

# THE COUNTRY GRIND



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ISSUE #4 HARVEST 2014  
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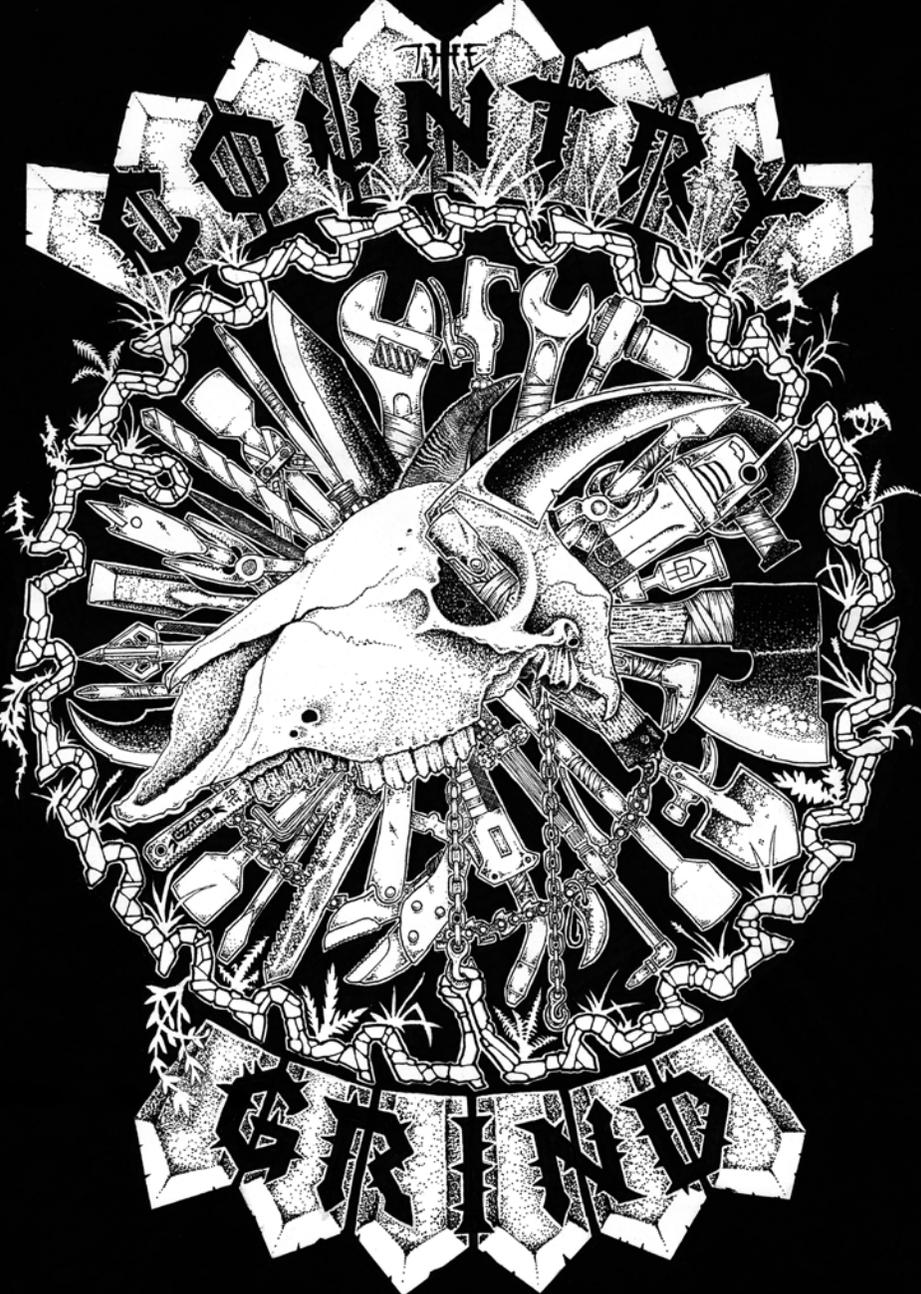
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### SUBMISSIONS

We are actively seeking submissions for future issues. We would love to read your articles, editorials, art, comics, poetry, fiction, book and music reviews, as long as it is relevant to rural punks and follows our guidelines (read them first on our website!!)



