



MINUTIAE

Non-stick Surface

In rare instances, a person may accidentally ingest a flake of nonstick coating from an aged pan. The coating flake is non-toxic and would pass through the body without being absorbed. Based on the inert characteristics of the coating, data indicate that there are no health effects from the incidental ingestion of pieces of nonstick coating.

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MINUTIAE #15

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DEPARTMENT OF SALUTATIONS



What up, world? This is your boy Norfolk Renoir here. If you're like me, you're a 24 year old Stanford grad, living in San Francisco, and having a hard time meeting women. It's just, like, so hard to approach women and act cordial. That's why I created ShUGH, a revolutionary dating app that takes all the friction out of social interactions.

We recently got a round of angel investing from Yucatan XV who we pitched to at their relaunch party where they rented out the entire Freedom Tower. They were so impressed with our new vision for internet dating that they dropped \$30 million in offshore cash to help us get started. So, we got a huge new SoMa office that used to be a homeless shelter, hired 300 employees to get our company off the ground, and was handed Minutiæ Publishing as a platform to talk about ShUGH (which stands for Show Up, Get Hard).

And this issue of Minutiæ, **Friction**, is the perfect time to talk about our disruptive dating app ShUGH. Doesn't it suck to have to put in the work of getting to know someone before showing up to get down? Doesn't it suck to have to fake some kind of interest in someone before showing up to get down? Doesn't it really suck to have to put in the minimal effort of today's 'swipe left' society before showing up to get down? YES! It totally sucks. And that's what I learned at Stanford in Sociopath Club.

So let's step through how ShUGH works. As soon as you open up the app, it uses geolocation to find willing partners in your area (all of whom who have agreed to leave the door unlocked). Then the sophisticated sexual algo-"rhythm" matches you up with a perfect vessel for your genitals. After that, you just have to Show Up and Get Hard.

A lot of folks have been using hashtags to attack ShUGH. Tags like #DisgustingTechBros, #MonstersOfTheInternet, #NotRapeButStillBad, and #JustLockYourDoors. To all of those lamers out there, I say you have no idea how great using ShUGH can be. It takes away all the natural and healthy anxiety of meeting someone, getting to know them, appreciating them as a human being, caring about their well being, and having the act of sex be more than an exchange of thrusting organs. It's too much! So, get on ShUGH, and make sure to get those in-app freemium upgrades like No STDs, White Girls Only, and Send Roses (a concierge service that will have roses waiting for you at home after you have sex with a nameless body).

Y'all, the future is sweet, as sweet as ShUGH.♦

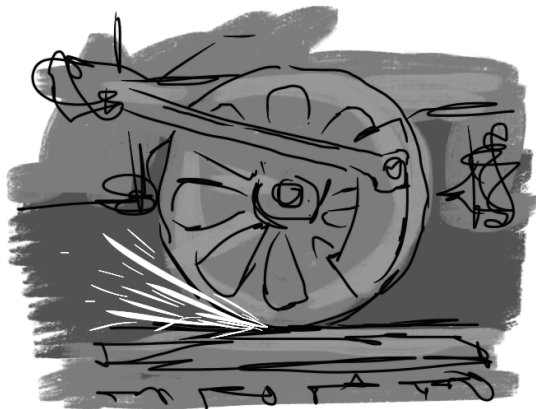


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AGENCY OF CÖRRESPONDENCES + COMMUNIQUEÉS

Gentlemen, this your boy H.D. I know this is an inappropriately public forum, but the police are gonna crack down on me soon and I need to sell off the rest of my supply to pay off my debts. So, I got the following: joints, bongos, vaporizers, rippers, chuzzers, wheezies, piccos, swillies, gravity chuzzers, duecers, biskies, cumbers, spiggies, water chuzzers, stogers, and that sweet sweet Dominican Kayea. Let me know how much you want by leaving a note at the police station.

