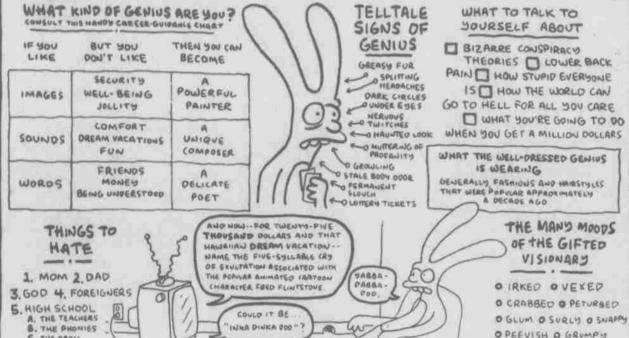
"Sight"

ANOTHER YEAR OF LIFE IN HELL

@1985 By MATT

GROENING

SO YOU WANT TO BE AN UNRECOGNIZED GENIUS



C. THE PROM 6. TV 7. RICH PEOPLE IDIOT, THOSE PRIZES 8. YOUR BOSS 9. YOUR FRIENDS BE SURE TO SWEER AT THE TV FOR AT LEAST FOURS HOURS A DAY 10. HUMBE

DON'T FORGET YOUR SECRET PROJECT!



work is hell, love is hell, hell is hell.

MAKE PLENTY OF NOTES 3 TAKE A NAP 4 MAKE A LIST 5. DRAW A DIRGRAM

& RUMINATE SIME MORE

7. DON'T SHOW YOUR WORK

NOTE TO AUTHORS FOR BEST RESULTS, THPE YOUR MANUSCRIPTS SINGLE-SPACED WITH NO MARGINS JINGS AN OLD THPENRITER RIBBOD, USE LOTS OF UNDERLINE'S AND EXCLANATION PRINTS AND DON'T FORRET THOSE RELY IMPORTANT IMPORTS AND CORFEE STAINS THAT SHOW THE CONSUMING INTENSITY OF YOUR WINES TORMENT

THINGS TO DO TODAY

GLARE AT SHOPPERS IN THE GROCERY STORE I WRITE A FROTHING LETTER TO THE EDITOR

MUMBLE MENACINGLY UNDER DNES BREATH AT THE LAUNDROMAT WALK OUT OF THE ART GALLERY OPENING IN A HUFF

MASTURBATE GLOOMILY

PRACTICE JOUR AUTOGRAPH PAY OF FAME Binky

Binky Binky

THE SECRET MOTTO OF THE SECRET GENIUS (TATTODED ON ASS) LIVE SLOW DIE IN LATE MIDDLE-AGE LEAVEAN ARTERIOS CLEROTIC

CORPSE

O SULLEN O SULKY

RAINY-DAY GENIUS

FUN PROJECT

DEFALE PHOTOGRAPHS OF MODELS AND CELEBRITIES IN

MAGAZINES

O SOUR O DEADLY

o you ever wonder why you like to pick scabs? It's not good for you and it hurts and it's messy, but you just keep doing it. Not waiting for the wound to heal, you make it bigger and uglier with every yank — increasing the chance each time that you'll catch some sort of horrible infection and die in ag-

Reading Matt Groening's "Life is Hell" cartoons is a lot like pulling scabs — a notparticularly-pleasant activity that nonetheless holds a strange, irresistible, unholy fasci-

nation.

"Work Is Hell" is Groening's second collection of "Life In Hell" cartoons. In the book's first cartoon, entitled "Life In Hell: An Introduction," Groening tells us that "Life In Hell" is "an amusing little trifle of a comic strip starring assorted crudely drawn rabbits." The rabbits are Binky, the book's star, Sheba, his girlfriend, and Bongo, Binky's one-eared illegitimate son. Also appearing regularly are Akbar and Jeff, two imperturbable, identical human annoyances in Charlie Brown shirts and fezzes.

In the first cartoon we also learn that the five major themes of "Life In Hell" are love, sex, work, death and laughs; that the "Life In Hell" philosophies are "your days are numbered," "It's later than you think," "we're all doomed" and "have a nice day;" and that the cartoonist's name rhymes with "complain-

On first reading "Life In Hell," one is tempted to believe that Groening is some sort of satanic illuminatus with cameras and microphones planted in your

bedroom, bathroom, car and place of business.

In truth, Groening's genius is an ability to see into conventions and anxieties of the race so ancient that the rest of us don't even realize they exist. When he drags these primal taboos out into the sunlight and waves them in our faces, our reaction is laughter. Loud, edgy, hysterical laughter that can go on for minutes at a

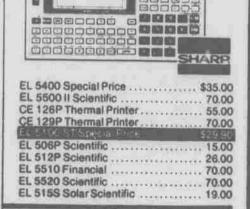
Don't get me wrong; there's nothing gross or disgusting about Groening's cartoons. It's easy to ignore the gross and the disgusting. Groening is much more insidious than that.

This book is not quite as effective as its predecessor, "Love Is Hell," simply because work is not as intrinsically painful an experience as love. Only about one-third of the 45 cartoons in the book actually deal with work. If you're leery about shelling out \$5.95 for 45 cartoons, that's understandable, but reading Groening is not like reading "Dennis The Menace.

So, if "Life In Hell" is so unpleasant, why is it so great? Maybe it's kind of the intellectual equivalent of playing high school football. Most of the kids out there on the field don't want to be there; they don't enjoy being trampled by 300-pound, 15-year-old endocrine freaks. But football is a way to prove you're a man, a way to show you have the fortitude to function in adult society. Maybe literate people need "Life In Hell" to show they don't need the cultural illusions, to prove they can face reality, to show they can take it.

By Chris McCubbin

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