# INTRODUCTIONS

CAT

GRETCHEN

Hello everyone, I'm Cat, your new submissions editor. As I write this I am travelling to a new, temporary home, a place I know to be called Winnipeg. This will be my first real test at living in a city, I am from a place that has been given more than one name, Somba K'e - Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, Canada. There is a traitorous feeling in leaving the rural to exist in the noisy, suffocating pulse of a city, but for those who were also raised in the quiet murmuring of small town life, we know it as a rite of passage. A way to finally connect with more people who have shared ideas.

When I first heard of the idea behind this paper I was mad with excitement. I had spent my entire life as the unusual 'punk' kid, titled a hippy or hipster by those so unaware of North American stereotypes they would insist I would LOVE the most recently popular metalcore band on their stoner cousin's iTunes. Not that I am jaded about rural life... okay, let's face it, anyone born into it gets jaded about rural life- I was even one of the few who embraced it. To be the odd one out is isolating, especially when applied to the population density of small towns- and one can only suggested to listen to As I Lay Dying so many times. Exposure, I needed it.

Real, human, connections are of deep importance to me, and I am hoping that if you have your hands on this paper they are valuable to you, too. Part of what made me so excited about The Grind's conception is that it is born of those relationships. There was only ever so much I could get out of the internet when I was looking to understand what community meant outside of my day to day with fellow locals. Growing up in buttfuck nowhere leaves you pressed against the glass, staring outward at bigger movements and understandings. I hope The Grind is able to bridge that feeling which



tugged at me my whole life, pulling me which way and that, away from the beautiful north.

Would it not be wonderful if one day young, bright eyed punks, full of resentment and love for their family for raising them in stark isolation from 'society,' could at least find comfort tucked away next to a woodstove in the pages of this zine? In all of our words, love, comfort, experience, inexperience and frustration, we can use The Grind as a place to come together and feel connected.

I am beyond words at what this project is becoming. I am all too glad to now become even more involved as the submissions editor. It has been a joy reading your works and I can't imagine it will ever stop being such.

Thank you, each and every individual reading this.

Without you, none of this would be possible. Without you, this project would mean less.

Cat

Here we are. Harvest! Now is the time of year that the farmers and gardeners get to enjoy the fruits (and veggies) of their hard labour all spring and summer. It is when the hunters are cleaning their guns, adorning themselves in their finest realtree and going out to procure their meat for the winter. It's when fur bearers are coming into their prime and the trappers are cleaning/descending their legholds and conibears.

Harvest is usually pretty busy anyways, but this Autumn (and Summer for that matter) have been especially crazy for me. I'm been settling into my new job pulling wrenches at John Deere, working lots of overtime during seeding and harvest, which is to be expected, making a lot of mistakes and (hopefully) learning from them(yaaay! being an apprentice).

Pretty much all of my freetime outside of work has been spent trying to winterize my cabin. This is the first winter I'm going to

be spending in this cabin I built myself, and as of writing this (Mid-October) I'm still waiting on my Bakers Choice cookstove to arrive, and it's starting to get below freezing at night.

Between working at my job and working on my cabin I have had very little time and energy to put into The Grind. I have admittedly been really fucking bad at replying to peoples emails and letters. There are still some old tshirt orders that still havent been filled. People are wondering why they haven't received their copies of #3 (some still waiting on #2). It is all really, really overwhelming, and I want to seriously apologize for failing so hard on some of you. I promise I am trying my best to keep up with it all, but this magazine has become so big so fast, and I am struggling to keep up. Also, aside from having a fulltime job, living rurally keeps you fucking busy enough on it's own. I'm sure you can relate. So while The Grind is so fucking important to me, getting my cabin insulated before the harsh Manitoba winter takes precedent.

I feel like I have sound myself in a really awkward place, in that I am not a professional at this, and I want to always stay non-professional, but in the same hand yall are giving us your hard earned cash for a product, and we have to make sure we can deliver. I promise that as things settle down I will get better at replying to all of your concerns. I'm confident as we grow and mature we will figure out how to make shit run more smoothly.

In closing I would just like to point out that this is our first issue made without the help of our old submissions editor Celeste. Because of personal reasons Celeste had to bow out of the CG collective and the Grind has really lost some of its charm with her absence. We would all like to thank her for the countless hours she put in to create this paper.

~gretchen

# COLUMNS

## Home Herbalism



Juliette Abigail Carr

### Bark Harvest & Ethical Wildcrafting

Autumn is the season for bark harvest, one of the most fulfilling medicine making tasks. A walk through the woods on a crisp fall day followed by several hours in the sun as the days grow shorter and the world goes to sleep—it is definitely worth the effort, and a few trees will provide a lifetime's medicine.