*H.D., Your Boy
Drug Dealer
Slugtown, NJ*



Gentlemen, Start Your Engines here. We're an exciting new aphrodisiac company that's paired with NASCAR to really rev up things in the bedroom. Your ad sales team was unresponsive, so we're contacting your editorial team to find out how we can include a full trifold advertisement in your next issue. It would be a full color glossy of a very nude Rusty Wallace, Jim Spencer and Al Unser Jr. standing in pit row with Firestone tires hanging off their erect penises. Let us know!

*Ricardo Franto
VP Marketing, Start Your Engines
Indianapolis, IN*

Gentlemen, this is Craig, I just lost my job, got dumped and am getting evicted, but I realized the thing that's wrong and why my life has turned out so poorly is that I never got that dance with Nancy Kowlawski at prom! So, here's the plan, we all meet back in our hometown, have a crazy night of reconnecting, drinking over at Gouter's Pub, and then we walk over to Nancy's, dig her body up under a full moon, and let me dance with her corpse while the rest of you guys whistle Boyz II Men. We're brothers, right?

*Craig McCraig
Unemployed/Homeless
Fraiser, ID*

Gentlemen, everyone is worried about climate change, but I am writing to tell you of an even greater threat to the human experiment: Gravity Loss. If you would be so kind as to purchase my \$325 book, it's all in there: what Gravity Loss is, how it works, where it comes from, and where it's definitely going. Also, if you would like me to write a \$325 issue of your magazine for you, I would be so happy to do so. But reply quickly, before all of our precious Gravo-trons run out (oh no, I've already said too much for free!)

*Dr. Fred Spangler
Gravitologist
University of Jack Links at Alberta*

“It comes off so easily...”

SEX

“That scratching sound...”

IS

*“He doesn’t know how to
tie his shoes yet...”*

VELCRO

MINIMALIST

Parker Winnepol doesn't need much. In fact, she needs less and less as time goes on. A self-styled minimalist, Winnepol believes that there is freedom in fewer things, and is pushing that notion to its edges.

It wasn't always like this. Two years ago, Winnepol ran a successful teacup shop out of a half-burned Seattle storefront in Yesler Terrace. To get there, she had to amass a teetering collection of the delicate porcelain mugs, which lay throughout her apartment in haphazard boxes. Before that, there was the book binding business, which left an entire spare room covered in two feet of loose pages — stories that would never be bound, quantified and sold. There was the ribbon reuse service, the notion to make rigor mortised dog feet as culturally known for being lucky as rabbit paws (there is still a curio around somewhere, packed high with the knobby bottoms of kill shelter pups). And of course, her brick-fusing idea: help laborers save time by binding two bricks together and selling the result at a slim margin, ostensibly cutting a bricklayer's work in half. With a small apartment filled to the rafters with half-mortared bricks, dead dog feet and piles of type-written pages, it was hard for Winnepol to find a date; but even harder for her to find room to move around.

One day, amidst the piles, Winnepol dropped her purse and spent the better part of an hour finding it again. She tried calling the phone inside her purse from a neighbor's cell, but the miles of unrolled reused ribbon acted as a natural sound barrier, gobbling up the ring tone. After stubbing her toe on countless bricks, Winnepol found her purse, but gave up on the notion that more is more — or, that more is more profitable. She sold off the entirety of her many-varied items to one oddball man from down near Tillamook along the Oregon coast, who seemed intent on building some sort of ill-fated children's museum, populated only with scrap ribbon, teacups and dead animals. Clean living, she thought, with time and space to reflect on what matters. And to really start living life, instead of just experiencing her next futile idea.

Soon, the cleared shelves and empty cabinets gave way to bare walls and only a single two-legged stool and wooden post bed that sat forlornly in one corner of her bedroom. At night, she would pull the pillowcase off of her lone pillow and use it as a blanket against the chilly Seattle nights. The lack of stuff led Winnepol to begin to explore her neighborhood, reconnect with old friends and even go on a few dates. There were nights spent at downtown bubble club Poppers, weekend afternoons at Turby Beach and at least one romantic interlude at Chez Le Petite, a classic French bistro teeming with old knickknacks. For a while, these were all of the things that Winnepol needed.

