



**miniMAG**

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# LUCKY SEVEN

Jack Farzan

the psychics told me six is a romantic number.

it had been six years since we had last seen each other yet  
with careful words - elf - immortal - succubus - he plucked apart the clay  
around my heart until he could feed on the blood that gushed from within.

i opened a door he didn't know existed. i pointed out a path he had never  
taken. he laughed, exasperated. "it's like you're trying to ruin my life!"

we joked that he was hiding bodies. each time his count went higher, we  
giggled. "can i be your seventh body?" i asked. he was unsure. "who would i  
talk to, then?"

he told me he brought six condoms so i decided we would fuck seven times to  
prove how much better i am than the me in his head.

"have i ruined your life yet?" i asked while we were melting our bodies  
together.

"i don't think this counts as ruining."

"this makes me your seventh body."

"am i murdering you?"

"in a good way."

the psychics told me i would meet my match.





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## Not a prince

Melissa Lemay

Once upon a time, you called  
me a goddess. You fed me  
the finest foods, and we drank  
the finest wine. You kissed me  
goodbye at two in the morning.  
We didn't want the magic to  
end just yet. I saw glimpses  
of passion inside you, but they  
turned to rage. With a broken  
heart, I thought it would have  
been better if I'd kissed you  
and you'd turned into a frog.



# HUNG JURY

Alan Berger

When you first meet a person you either look for something to like in them, dislike in them, or not care at all.

Penny Maxwell did all three.

When Penny went to bed that night, she was already hanging and dangling by a slim and under fed thread.

If it wasn't for her cat next to her on his pillow, she would not bother to wake at all.

The cat kept her going on whatever rough river she was flowing.

The next morning yesterdays mail contained envelopes of depression. One special one was surrounded by the ones that went by the name of Bill now due.

But this envelope out depressed them all as it was a fate worse than death and poverty and clinical depression.

Jury Duty



And Penny Maxwell had the misfortune of never having had a felony conviction.

They got her.

She was afraid she would not be able to care for her cat in her contempt of jury duty jail cell if she didn't respond.

Maybe if they saw the sea she was drowning in she would get a "pass" like on "The Sopranos"

But civic duty was calling, and she would have to answer this call.

Love never knocked nor spoke nor whispered on Penny Maxwell's door.

She would have answered that call, too.

So, jury duty? Who knows what may come of it? Might be an adventure!

We shall see she said to the herself and her "Precious" the cat.

She went to downtown Manhattan where she was approved by both sides.

Damn

Penny told The American Judicial System that she could not afford to lose work and The American Judicial System said tough shit and when Penny told the company she worked for she would be back when she was done, they said don't just show up, call first.

Oh, well, Penny Maxwell thought, I could always get a job as a waitress, I'm good at it, I've been waiting all my life.

The case was going to be not in the exciting arena of murder, drugs or the violent kind, but of the money laundering kind.

The only thing she might learn from it she thought to herself was maybe she would get some tips on a better laundry detergent.

Oh well, she had no choice in the non-hanging matter.

Just the way she liked it.

In all her life Penny Maxwell always sat in the back.



At the plays she went to, at the poetry readings she sat thru, at the lectures she slept thru, in the back she always was.

Not this time.

When the powers that be brought the jury in to face good and evil, Penny was placed front row center.

She felt like she was on trial.

What does anybody really want out of life anyway? It may be nothing more than attention and she was now in the spotlight of it all.

Then, she saw the defendant.

He was in a wonderful, beautiful, perfectly lit spotlight of his own, and then some.

The defendant was her blueprint of beauty.

She thought no matter what he did or did not do, she would see to it personally that he would walk.

Maybe trot, maybe dance out with her in their private musical.

He reminded her, the defendant did, of a young Leonardo Di Caprio, but let's be clear, a good-looking young Leonardo Di Caprio.

In her plain brown eyes, his fate was sealed, and she wanted to lick the envelope.

After all, it's only money he was accused of, and you can't cheat an honest man.

What rent, what job, what pet cat at home due to die of old age and diabetes without her there to comfort him?

When she closed her plain brown eyes, she was on a tropical island paradise vacation with Mr. Defendant. Him and all his accessories, which were his eyes, his hair, and his nails that would be running up and down her tanned back, not to mention his cock, for Penny Maxwell was no virgin although close to extinction sexually.