Bark is highly potent, as it is constantly growing and changing based on the needs of the tree and the influence of its surroundings. Interacting with the wider world makes for strong constituents—as in “what doesn't kill you makes you stronger”—so we make medicine from plant compounds generated to ward off pests, disease, sun damage, etc. Trees are part of a larger system, so they're forced to interact and protect themselves, making strong compounds along the way. Bark contains the growing cells of the tree, as well as the cells required to transport water and sugar for photosynthesis—on a cellular level, bark is always interacting with the rest of the organism, the mycorrhizae in the soil, and changes in its surroundings, so it contains quite a lot of plant magic.

### Ethical Wildcrafting

Ethical wildcrafting is the practice of harvesting plants and trees conscientiously to avoid damaging the health of the population or the overall ecological system. It's especially important here because if you don't harvest bark properly, you'll kill the tree, which is like killing a chicken for the eggs. The basic principles are simple: don't kill something when taking part of it will do; don't take more than you need; and don't take more than the population can stand. This issue is close to my heart, as I've watched plant populations decline as people violate the sanctity of the natural world in the name of greed. Ignoring the longevity of other creatures is buying into the mythos of man as supreme ruler over the birds and fishes—which solidly places us on the path toward unwitting acceptance of large-scale corporate rape and pillage of the natural world, violating the basic principles of land stewardship and of simply being a decent person. Harvest intentionally and teach the people around you, so our natural world stays awesome.

**Don't Kill It** This is an issue with any wildcrafting or wild foods harvest, but it's blatantly obvious when you harvest trees. Trees are keystone species, meaning they form the center of the complex ecological web that surrounds them; from plants that only grow in soil with the pH maintained by that tree's leaves, to the lichen on its branches, to the birds that eat the bugs that eat the wood, to the foxes that eat the birds...you get the idea. Trees are important fellows among their woodland brethren, so it's easy to imagine the impact of removing one for a shitty reason, like by accident. The most common way this happens in wildcrafting is by **girdling**, or removing a section of bark around the trunk of the tree. Girdling kills the tree because the leaves and roots can't trade water and sugar, leaving the tree to starve to death. Girdling is one thing if you're carving a homestead out of the wilderness—it's a time-honored way of clearing forest—but it's something entirely different if you're just doing it because you don't know

any better. Girdling is specific to trees, but the overall principle applies to any plant: don't kill it if you can avoid it. For example, instead of taking the whole root of a perennial, cut off most of the root, then replant the root bud where the stem comes out so the plant will grow back. If you're harvesting leaves, cut the stem above a leaf node so it will easily regrow, instead of cutting it off at the ground. This is an easy habit to get in to.

**Take What You Need...** There's no reason for wildcrafted herbs to end up in your compost. It's better to go back for more than it is to take too much the first time.

**...But Not Too Much** When harvesting wild plants, take about 1/5 of the population, max. I've heard this explained as “1 each for the animals, birds, fish, plants, and people,” and “1 left for each of the four directions,” but those are maybe a little out-there for me. I just don't take more than 1/5. It's easy—if you're really not sure, count to 5 and take the 5<sup>th</sup> plant. It's especially important not to take too much when you're harvesting from a small population, a rare or threatened plant, or at a place that's really popular for wildcrafting—in these situations, you might decide to harvest far less to avoid having a negative impact. The United Plant Savers website has great resources to tell you if a plant is threatened.

### How to Harvest Bark

#### Tools:

Small handsaw

Pruners

A small, sharp knife, not serrated

Quilt or bed sheet, spread on the ground in a sunny spot

**Timing** Harvest bark when nights are cool and days are warm and crisp, as the leaves change and fall. You want the tree's energy to be focused on shutting things down for winter, so it's heavily present in the moving part of the bark. Bark harvest is best done in a group, since the yield is high and it's more medicine than you really need just for your family; together with friends, it takes on an air of cider-pressing or finishing a quilt, celebrating community and the work of your hands.