But eventually the bubble club seemed too cramped, the beach too dirty and Chez Le Petite too cluttered and Winnepol accepted fewer and fewer offers to leave her apartment. Friends faded, love interests dwindled away, and by the end of the year Winnepol's life consisted of that pillowcase, the bar of soap in her bathroom that doubled, improbably as both her tooth brush and her drying towel, and the thoughts in her head. Even her cell phone, which had been so cautiously recovered from the pile of rubble just months ago in her apartment, was thrown away. No phone calls means no distractions means no clutter. Finally, her mind was clear.

Sitting in the stark white bareness of her studio apartment (she downgraded to an efficiency suite, since keeping cooking utensils around seemed so to her to be a crazy thing to do), the only thing that Parker Winnepol had left were memories. And if she tried hard enough, those could be thrown away too.

—

And that, kids, is the story of the founding saint of Tillamook's Darby-Warloo Double-Bricked Children's Museum and Taxidermy Outpost. Not only was Ms. Winnepol instrumental in providing the raw materials for the museum and taxidermy outpost, she was a complete lunatic. Now who wants to watch me put this entire dead dog foot in my mouth? ♦

GUIDANCE & ADVICE

Susan Alan-Wenswick is a prolific Life Specialist, working in the metro Miami area. She has written several books, including most recently Mama Got A Brand New Bag: Making Friends at Forty.

My roommate's boyfriend has started staying at the apartment we share and it's starting to become too much. How can I get my apartment back without being the bad friend?

First off, know that you are fighting the good fight, sister. It's not fair to you that the rug is being slowly pulled out from under you and then all of sudden you see the awful disgusting linoleum floor beneath it. Coincidentally, I recently had to move out on my apartment building when they pulled up the linoleum flooring to a disgusting megacolony of ants, termites and nano-snakes. Needless to say, uninvited guests are the worst and can ruin a good thing, so sitting down and talking it out is the best way to go before he really moves in.

It's come time to move my mother into a nursing home, and she's very unhappy about it. What can I do to soften the transition?

It's hard to move out of your home, believe me. I haven't lived anywhere for more than six months in over a decade, but each eviction letter is harder to receive than the last. When I moved into Backwater Ha-

vens (an community of adults not yet at retirement age) after the megacolony was discovered, I was very upset. It didn't help that I moved in with Gale, a widow who refuses to let her past haunt her. But, I helped myself by finding activities and benches that I could take ownership of, despite only having a very imposing rental agreement.

Hey, is Gale there? We're doing risqué Pictionary in the All Purpose Room!

No, Gale is not here. You know, some people get attention because they treat a shared apartment like non-stop party all hours party hall. Last Thursday night she brought back seven people — women and men — at 9 o'clock and they spent the entire time yucking it up and discussing current events! It must be nice not have to get up at 3 AM for your second job. It's like Mr. Sackover says, "Tired eyes don't inspect oranges good." Although, it is a Friday, and pictionary does sound fun...

Oh, well, I mean... we've already got full teams. We'll let you know about the next one. Okay?