It had been a very long season without any rain.

Make that seasons.

This did not go unnoticed by the lead defense attorney who put into a motion in the defendant's ear to start to not only notice it too, but to take it and run with it.

And run with it he did.



They flirted shamelessly, unashamedly, and endlessly till his lawyer said enough for now.

It ended with a wink. First him, then her.

Our Miss Penny slept beautifully that night after giving precious his medicine, after giving herself some dinner, which she Hardly touched, she had herself a sweet nice hot bath where she got herself in and off.

She would take her cat off at the vet soon, maybe one day on her way to the heavenly courthouse on account he was drinking so much water and pissing on the couch again. Precious most likely just needed one of his diabetic touch-up shots, and everything for around two months and two hundred dollars she didn't have would be alright.

The next morning the defendant looked even better as they continued their eye dancing.

Maybe he had a hot bath bath too and bathed his senses in his memory of Penny like she did of him, for this was how it works and how it is meant to be.

One day in Manhattan they would walk, shuffle, or run, into each others' arms and all the pieces would be clear and more than fit together, for he would know that she was the one that set him free.

On the subway, on the way home that day, Penny thought maybe dreams do come true, as well as nightmares.

When Penny got to her door, she went thru the ritual of tapping the doorknob before putting the key in so Precious could meow her in, but this time there was no meow.

After tapping some more and waiting some more, she went in and her Precious was dead.

She had been thru this, three other times before with other pets, and like all those times, before, she cried like there was no tomorrow.

But this time there was a tomorrow.

She put her past love into the blanket he always slept on, wrapped it nice with pretty Christmas paper and took him to the East River for a burial at sea.

She didn't sleep that night for fear drowning in her own out to sea of tears.



In the morning she got dressed and had to use a different notch on her skirt belt because on account of all the excitement lately she had been eating less and knocked off a few pounds.

She figured who the Hell wouldn't lose a couple of pounds and look better anyway?

You can't be too rich or too thin she remembered hearing. She had the corner on one of them.

She wondered if "Her man" would notice.

Penny had a lot of free very strong coffee with the others in The Jury Room down the hall from The Courtroom.

Soon the jury party were all herded down the hall.

As she was seated, she of course lovingly gazed over to the defendant, but something was different. Way wrong different.

Sitting right behind him was the most beautiful, most young girl in the world with black hair and green eyes that would make traffic go lights jealous. And it was too plain and too much pain to see that she was the defendant's and that the defendant, was hers.

She realized this was now an arena she could never compete in.

Everything went blind for a spell.

And this was a bad, terrible spell that she cast upon herself.

She thought she felt Her Precious jump on her shaking lap.

During the proceedings, she heard nothing until the sound of the judge's graveled voice and gavel, that called for a "Short recess".

On her way back to The Jury Room, with the others, she asked the bailiff if she could use the ladies' room and of course she was granted permission.

Soon the jury was called back in ,and Penny Maxwell was still in the ladies' room.

The bailiff tapped on the door like Penny the night before waiting to hear from her pet. The bailiff like her, heard not a thing.

He soon went in because he had to, and she was hanging from an old downtown Manhattan bathroom ceiling pipe courtesy of her new notch skirt belt.

The sensitive and titillating headline in The New York Post read "Hung jury".



# Trap Jammer

Hark Herald

You might think they have something going on, the way she talks about him.

Shower with the chains on; the Heuer waterproof — heavy metal, contemporary crystal.

Humboldt County smokes farm-to-table. Humboldt County is willing to do what's necessary.

All her friends are militants; she waives her third but never her second.

Long walk home under crop dusters. Come down from the watchtower. Come kneel under the bolt gun.

Everything reminds him: they just want to stop us getting rich.

Come through, come through. Come through if I'm at the function. Wallahi you should not come through.





## Mackay, yesterday.

Jack Norman

It was either the dusk or dawn of...

No, that can't be true.

I'm not sure I ever lived there now.

Mackay...

Dew of wet grass and dew.

She asked me did I love her?

And because I meant like friends,

I said Yes!

Like a home town or any girl that lets you fuck,

I will always love you!