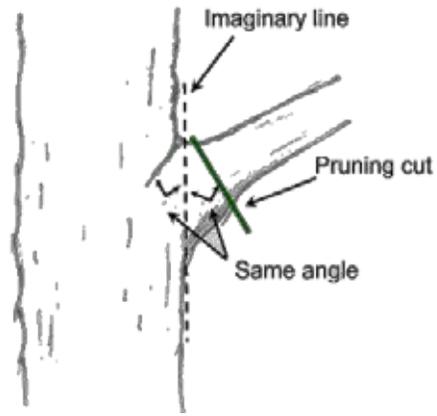
**Pick a Tree** Common species that make great medicine include willow, cherry, witch hazel, sassafras, birch, black haw, and many others. It's easiest to find the trees in the early fall, so you can positively identify them when they still have leaves, and come back when the time for harvest is nigh. Choose a smaller tree so you can reach the branches.

Next, taste the tree: cut off a little twig, the smaller the better, chew on it until you get a real good sense of the flavor, then spit. With a little experience, you'll be able to tell how strong the medicine will be from this tree. Even if you've never tasted this medicine before, know that strongly medicinal bark will effect your mouth: willow sucks up all the spit, sassafras makes your mouth feel wet, black birch tastes like root beer, cherry tastes like nasty almond air freshener (or cyanide...) so if you don't notice anything, even if you don't know what it should taste like, move on.

If you're not routinely tasting the plants you harvest, get in the habit. Medicinal content changes throughout the season and from year to year, based on where each tree is in its growing & reproductive cycle, and what its life has been like this year. Triumphant over adversity makes us all stronger, but sometimes it takes a while for our personal strength to recover from a major life-chang-

ing setback, so even if that particular tree isn't strong enough this year, come back next year and see what it says to you.

**Harvest** So now you're sure you've got the right tree, and it tastes great/terrible so you know it's got some magic in it. The next step is to harvest the bark. Choose a small branch, maybe the size of your arm or smaller. Find a place where the branch branches, then identify the collar, or the fatter part at the base of the branch (see drawing).



Use your saw to cut the branch just beyond the collar; if you cut into the collar itself, the tree won't heal right and can rot. Make your cut parallel with the collar, so water won't collect in the cut. Don't let the wood split or crack, cut it cleanly so you don't hurt the part of the branch you're leaving behind; if necessary, cut part of the way through from the bottom up, then finish by cutting from the top down. Remember that the priority is to not hurt the tree: don't take more than the tree can spare, don't take more than you can use, and don't make cuts that will hurt the tree long term.

**Process** Bring the branches to your blanket in the sun. Look them over carefully and wipe off any dirt, lichen, insects etc. Use the pruners to remove tiny twigs and pile them up—they're medicinal but you don't need to shave them. You can cut the branches into smaller pieces at this point to make them more manageable, 3-foot sections work well. When you're ready to shave bark, sit on the blanket with one end of a branch in your lap, and the other braced on the blanket in front of you. Use your knife to shave down the length of the branch, removing long strips of bark. You want to make sure you get the cambium, the inner bark that contains all the good stuff, but not the wood. Cambium can be white, green, yellow, even pink, and is generally smooth, moist, and clearly alive—it's the part that splits into the cells responsible for all that transport and growth stuff. If you're shaving off wood, make your cuts shallower; if you're leaving the cambium on the wood, go back and shave it again. If you're struggling to shave the bark, try switching knives—sometimes a different size or shape blade does the trick. When you're done, the branch should be all wood, no bark visible. The bark will have fallen on your nice clean quilt, so it's easy to gather.

### Making Medicine

To make bark medicine, you can tincture it fresh or dry it for later use.

**Dried** Spread the bark in a single layer on a drying rack in a cool, dark place, and stir regularly until dry, a few days. Once it's dry, store in jars, bags, or containers, in a dark place. Dried bark is useful for tea, poultices, baths, salves, or to make syrups or tinctures later.

You can build a drying rack in a few hours by screwing 1x2's into rectangles, attaching legs, then stapling lace or muslin over the frames. Alternatively, pin the corners of large pieces of lace to the ceiling, then place the herbs you want to dry on top.

**Tinctures** Bark tinctures best at a lower ratio, like 1:3 or 1:4 for a fresh tincture or 1:4 or 1:5 for a dried tincture, because it is so fibrous and dense—it needs more liquid to

extract all the medicine. Most barks prefer lower alcohol content, too, so use 50%-60% alcohol for a fresh tincture or 40%-50% for a dried tincture. If you have no idea what I'm talking about, please look back at the article about making tinctures in Country Grind #1 or read about it on my blog.