Of course, yes, no problem. I actually have tons of things I can do. I have lots of ideas for new books that I haven't had time to write out and— there are little tiny bite marks in my notebooks... what's this... A megacolony! NO! The megacolony is eating my lease! That's my only form of personal identification! ♦

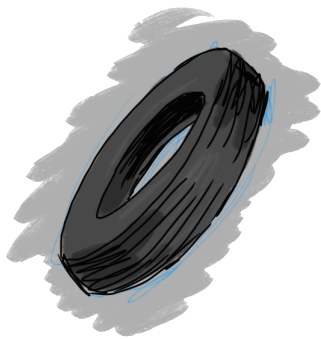


THE MODERN CITIZEN

DEBUNKING SISYPHUS

The constant churning; the repetitive ending. Such is the life of Sisyphus, an ancient Greek heel, former king and eternal endurer. He's the one with the rock and the hill, forced for all time to push the stone to nearly its apex, only to have the boulder slip and return to its original, cradled position at the bottom. The result of a life led deceitfully. Or, more specifically, for hooking up with innumerable wives, sisters and daughters in his back-handed pursuit to rule Ephyra.

Dave Norkel, a twerpy graduate student at New York's Fordham University, doesn't believe the hype. The bookwormish nob of a young man has spent more than a year at this ecclesiastical school, focused on debunking the long-held mythos, convinced that no one (real or imagined) would ever waste so much endless time on such a fruitless pursuit as pushing boulders against gravity. "I have spent my entire life knowing that the tale of Sisyphus cannot be true, and I am going to spend my every waking hour to prove my hypothesis," says Norkel, trying to impress me with using the word "hypothesis" in conversation.



Yet here I sit, in a grad dorm at this Bronx-area Jesuit temple of higher learning, cracking open two bottles of cold beer and persistently offering one to Norkel, who continues to refuse. "I politely refuse due to my needs to continue my scholarly pursuits," quaffs Norkel. "I cannot imagine what this would do to my studies." Each time I press the issue a little more, he seems to falter. "Oh, for heavens sake," he says. I believe for a moment that the bottle will reach his palm, he'll take a swig and the night will go from bust to

boom. But, just at the moment of contact, Norkel's eyes return to the search results of JSTOR, the online journalistic database, and he alights with a squeal back to his MacBook Pro.

Norkel is twenty four, deep into second-level studies at one of America's most prestigious universities. He is also a man, who - presumably - wants to do things like drink and carouse and, you know, actually leave his squat cinderblock dorm for the endless bacchanal of New York City that is only a train ride away. But his willowy body seems etched forever into the stiff wooden chair, and his arching back slopes up just below the shoulders, then sinks away into the sides of a paunchy midsection. It's as if he's been trying to lift himself up over and over, only to have the weight settle down at the bottom again. He squints his rubbery face closer to the computer screen and scribbles down a note about the impossible slope of ancient hillsides in Greece, recently calculated by archeologists.

On night three with Norkel, he suddenly proclaims to no one in particular that he has a date! Perfect, I say aloud, a chance to get out of his musty hovel and actually experience the world. But the effort turns out, maddeningly, to be impossible. Norkel can't be bothered to confirm the time and location with whatever unlucky woman waits patiently on the other end of his iPhone text messages. "I stand firm in my belief that if she is in pursuit of me, she should be bending to my whims." I plead with him to chill out.

He works the keyboard for a while, offering irritating counter-suggestions to her very modest dinner date proposals. Instead of Maxwell's on Third, Norkel wants Dumpy's Pizza, a place that he's familiar with the bathroom and knows the food will be served quickly, allowing for him to return to his schoolwork. She thinks DiMassio's has "a fun menu," but he wants to grab a pudding from the vending machine down the hall from his room. The texts trail off into the ether, and I feel my own stone falling from my throat to the pit of my stomach. Again, I plead with him to just be

chill. He thinks I'm a moron. That I don't get it. Another night in with this snotty dorkus, cackling over notes about boulder trajectory and the folly of Greek belief.

