

Reflections from a hot tub

By Christopher Burbach

Hot water whirled around Tim's ankles, steam forced its way up his nostrils, Asti Spumanti trickled down his esophagus and Mick Jagger's voice wailed on his eardrums.

Serendipity

"Wait, I think I've got it!"
"Got what?," asked Esmerelda as she tiptoed back against the far wall of the dressing room.

"The answer!"
"Oh." She sighed and reapproached the tub, stopped at the edge and screamed, "EEEEEEK, what's that?"

"Where?"
"In the corner."
"Which corner?"
"That corner."

Tim saw nothing in the corner, but he heard a not-too-dainty splash in Esmerelda's direction, where her towel now lay vacant.

"Probably just as well," Tim muttered. "Whabbbt?" asked Esmerelda, who was playing motorboat in the steamy

drink.
"That was just swell."
"Oh. Tee hee. Bbbbbb." Aren't you going to ask me what I've got the answer to?"
"Tim, dear, what have you got the answer to?"

"The ultimate question."
"Oh. Bbbbbb." Aaaaauuughhhhhh! Tim was audibly distressed. "Doggone it, Esmerelda, I've got the ultimate answer to the ultimate question, and you're playing motorboat. Listen, I can hear it in every song, read it in every book, see it in every painting, I've even smelled it in a burrito. It's been revealed to me. The whole world, no, the entire universe revolves around four words sung by the immortal Mick Jagger."

Esmerelda burred something that didn't sound at all like, "which four words?"

Tim was undaunted. "Love, it's a bitch. Don't you see it? It's sort of like the Yin-Yang, a coexistence of complete opposites. An overprofusion of either Yin or Yang, love or bitch, sets the universe and all its inhabitants on their ears. What do you think, darling?"
"Bbbbbb."

Readers' input sought, heeded

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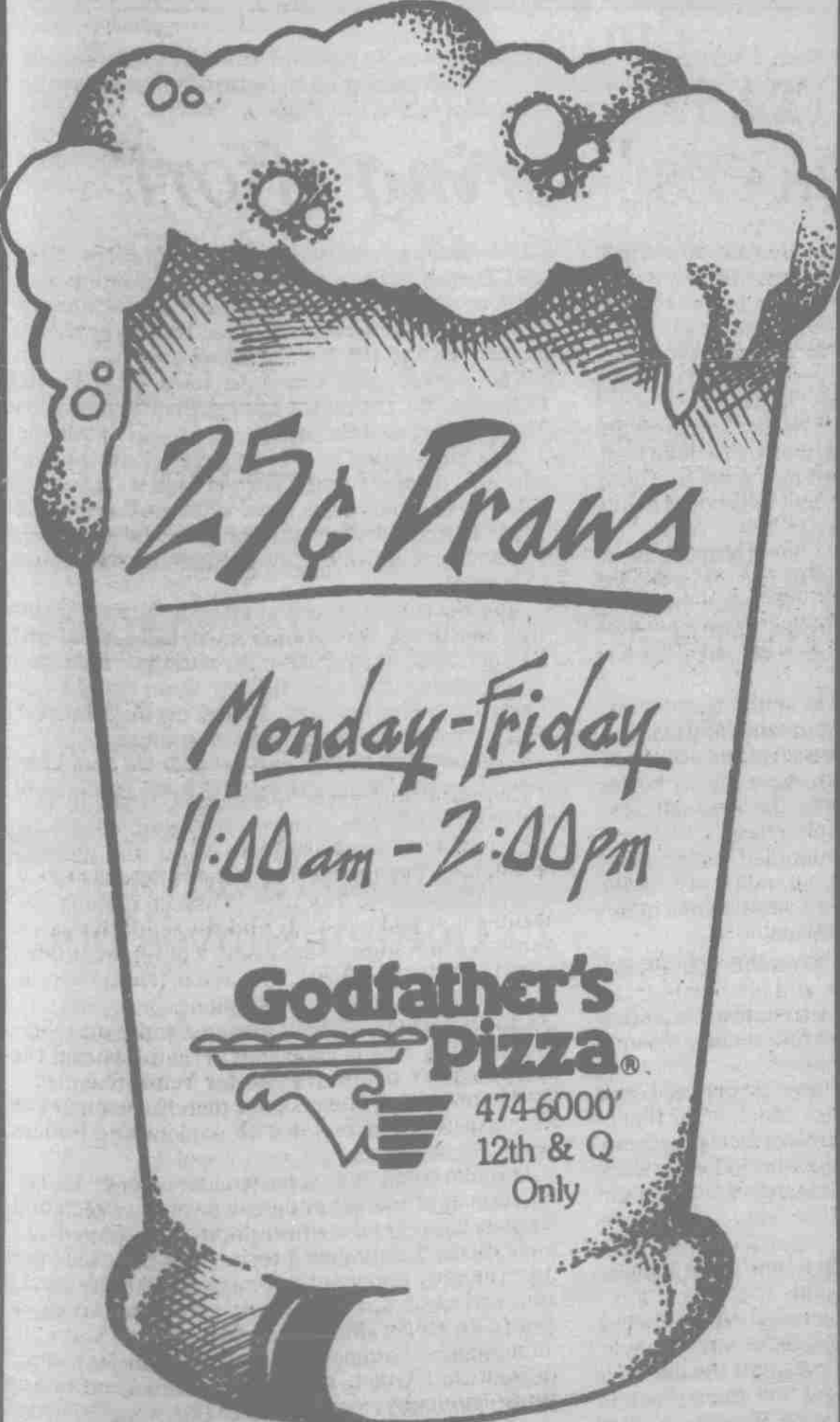
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