# WHAT... AND LEAVE SHOW BUSINESS...?

Anthony Acri

*Part 2*

It is 14 May 2023. Mothers day, so let the schmaltz and Chicken fat that is always co equal, at least in dying duchies like this, to the virulence of nightshirt counting bergermisters and aldermen who fall upwards until there is now here left to go but down. I SAY THAT recalling my ma telling me when the head police capt., is a rapist, well, the girls must wear ten night shirts if they want to avoid being trashed by the on the pad presidium trash of the fallen wreath.

The night before a gal at a magazine, well I opened it then, tells me i was quite the string narrative voice, and place master of new York in 1985 in my anti New York-er piece Other pillars...and she much liked it, but she knew that the creeps of that rag that are out there as a kind of literary death squad, a necessary evil when one votes nae on the Boland amendment, and I wasn't even paying attention at his constant tap hacienda, but saw it none the less. She assured me though much younger than I, that in fact all I heard about them was indeed true, as she noticed too, a sudden surge towards the hatred of the mother who was on Tom Snyder who got a Confederacy of dunces published and given a Pulitzer pries, despite it not being about a True Grit rip off, as I

called it, about a cowboy named Augustus, which now, like so much, is something that must either be burned or apologized for. Also they would just call it Engfish anyway, and without retaliatory metric as I know all their tricks, as they'd call it all run on sentences and such, and she did look up the famous paragraph in *The Betrothed* about the coterie and such of middlebrows, and buying words like salted salami as he wrote, and she thought there is no better master than him, these days. My brother asked me if I was to get a dinner and a cake perhaps to celebrate our mom today and I begged off until I got the nice letter, as it was affecting me this mother's day more than ever. But then, the gods of the cathode tube, so dark elsewhere, came chiming in, bing Bong bang, with a mothers day festiva of The sophisticated Odd Couple with Oscar and Felix and Neal Simon and that they represent and at three, told my brother to go to the local trattoria and then to the Giant Eagle and buy us three spaghetti dinners and a small yellow cake, but alas, nothing writ on it, to commemorate the day and her, and all the other girls of Italy that the kind woman informs me inst a line out of *Coriolanus*, but the defrauder, All well that ends well, and as I seem to call like the hustler, Fats, than something would happen when Bonny Prince Chuck would dare be pinpointed with Constantine oils and say he was Augustus among us, I informed her, a simple mistake, on my part, I once had to memorize eleven of those dreadful plays, and did somehow think it was *Coriolanus*, and if not close enough, but I did, this week, want to drop that name more than any other.

IN two weeks, I have been lauded for my 'courage' and my willingness and ability to be a Gore Vidal smelling the sulfur amid the dying vestiges of happy talk Today shows and the absolute toxic spills of this imperial goon who should have never been anywhere but the wings odd that Miami debate in which enraged and engorged, out turgid in everywhere Roman HERO BUTTONHOLED HIM AND SAID, BACK OFF OR ELSE, AND HE WAS A ONE TIME ATTORNEY GENERAL AND HE COULD ALAS DO IT. AH, he never did, and here we are. It is better , even being considered for a major-ish magazine for a piece, better than being tarred as a national socialist over dislike for a TV show about hyjinx at the camp, which you'd think that always clattering and always on edge and always def come 1 Jews would have never let through, but to me CBS is strangely closer to Bhopal than any new Florence, papillae in a land where there were no



dark ages and thus no Renaissance, natch, but too, somehow there was an age of enlightenment showing dear, pretty, and alluring Kaz, and I can imagine what Ma would say knowing a pretty brunette would dare call Her beloved Dante Gabriel Rossetti as “medieval”, which even the new York times not too long ago said didn't exist in Italay, where alas making Rome great again, wasn't just something on baseball caps.

I have been again asked to send more, as was once did, and advised that “We enjoyed X...”, which again is unfulfilling, my brother thinks it is all a con anyway, and not to place any more of this stuff to them, but was finally sent a dismissal from the new Y\*rker, goodbye to all of that, and did get my fairy along the causeway published elsewhere, if again, id tale out the caption reading every time a liberal woman pays eight dollars for a carton of eggs, or a CBS chat show goon has to pony up a hunge to fill up his tank, and Italian grandmother gets her wings. As I cowardly did with the line of old Nick, never sure what is ever unacceptable or not in freedom's land, I took it out, and it's the one that is only sketchy in black and white anyway, so that's that.