I check back in with Norkel a couple of weeks later, to see if the pale, wormy manchild has made any progress on life — forget the anti-Sisyphus thesis. But he seems to have slunk even further into the bottom of his own hill, wearing thin the wooden seat of his dorm desk. I half-heartedly offer him a beer, but the underdeveloped kid doesn't even look up, and I realize that maybe the real struggle is my own, trying to reach the top of this impossible peak known as Dave Norkel's social life. "I heard back from the modern woman who attempted to ensnare me in romance. She told me she had intercourse with a gentlemen, which she immediately regretted, because I simply would not go have a meal with her. Did I ruin her life? Or did she try to ruin mine. My hypothesis," he said, emphasizing the last word, "is I, to use the parlance of our times, bit the bullet." And I realize that no matter what the little asshole ends up finding — Sisyphus is real. ♦

TARTARUS MOBILITIES

What do you do after you create sideways elevators, tank cars and advanced water hovercrafts? If you're Tartarus Mobilities, you get bored. "I mean, we started to look at this Hyperloop stuff," says Tartarus CEO Gendler Bing, "but we just call them loops." Set on 124 acres in Baden-Württemberg, Germany against dense forest, Tartarus has found itself unexcited about current and even developing methods of transportation. "We were just sitting around one day, at 2pm, after lunch, having done nothing, and we look at each other figure why don't we just shoot a man in a sling-shot across Germany?" says Bing as he leans back and stares up at the ceiling, "So we just did it. It was in the paper." Bing holds up a headline from an October 2013 *Der Spiegel* reading "Man Flung Across Country, Company Sighs."

After some coaxing to get Bing out of his office, he shows me around the beautiful and pristine Tartarus headquarters. Going through the halls and offices, we encounter countless employees on their smart phones playing games or just texting. I ask one engineer what he's working on and he points to the pallets of mayonnaise. It is Tartarus' plan to run a new train on incredibly viscous mayonnaise. When I ask why, the engineers just shrugs and goes back to reading Goebbels, collecting Goebbels Reading Units to trade for Goebbels Virtual Stickers.

Yet, they all still show up to work everyday. "We pride ourselves on perfect attendance," says Bing. "It is important to come to work." Everyone agrees that it is more important that they're there, regardless of whether or not they actually accomplish anything. "We love coming into work," says Bing, "it is important to have a job." Everyone nods in agreement. When I point out while they do in fact have jobs, but aren't doing anything, they just laugh and go back to reading Goebbels, collecting Goebbels Scroll Points to trade for Goebbels Virtual Snickers.

So, the employees punch their timecards and sit around, occasionally coming up with a more efficient combustion engine or a sleeker design for a rocket car. "I honestly would rather work on something exciting that's evil, than continue to work on boring technology that's good for the world," says Bing as he snakes his hand up the vending machine, a task that he has been practicing for two hours a day for the past three months. "I know you didn't ask me about that, but I wanted to give you something positive to print about us." He finally gets the candy he was going after: a Goebbels Virtual Snickers. ♦



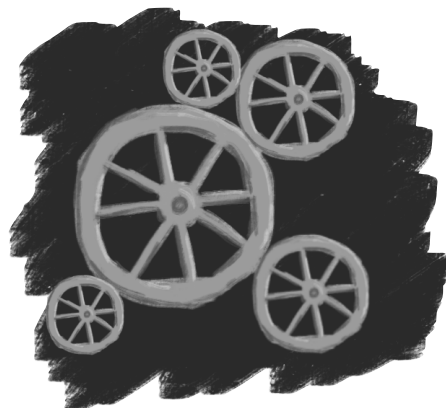
MR. K'S BROADWAY.

A community theater playhouse amongst the favelas in Rio de Janeiro is an oddity. Placo do Povo (The People's Stage) has only been in existence for four months, but it is already a hit. "This stage gives us a voice, and a way to express how we feel," says Placo do Povo's Artistic Director Aleixo Bioergo. "Before, we watch the television that they, the rich, that they perform. These are our performances." The performances are of plays with names like "The Ruthless Controlling Class" and "The Uprising Is An Inevitability," and they're all written by the same group that created the theater: La Organizacion, the rising paramilitary stateless group that is best known for their recent collapse of the Singapore manufacturing powerhouse and crime syndicate SwaTech from the inside out.

