

Mark  
ALBRACHT

# The (house) party is over

Another day or two and we would have had to sound the civil defense sirens, but, by whatever auspicious alignment of planets occurred Monday, our kitchen sink was safely



ourselves as the victors of a war.

It began relatively harmless, a party here, a shindig there. The garbage did begin to mount, but there was always room to socialize. It wasn't until we began to let the animals into our apartment that things began to spiral out of control.

Our first inductee was a gold piranha named Mr. Blonde, a morose little fish who's sorry to be alive. Our apartment then became a Noah's Ark for discarded pets, many of which we also discarded after trial periods, but some we kept. Our ecosystem, as we now call it, contains a wider array of animals than Marlin Perkins ever met in a single week — most notably a ferret we've named Cornelius after Roddy McDowall's monkey in "The Planet of the Apes."

The fish typically and the frogs generally don't make nuisances of themselves. The frogs do have a knack for mating loudly, despite the fact that they're all males. We have a "don't ask, don't tell" policy at our apartment, so my roommate and I let what goes on under closed aquarium lids be.

Cornelius is another matter entirely. He is a big reason why we let things slide in terms of maintaining domestic order. Actually, he's the

big reason why my roommate and I vigorously hurled domestic order down the wet banana of household disarray. That's a lot of blame to place on one ferret, you might say. But you've never met this particular weasel.

With our attention focused mainly on Cornelius, other problems seemed to sprout without our remembering how they even began. We were no longer able to tell which beer bottles went to which party, nor which unwashed dish went to which day-of-the-week's meal. What's worse, at that point we didn't even recognize the situation as a problem. We only needed to remember to wear shoes in the house and to burn as much incense as possible.

We had taken to calling ourselves biospherians and were tooling around with ways to recycle our waste in order to perpetuate the colony. However, this idea immensely added to our problem as we couldn't figure out how to reuse emptied-out Chef Boyardee cans, toe nail clippings and the like. Smaller peaks rise in the Himalayas than the one that was mounting in our kitchen wastebasket. Or 2: Our landlord would fix the problem himself, mainly by getting new tenants. I will refer to my landlord as "Spiro Agnew" to prevent him from discovering that I'm talking about him.

Spiro has an uncanny sixth sense which he uses to determine what's out of whack at the apartment complex. For example, he can tell a beer stain from a soda stain on pavement by its color and flow pattern. Facing such formidable skills such as this, we knew that we had to act quickly before any telltale odors wafted themselves into Spiro's highly perceptive nose.

We decided to become men and face our greatest fear, which on that



day was the kitchen. Dressed head to toe in surgical garb we marched to the frontlines, the whistling of "Colonel Bogey March" muffled under our masks. But that soon gave way to bouts of coughing and near-retching as we were ill-prepared for the enemies we faced — the nacho dip, the 10-day-old Tuna Helper. The horror ... the horror.

At this point we decided that one of two things would happen if we continued to let the mess grow. 1: The increasing vegetation would trap us inside the apartment and we'd eventually become like feral children, losing our ability to speak English and forgetting to wear

We looked about frantically for safe refuges. We had Lysol spray for an aerial assault, and for the sink, liquid detergent. "I love the smell of Palm Olive in the morning!" I shouted between gags. "It smells like victory," added my roommate as he clutched his throat.

Diving into the pile of dishes on the kitchen counter, we were pretty confident that it would become only a matter of time before our kitchen problem's bud would be nipped. It

was at that point when we met several Martian microbes who had been living in a bowl of macaroni and cheese. Arrogant little creatures, they had declared the bowl a sovereign nation and claimed that any attempts to regain control would be met with aggressive retaliation. This all seemed strangely historic, but of course, it may have been a hallucination. There's no telling what tricks rancorous kitchen vapors might play on the mind. We washed the microbes down the garbage disposal.

Several hours later — and several obliterations of other alien life forms perpetrated — the dishes were finished. We still have flashbacks occasionally, an un rinsed dish on the counter is enough to cause nightmares for weeks, but we have persevered. If we should ever let home sweet home once again dip below the standards of common decency, we may opt to forgo our lease, lob in a grenade and let Spiro Agnew sort things out.

