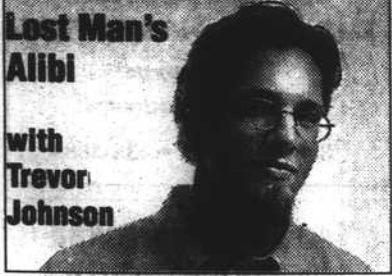


# Broad horizons

## Columnist questions career path

### Lost Man's Alibi

with  
Trevor  
Johnson



Today I woke up, and I wanted to be a lion. I wanted to stalk zebras through tall, burnt grasses with the sun's heat bearing down upon my

back, illuminating the glory of my golden fur.

To creep up on helpless, grazing giraffes and chase them down in a chaotic frenzy, a life-or-death situation.

I wanted to rip into my catch, ravenously, crazed, tearing into meat that meant my survival.

Blood dripping from my lion's beard, I would drag the prey back to my hidden den.

There, a lioness would wait only for me and the feast I brought. And

after the feast of satisfaction, I wanted pure raw sex of lion nature; then contented sleep would come.

Happy in my lion's den, everything that needed to be done was completed. Tomorrow, if food was needed, food would be found. When sex was needed, sex would come. Pure life, natural life, instinctual life. I wanted to be a lion.

Today when I woke up, I was not lion.

I thought of a lion, but a lion could not think of being me. A lion

“

*Today when I woke up, I was not lion.*

does not think of being a lion. A lion is a lion.

I have a Spanish test this week. I took Spanish because I wanted to learn another language:

Me gusta español, porque es una lenguaje especial, y yo no soy contento con inglés solamente. Yo necesito aprender más lenguajes.

Last week I turned in my final papers for Educational Psychology 251. Psychology of adolescents.

I wanted to know about adolescents, because I think I want to be a teacher.

But I am not exactly sure that I want to teach. Maybe I want to be something else.

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# Science fact

## Medical breakthroughs surprise in near future



It was 2009 when I awoke.

A doctor in a white lab coat hovered over me with one of those phony smiles plastered to his face. He was a short black man who looked back and forth between me and my chart.

“Welcome back to the land of the living, Mr. Hicks. How did it feel to be dead?”

“Deathlike,” I responded, raising one hand to rub my forehead. An IV was strapped to my arm. I felt weak, had trouble remembering things.

“Where am I?”

“St. Joseph's, Mr. Hicks.” The doctor took a penlight out of his pocket. “Don't worry. It's common to have some memory loss just after defrost. It will come back to you eventually.”

“Defrost?”

He smiled condescendingly. “Yes, Mr. Hicks, you had a terminal form of cancer, and instead of letting you die, you were cryogenically frozen until a solution could be found.”

I blinked the room into focus. It sure as hell didn't look like the future: standard hospital white. No one was wearing mylar outfits; the doctor still had on a digital watch. “How long ago was that?”

“About two years ago.”

“Two years?!”

The orderly pushed me gently back against the bed.

“I'm sorry it took so long, Mr. Hicks.”

“So long? I expected I'd have been frozen for a decade or two!”

“Well, Mr. Hicks, medical science is just hopping along. It has been since the late '90s.”

“Forgive me for the spotty memory, Doc, but what's been cured since then?”

“HIV, lung cancer, spiral paralysis and blindness, to name a few ... it's a brave new world, Mr. Hicks.”

“The blind see? The lame walk? So Stevie Wonder, Christopher Reeves?”

“Both are fully functional once again, I'm pleased to say.

“You were dying of inoperable brain cancer.”

“And you've found a cure for it?”

“This type, yes.”

“So,” I cringed, “when do I go into surgery?”

“You don't.”

“What do you mean I don't?”

The doctor smiled and shrugged. “You don't. We've developed a tiny little micromachine that goes inside you and burns away the cancer while repairing the flesh. It only works for

this type of cancer, but it's all you need. We call them ...”

“Nanomachines.”

“Why yes, that's right. How did you know?”

I chuckled softly. It hurt a little.

“They were the stuff of fiction back in the day, Doc.”

“Oh yes, I do keep forgetting you were something of a writer of this type of thing. You'll have to excuse me; I don't have much time for recreational reading.”

“What else has medicine done?”

The doctor frowned at me like I was a little child. “Done?”

I felt excited now; it was all coming back to me. “Sure, what else has modern medicine done?”

Can I look around the hospital?” I started to get up.

“Mr. Hicks! Get back in that bed this instant!” the doctor scolded.

“Oh, but Doc, I wanna look around and see what the future looks like!” I looked at the orderly.

“You'll sneak me outta this joint, won't you?”

The orderly, a thin Vietnamese girl, smiled down at me. “Sorry, Mr. Hicks, no jail-breaks planned for another two weeks.”

“Besides,” the doctor added, “your wife and son are on their way here.”

“Wife? Son?”

I rubbed my temples. My brain'd started to hurt. “I'm having trouble ...”

“Shhhhh ... just lie back, Mr. Hicks, and get some rest. The thaw process places heavy strain ...”

I was asleep before he finished the sentence.

A day later, my brother

Curt was pushing me around the

hospital a little too fast for my own good. I told him to do it.

An orderly ordered us to slow down, and we came up to a big glass window. Both Curt and I were transfixed as we watched.

A man lay on a table, and his left arm was being rebuilt. Apparently his arm had been crushed in an industrial accident, and reattachment was impossible, so they were growing him another one.

The stump of his left arm was resting against a tank of fluid that was being bombarded by millions of little lights. And inside the tank, a new arm was growing where his old one had once been.

“

*That's the one thing I've learned ...: If you're alive long enough, almost all science-fiction becomes simply ... science.*

“Did you ever think you'd see this, Cliff?” my younger brother asked me.

I smiled as Curt started to push me back toward my room. I was to be released tomorrow, and that was that. Being brought back to life only earned you a week in the hospital at most anymore.

“That's the one thing I've learned best of all over the last 10 years, Curt: “If you're alive long enough, almost all science-fiction becomes simply ...

science.”

He laughed at that.

“Next thing you know, Curt, you'll be telling me people live on the moon.”

He grinned, knowing my memory wasn't all back yet. “Oh, by the way — our brother-in-law, Tony, sends his regards and said he'll see you next time he's on the planet.”

You gotta love the future.



MATT HANEY/DN

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