In fact, the story of SwaTech is now being told at Placo do Povo in sold-out performances of "The Employer's Corruption." It follows the story of a young boy who learns of SwaTech's criminal activity and, with the help of La Organizacion, takes down the company, receives a modest reward and two successive dates with the love interest of the play. It also features the character of the shadowy leader of La Organizacion that the world has come to know only as Mr. K.

In all of Placo do Povo's plays, Mr. K appears as a messiah genius who ultimately saves the day or fixes the problem. "I do not have a problem that Mr. K keeps showing up," says Bioergo, "The audiences love it. They are just waiting for Mr. K to arrive on his water hovercraft and defeat the corrupt leaders." Even in the children's plays put on by the theater, Mr. K shows up to help the children perform their song in "The Children's Song." (The song is an anti-government, anti-capitalist ballad)

"It is a honor to be Mr. K," says Júlio Patrício Cruz. The 34 year-old former gang member is now famous in the favelas for his positive portrayal of Mr. K. "I am just disappointed in myself that I am not able to fully capture his greatness." In the plays, Mr. K knows a variety of martial arts, holds several degrees and is a



giving and excellent lover. "I only know two martial arts, only have one degree, and am at best a competent and forceful lover," says Cruz. Yet, every night, he puts on the fully black leather body suit, covered in glow sticks, (no one has seen Mr. K, and this costume is an artistic interpretation of the character's raw power) and steps out to massive applause and cheers from the audience.

And they cannot get enough. After a thrilling performance of "Police Are Criminals," the men, women and children of the audience rioted. Two policemen were killed by Playbills being stuffed in their mouths. Upon learning this, the local government tried to shut it down, but the police are terrified of going near the theater. Not only is it under the protection of members of La Organizacion, but the police believe the tales of Mr. K's supernatural abilities that stemmed from the Gothic inspired Halloween story of "Mr. K's Long Reach."

Next month Placo do Povo is hosting the first Favelas Tonys, to honor their theatrical efforts. Amongst the awards will be "Best New Play," "Best Funding Organization," "Best Portrayal of Mr. K," and "Most Ruthless Oppressive Government." "Do I think I have a shot?" wonders Cruz, "if the voters can see beyond my 3% body fat and my only five octave range, then maybe I can squeak by with a win. I hope to win so that I may thank Mr. K in my speech and he will know I admire him." ♦

The National Coalition of White Bus Riders

"We're not trying to upset anyone"



THICK GRAVY

It's 3AM in a motion-capture studio somewhere in one of the multitude of Burbank sound stages. Lindsey Bucket and her co-star Richard Palmetto have been at it for fourteen hours. Action. "We can make it to the edge!" screams Bucket. "No! There's too much gravy!" screams back Palmetto. Cut. No, not quite right, time to try again.

\$145 million dollars have already been sunk into Gravy, the parody of Gravity featuring two people lost in a gigantic gravy boat, and it's continuing to leak money all over Hollywood's pleated khakis.

Mark Wollenberg, the director of 12 Bears a Cave and New Bra Ska, had been making good pace with his hope of one parody a week, but the rate has slowed glacially with Gravy. During a break while the motion-capture system reboots after failing to capture the nuanced performances from Bucket and Palmetto, I sit down with Wollenberg. "New Bra Ska was this great black & white story of a ska band that got new bras, and 12 Bears a Cave, it was a cave and bunch of bears," says Wollenberg, running on no sleep. "But, Gravy... this is my Nuremberg. Right? Am I using that right?"

"For parody to work," begins Wollenberg, "Everything but the jokes have to be top notch. If the gravy looks like brown water, then is that the joke? If it doesn't stick to their faces properly, is that the joke? No, the joke isn't that the effects are bad, so we have to work hard on making the gravy good. We need good gravy!"