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WILTGEN

# Days are restless, nights are dreamy

All I do anymore is work, go to class, eat and sleep.

Therefore, given my human need for leisure and recreation, my brain has done me the favor of making efficient use of my sleep time by allowing me to have rather interesting dreams. In fact, my dreams more than make up for my inability to relax during waking hours.



Some say "dreams can come true." Mine are usually beyond the realm of possibility. I have made people laugh for multiple-hour periods by telling them my dreams. Allow me to explain why with some examples:

AN "AVERAGE" DREAM

This morning I had an average but unrealistic dream. In it, I was a professional basketball player who had just been traded from the Detroit Pistons to the New Jersey Nets (is that a team?). I was quaking in fear because I had to board a plane to go to the next game.

Since I don't play basketball or follow professional sports, I attribute this dream to seeing the word "PISTONS" on a vanity plate shortly before going to bed. It also didn't help that I watched Robert Hagar reading the final transcripts of the ValuJet crash on NBC News the night before.

“ My dreams more than make up for my inability to relax during waking hours. ”

THE "WESLEY SNIPES SERIES"

After seeing the movie "Rising Sun" on video two years ago I had two strange dreams.

In one, I was in the elevator in Schramm Hall (where I lived then) with Wesley Snipes. I pressed "4" and he pressed "7." The elevator went up, but it didn't stop at the fourth floor. No biggie, I thought, it had done that before (in real life). But then it didn't stop at the seventh floor either. Instead, it accelerated ever faster, and Wesley Snipes screamed "Oh shit!" just before the elevator crashed into the roof.

In the other dream I went from my then-dorm room, Schramm 421, up to Schramm 521. However, this was not at NU but at the University of Wichita for some reason. It was supposedly Tom Brokaw's dorm room. The door was open. I went in and took a \$20 bill off the windowsill. As it turned out, it was actually Madonna's dorm room, and she and Wesley Snipes chased me down the stairs to the basement, through a weight room full of weightlifters (there was a 3-D map of San Francisco on the ceiling), and outside into a grassy field. I tried flapping my arms to fly away (a common element in most of my dreams), but the dorm

food must have weighted me down because I only got about five feet off the ground before Wesley Snipes grabbed my ankles and pulled me down.

"TERROR IN THE SKIES"

A few days after an airplane explosion on the runway of Milwaukee's international airport, I had a dream that I was watching it happen on CNN. However, during the dream I was somehow absorbed into the scene. I was standing in a flat, open field about 500 yards from the nearest runway. The airplane blew up, knocking its repairmen to the ground. Then a nearby wing of the airport blew up; then the rest of the airport blew up as well. Balls of fire welled up from the horizon as black smoke filled the sky. The next thing I knew, thousands of dark, silhouette-like corpses were raining upside-down from the sky. I caught one by the ankles as it fell, prompting me to scream so loud my parents heard it upstairs in real life.

In a similar dream, I was walking in a park near a small airport when a jumbo jet suddenly fell out of the sky, in a normal horizontal position, and slammed into the ground at terminal velocity, sending flames at least 5,000 feet into the air. Thankfully there were no corpses.

WEATHER DREAMS

Being a meteorology major, I have many dreams about weather, especially tornadoes. One dream stands out particularly strongly.

I dreamed I was in Duluth, Minn., with famous weatherman Willard Scott. (I've only spent 15 minutes of my real life in Minnesota.) He was covering a massive flood on the Mississippi River (which doesn't really go through Duluth). After he got done talking to Katie Couric or whoever, we heard rumbles of thunder nearby. Quickly we ran for his car, which was a white Chevrolet sedan of some sort. Only 10 feet from the passenger door, I dived for the ground as a lightning bolt hit me. I screamed an obscenity as I saw my right arm glowing. I thought I would lose my memory.

I also had a dream once that the lightning outside was so bad that the sky cracked into a million pieces and fell down. That was pretty cool.

I AM NOT INSANE

I suppose I should note, now that I have risked my reputation as a sane human being, that I have never used illegal drugs. I swear on my honor that these are all legitimate dreams that I had under normal sleeping conditions.

Unfortunately I don't have room to tell you all my other dreams, but I hope these woke you up. Uh ... hello? Can you hear me? Are you awake?

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