the guys. Actually, it’s wing night tonight—you guys want to come along?”

“Sure, great!” agreed Vas.

“Gay wings?” queried Darwin.

“I don’t think the chickens had much of a preference,” Charlie retorted. “Anyway, I think I’ll stay in.”

“Can I come?” I asked, hurrying off to grab a blank journal to document what was sure to be a wild night.

Ballers was only a ten-minute walk away. I knew because it was previously a venue where there’d sometimes be punk shows. At some point, it put up a rainbow flag, and I guess started calling itself Ballers, and no more shows.

“Where are we going out?” Ryan asked Vas and Darwin, who’d been walking with their hands in each other’s back pockets but quickly fell out of sync and lost contact.

“Okay, I’m totally out to every-...”

“When my older sister found out, she apologised for beating me up all those years,” said Vas.

“You’re lucky,” said Ryan. “I haven’t spoken to my parents in five years.”

“So then who pays your rent for you?” Darwin asked.

“Darwin, you idiot,” I snapped.
“People normally don’t have rich parents to give them a monthly alowance.”

“So,” said Vas to Ryan, “what do you do? Musical theater, interior decoration?”

“I design kitchens,” said Ryan. “But I am appearing in a musical adaptation of The Wiz next month. I’m going to be the Cowardly Lion!”

“Coward!” laughed Darwin. Anyway, the gay bar was tense, but not outstandingly weird, and retreated. Mostly. It wasn’t too busy on a Wednesday night, with just a few of Ryan’s friends playing pool. I kind of stayed to the side and, not knowing what else to do, I buried my nose in my journal as I listened to the others socialising with the local gay community. Despite it being a wing night, none of us could commit to ordering.

An older guy with an untriumed moustache and a big beer gut came over to Vas and leaned in toward his ear. “I’ll buy y’all a beer if you take your shirts off!” he offered.

Vas obliged, taking off his shirt and carefully folding it on a nearby table, then going back to the pool table to line up a shot like it was the most natural thing in the world to play pool shirtless.

After the old troll was gone, Darwiin jeered at Vas. “Aw, looks like he has a crush on you!”

“What—jealous?” Vas retorted.

Suddenly Darwin’s Dancefloor Disasters shirt was hanging from the rafters.

What if they really were gay? I wondered. Didn’t seem like how I’d imagined a friend coming out, let alone two at once, but…at some point you have to give them the benefit of the doubt. Soon they were whooping and hollering, and that older guy brought back a round of beers for everyone, myself included.

I took a few sips, then left my beer there and went off to use the washroom. I always hated using urinals—the social awkwardness, the potential splashback—but the stalls looked pretty grim. As I was pissing, that older man came in and went up to the urinal stall to me, even though he could’ve left one in between as a buffer zone.

“Hey,” he said, trying to make eye contact.

“Buh,” I replied with a quick nod.

“Hey, what about you take a step back, darlin’?” he asked.

“Look, I’m just here with my friends…” I started, shoring up my pants and concealing myself better. “You need to loosen up,” he breathed. “It’s really unsexy.”

I squeezed out the last few drops, zipped up, and hurried out without washing my hands, something I would never do.

Charlie and Darwin were at the bar doing tequila shots when I got back, standing front to back.

“What is it about man-on-man aspllay that’s so fuckin’ hilarious?” Darwin laughed as he licked a body shot off the small of Vas’ back, around where he’d have a tramp stamp.

I felt ill and wanted to go. Fortunately Ryan made the first move.

“My friend called about a party down in Garneau,” he said. “Should be a little more happening than this place tonight.”

After getting Darwin’s shirt down with the use of a pool cue, we got out on the street again without having to see the old creep again. I just wanted to get far away from there in case he came out looking for us. I wasn’t really in the mood for going along, but I also did not want to be alone after dark then.

“Man, I never had so many guys wanting to buy me drinks!” Vas remarked.