"It isn't supposed to be this hard!" screams Wollenberg, as he flings his cappuccino across the room, hitting one of the motion-capture cameras, causing a malfunction in the system that would take two hours to fix. Wollenberg, furious and uncaring, starts to monologue: "Captain Pullups wasn't this hard. Philocheestake wasn't this hard. God damn The Wharf of Squall Beak wasn't this hard and that was claymation!" He then ripped apart the entire motion-capture wiring system before retreating to a corner of the room to roll up in a ball. "It shouldn't be this hard."

While the production crew fixing the set to start filming once more, I spoke with Wollenberg's longtime producing partner Patrick Fallerton. "Every dollar over budget we put into Gravy raises the pressure, which then makes us work harder, which means we need more time, which means more money... It's a cycle." I also ask him why they didn't do a Her parody. "We didn't touch Her because there were already too many stupid parodies online and we didn't want to just add to the noise. We're not monsters. We're artists."

The crew has had time to reset to capture the penultimate scene: Palmetto's character has floated away on a piece of sausage only to return to Bucket. Action. "How? How did you make it?" wonders Bucket aloud. "I'll tell you one thing, Admiral Sadlady, it wasn't gravy," smirks Palmetto. Cut. Wollenberg bursts into tears.

At the time of publication, Gravy is \$200 million over budget with an estimated release date of June 2017. ♦

THE RAIN KING

The beautiful new home for Corbelient Systems on the edge of Great Smoky Mountains National Park on the border of Virginia and Tennessee is “a cathedral to innovation.” It’s a tall metal behemoth that, when finished, will be covered in black glass, dancing with the reflection of the nearby river. The exact cost is unknown, but at least millions of dollars were spent to turn the land that Fort Requisite sat on for a hundred years into a world class research and development center for the newly formed Corbelient Systems. While the work being done there is top secret, the never ended caravan of government vehicles and private black cars lets the world know that something big is happening. And the man at the top lets the world know that it’s only a matter of time before that something big will change it forever.

* * *

Marquis Corbel was born in Lille, France in 1969 to a waitress named Louisa. Nine months earlier a Belgium gangster named Bruno had been hiding out in Lille and soon fell in love with Louisa. Yet, a very public midnight shootout in Citadelle de Lille left Louisa to raise Marquis all on her own. Despite his family’s hardships, the young boy became interested in chemistry and physics, interests that were nurtured by local neighborhood characters.

There was Alvan, the ex-government chemist, who was always bickering with the socialist physicist Francois. The two of them would fight from the sun’s dusk to the sun’s dawn. When Louisa and Marquis were forced out of their home, Pierre the Librarian let them sleep in the library, where Marquis would regularly fall into a lush world of imagination, with Pierre acting as his guide. Bryce and Aaron, the twin butcher and baker, would provide Marquis with a meal if he would recite scientific facts. The entire town got behind Marquis, and he was a lovable little scamp who was hit by a government truck when he was 14.

The truck not only crushed his leg, but also his youthful vigor. Marquis retreated further into books and studies. Sometimes he would go on walks along the river, but his limp made it difficult for him. He never had much use for friends. Yet, thanks to this curiosity, persistence and his mother’s constant encouragement, he gained entry into the Institut National des Sciences Appliquées de Toulouse at the age of 18. In 1993, he was recruited into the French National Centre for Scientific Research. It was here that Marquis made the first of his many important discoveries.

Marquis was part of a team tasked with helping soldiers heal faster. While this endeavor may sound altruistic, the French government was mostly worried about the rising costs of health care. Marquis was the one who discovered a rare protein in a frog that could regenerate its nerves very fast. While it could not do anything for illnesses or bone breaks, it was the precise remedy that could remove Marquis’ limp. Yet, he chose never to take it himself. He believed the limp was a reminder. “When the world is fixed,” says Marquis, “I will fix myself.”