The vainglorious massive sign reading Colbert to the aliens that watch the new Amsterdam sky for signs of intelligent life, good luck, alas has been going dark. The game shows at midnight, TV is back to its General Sarnoff days and we all play plinko, but Broadways open house is alas closed for the season. I think of the girls and their bar straps inherent in that vainglorious sign, and of the remark in that self same National Lampoon about the Ed Sullivan theater, as Colbert shows his aging and smarmy devotion to someday becoming Any Wednesday. Is the sign still on...?, burning away in the ruins of the emerald city night, like say the kleige lights at PNC park when the pirates aren't there, or are there but no one notices, and no one cares...? Be careful Biden-ites when absolute zero is met with. I wonder, as I found the revetments of an essay called Updyked, when again like with harry potter I was castigated for having an opinion , the group didn't have, or wouldn't have until Ru Paul now in Grey flannel suit between CBS misfires dropped his handkerchief and the drag queens hawkaaaay-ed like cartoon aviators. My copy of Gore Vidal's The Last Empire, as used some of my cartoon money, which I usually try to save in a savings account, at now about five hundred bucks, not a Caesar's ransomed, but then more than oarsmen cartoon pimps thought id ever get, as a twenty sent to me on pay pal by a ziner, is worth more , no fooling than being mimeographed in the debarred New Yorker, to

whom I sent Updycked, way back, and yet its was a piece about Statius, mute to all lesbians, and their Johnny Applepolsiher grandfathers, that got me offered a place in their Valhalla of middlebrow, should I chance to take that even then crumbling demographic of swells. The library at Alexandria indeed takes Visa.

But with only Jewish slapstick at hand, the toothy goon who smiled his way to getting us to a Bidden and his killing of the oldness goose and the up-selling of golden eggs, has him as Monteverdi, with Julia Cappelletti as pretty, funny, she can be no more than that amid the Whigs, Cecily on the balcony, on the west side of Verona, with Verizon as the overridden grouchy sex hating, church, that I called to Jesuitical admiration, the truest villain of that bit of plagiarism. I see as the castles are dark and the clowns return to their hovels on long island, the goons of comedy are dark, the signs taken down, I think, as hear that it wasn't until midnight dreary that the NY times CBS news poll



and sadly announced the death of Biden at 32 percent as Gore said , his dream of laying in state fulfilled, as the great American Suetonius had him fingered, and made true as anything in On Himself. I think as see that Bill and Hill and Jebby, unawares of the Roman farces having a moral undercurrent less Aesop and more Boethius, he will be dropped the moment they realize he was indeed an Italian, loved by Updike straggled, as a “Christian” writer, though a martyr to the faith long after Constantine, who began the farce of anointing one's head with olive oil, and being the princely Roman, the polls came out while as told Maggie Mae I watched a marathon of something called “Alone”, Dear Miss



Maggie, have you ever seen this show, I asked her, and it's strangest adherence to the Scars-dale diet....? Once Roman Bill, blue and alone is left by the wayside, and I think of all the bodies buried and not, to get him to where he is past perfect, and mere prolog. I think of Waco and Monica, and all the duct tape there isn't enough of now, and playing Medea late last week, in drag and Roman drag and thou hast conquered Tommy Smothers, as I recall all that falderal and mishegoss and all those other unroman words, he now seems to barnacle with. In sortieing Trump, if you have, you've become kamikazes, whereas old Julius said a Roaming centurions suicide is implied in the very cape. All's well that ends well, I guess. My mother warned me with an Italian girl who adored Marc Antony and his tragic aplomb, when you piss on someone's birthday cake, don't be shocked when they can shit in your macaroni later. Satire, alas, is what is shuttered on a Saturday night.





**“to be loved is to be changed”**

Arun Malani

“Please don’t kiss me,”  
said the frog,  
“I don’t like change.”





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“My name is Irina Tall Novikova. I am an artist, graphic artist, illustrator, writer. This in some way an experiment, I don’t glue my collages, but simply lay out the cut out elements.”

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“Hung Jury” by Alan Berger

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“WHAT... AND LEAVE SHOW BUSINESS...?” by Anthony Acri

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“Trap Jammer” by Hark Herald

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“Mackay, Yesterday” by Jack Norman

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