“Yeah, now I know what it’s like to be a girl,” replied Darwin. “Gael awesome!”

As we walked down the street, Darwin pined Vas up against a wall and began dry-humping him from behind.

An older couple walked by, giving them the stink-eye.

“What?” Darwin hollered at them. “This is the future—get used to it!”

As we walked, Vas focused on a pole nearby, hurrying over and ripping off a poster from it. “Holy jeez,” he exclaimed.

We all crowded around to get a look at the poster. It had a picture of a cat that was undeniably the same as the one sticking out our backyard.

“Missing: very smart orange-coloured cat,” it read. “Answers to the name Lasha. If found, please call 478-8759. $200 reward.”

“Wow, looks like I hurt your girl-friend!” called one of the normal people.

“I don’t have a girlfriend—he’s my boyfriend!” Darwin retorted.

“You bast pirates! Think you’re so tough? Come over here, I’ll give your ass a pounding!”

Just then, a couple other normal guys came around the corner, and it quickly became apparent that the tide had turned. We hurried along, with these normal people chasing after us hurling taunts, and occasionally whatever small rocks they could find along the way.

Soon we spotted the Den up ahead, and sure enough there were about a dozen punks hanging out in the yard. Very suddenly, the normal people found themselves outnumbered, and they did the cowardly thing and retreated, like all normal people eventually do.

“Go back to the fucking suburbs!” Darwin hollered after them.

Anyway, those guys continued along to the party, and I stayed back.

“Charlie, have you seen that cat?” I exclaimed.

Oh, he won’t be coming back after what we did to him,” Charlie said, gesturing over to a couple punks crouching down next to the deck, a ghetto blaster playing the Clash aimed underneath. “Now that’s what I call a nifty package!”

“Yeah?” I exclaimed. “That cat was worth money!”

I showed him the poster, and his eyes widened. We looked around, but no cat.

We went inside and Charlie called the Your hostess. “Hi, ma’am? I think I have something of yours,” he said. “You offered a, ah, reward for an orange cat?…Really? Well maybe you could still take a look at him? Hello? Hello?”

“Yeah,” I asked.

“It’s the wrong gay cat,” Charlie said. “She said the poster’s a month old, and they got the real cat back long ago. Ours is worthless.”

I figured I should catch up with my friends, and see what happens after the party. I managed to catch up with Ryan, who I found smoking outside an apartment building a couple blocks down.

“This is our friends are upstairs,” he said curtly.

I nodded, and by the time I got to the houseparty it was a boring mess. Gay dudes standing around, backs to the walls, with “What’s Up” by Four Non-Blondes playing.

And in the middle of the room were Vas and Darwin, riding each other like fully clothed rodeo bulls.

“We’re so fucking gay!” Darwin shouted.

One other guy came over to me. “Hi, are these two your friends?”

“Yeah,” I admitted.

“I heard he was looking interest in me and walking away.

I could sense the distaste running through the room, and finally I could see a glint in Vas’ eyes indicating that finally he, too, was willing to admit what was going on. Darwin was still going through the motions, because to stop was to call it a night, or worse admit the sham that they’d been perpetuating on us this week.

But they also didn’t want to disentangle themselves from what they thought was going to be a normal relationship, especially not in front of a room full of gay people who were clearly unimpressed with their antics.

I wasn’t either, so I headed home, just as the sky opened up, doing its best to wash away the filth that we create down here.

I got back and saw that damm cat out in the backyard, picking food out of an open garbage bag.

“Out of my way, you fucking cat!” I bellowed, kicking the garbage bag and scattering the past.

A few days later, Vas would get his STD test back, no infections, and go back to his womanising ways immediately after. Darwin, eventually, would get laid, by a girl, and it would be the greatest thing to ever happen to him.

Did you know the word punk was used in the ‘20s to describe gay men who would suck you off if you couldn’t find a woman to go home with?

Next time: Charlie tries to become a skinhead (or I pick something more relevant).
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