* * *

In 2004, Corbel became disillusioned with the French government and took a job working for Fluid Combine Industries. While he was not changing the world, he knew what FCI’s interests were: making money from combining fluids. Corbel was instrumental in the Bone Enamel Oil, made from deer bones for lubricating rear axels on trucks. In 2009, FCI was bought by hPharma and Marquis went to work creating pharmaceuticals such as Sasmox, a very effective hair-growth pill. Finally, in 2010, Marquis moved over to TARK. Following TARK’s indictments for tax evasions, the company was restructured and Marquis was made the lead researcher for the Future Properties Lab.

During this time, back in Lille, Marquis’ mother Louisa was hit by a government truck and died. (In

fact, the French driver of the truck got out, scratched his head and said, in an American Southern accent, “Paw, I done did it again!”) Marquis was unable to make it in time to her funeral, needing to be in the US as the TARK restructuring took place.

It was also during this period that a coworker, Saladé Pantis, rebuffed his advances. All of this led to immense homesickness, isolation and depression for Marquis. Yet, despite all of his hardships, Marquis did as he always did and poured himself into his work.

TARK’s heavy investment in the ownership and operation of SuperMax Prisons led Corbel to develop CorbelLoaf, a genetically modified food that tasted and smelled great, was perfectly nutritional and efficient to feed to prisoners. When Corbel presented his loaf to the board, they refused to bring it to market. They didn’t want the prisoners fed or treated well.

Corbel was furious and began his exit from TARK. In a last ditch effort in the cafeteria, he begged to Saladé Pantis to be with him. He informed her that he “wanted her to be his ‘first’.” He was laughed out of the company. “This was a dark time,” says Corbel, “I lost my way in what my cause was. The reason that I left TARK was only because of myself. I allowed myself to focus on love. This was a folly.”

Yet, it was Corbel who would have the last laugh. Thanks to a lack of oversight, Corbel was the sole inventor named on all of TARK’s patents for the four years of his employment, during which time he developed many of their key products. Corbel took TARK to court and won, effectively ruining the company.

It was with his immense winnings that he bought Fort Requisite from the United States Government and begin construction on the headquarters for his new operation: Corbelient Systems.

Corbel stands in his office — or what will be his office once construction is complete — in his trademark dark silver suit and a purple polo shirt com-

pletely buttoned, two inches shorter than he should, thanks to his limp. He enjoys eating CorbelLoaf, which he has been having a small plant in nearby Abingdon, Virginia produce. In fact, it’s all that he eats. It’s looks like a tube of grey cookie dough. He munches on it as he shows me around his new facility. He calls it his “cathedral to innovation.”

“What we believe in is innovation, and only innovation.” says Corbel. “Everything here today will be gone tomorrow. We must always start anew.” Then he took me to one of the few areas that had been finished, complete with a state-of-the-art security system from a company that Corbel won’t disclose. It is a simple black polished room with a long fish tank. In the middle of the tank is a filter, and probes on either side of the filter run up to screens on the wall showing the purity of the water. Corbel walks over and grabs a

vial from a refrigerator. He shows it to me: “Cholera.” As he pours the vial into the water, the purity levels drop. The water becomes contaminated. Then Corbel presses a button on the filter and it buzzes to life.

And this buzz. This small whirring of tiny micro-motors within the filter. This is the sound that prayer sounds like in this cathedral. The filter is a miracle as the purity levels rise and the contaminants are gone. Corbel explains that it removes contaminants from the water, breaks down the impurities into individual molecules, and then disperses those molecules as harmless particles of air. I remark that it is genius.

Corbel turns and tells me that it is only what is necessary to save lives. “Genius would be finding a way not to ever need these at all,” laments Corbel as he takes a bite of his CorbelLoaf. His plan is to begin installing these filters in water supplies worldwide in the next fourteen months. By 2016, his plan is to have everyone in the world drinking clean water. It’s a monumental task, but for Corbel he sees no choice. For him, saving the world is the only answer. ♦



FRICTION