I hope you decide to give this a try—it's really satisfying, especially in January when you clear up that cough with your own cherry bark, or fix a brutal headache with willow you processed yourself. I love hearing your successes & failures with medicine making, so let me know how it goes!

*Juliette Abigail Carr is a clinical herbalist in South Newfane, Vermont and the proprietor of Old Ways Herbal. She teaches about family herbalism and homesteading at her family's farm and locations around the state. Read more and contact her at oldwaysherbal.com/blog or on facebook.*



I've been busy, but I can't help but notice the chill creeping into the mornings. It reminds me of last winter, of the little lives I worried about in the barn and in the house. Of the price of fuel. I've got a winter's worth of wood from doing tree-work and bucking logs. But the farm is a rental, with two defunct coal chimneys and no wood stove. We ran out of propane last January, out of money, as the nights dropped below -10. Our old farmhouse leaked every thought of warmth. Jessie and the kids went to stay with her mom for a while. I thawed water to shave. I shivered and did not sleep. I marveled at how we had gotten so desperate.

Haybale Mike wrote on odd jobs in the last issue, and on the back page there was a personal ad asking what people do for money in the country. There's been a spate of articles in the homesteading mags recently about “The Key to Successful Homesteading,” or “The One Necessary Country Skill,” and they invariably boil down to simply possessing the drive to get the work done. Survival is a lot of effort. We strive each year to make sure there is enough hay, enough corn. But what about the extreme circumstance? What do you do when the world intrudes on your rural routine? What the hell am I talking about?

I'm talking about the bad times.

I'm talking about when your family is in danger, of starvation, of freezing, of bankruptcy, of what the fuck ever, when you need it, money. This theme recurs through history, back to when “homesteading” was called “living,” when a bad crop or a broken leg was an existential threat. A few bad harvests will send a proud man into servitude, a peaceful man to war, a provincial man to the capital. We do what we have to. It goes beyond the “odd job.” I like to think of it as the “knight errant,” though I'm sure the in-laws think of it more as “deadbeat dad.” Sometimes you gotta go down into the streets and hustle. That's real.

I wanted to write about something else. Back in August I outlined an article getting into the minutiae of pest and disease resistance in food crops. But I've had a hell of a week.

I had to stand mutely by as my lady defended our small company against a malicious lawsuit. If you haven't done this, let me tell you, it's a pricey operation. Not something you can pull out of your market garden. Not something you can finance by selling off books and CDs. But it's gotta be done; the

alternative is worse.

We ran the family business from the farm. On slow computers out in the boonies we lived the dream, supporting ourselves financially and putting money back into the community, raising a family and watching the crops grow. And then, a year ago, the lawsuit, and scared wholesalers pulling away. It wasn't fast; it was like being swallowed by quicksand, a panicked and ever-widening search for work, pulling me farther from home. How do a couple of broke-ass country punks get it together to go toe-to-toe in a court of law? Hustlin', that's how. Hard. All the time. Driven to get the work done.

Jessie ran the company, ran the farm, ran the kids, in Kansas. I took on more work where I could find it, ending up 1800 miles from home. I slipped into familiar currents. If going to the country was a one-way street, a lot of us would end up fucked. Urban consumption supports lots of country folk, like organic farmers and independent dairies. For me, the city is a weird haven, a place to soak up sodium light and the smell of piss and dumpsters—a place to get cash—no resumes, no photocopies of identification documents, no last names.

People talk about country skills, here's a good one: make fucking money somehow. I've done a lot of things to get by, none of them glamorous. Mechanic, salesman, life-guard, forklift op, night stalker, a hundred species of hired gun. Restaurants are a good place to start if you're desperate; the pay isn't great, but you won't starve. Still, I'm loath to ever strap on an apron again. My first cooking gig was a rough bar & grill, bikers, brawlers, coke dealers; even the cops that came in there were looking to fight. I didn't know shit about cooking, but I told the manager that I had *eaten* food. That first night was tough. Give a well-done burger to a guy that ordered medium-rare in that bar, and glass starts exploding like when the Blues Brothers sing "Rawhide." I'm pretty sure Steve got me the job just because he likes to start trouble.

After that, I cooked in a rib joint attached to a hotel—owned by George Steinbrenner. I used to cook thousands of wings and hundreds of burgers daily for the Yankees' lunch during spring training. Nights are hot on the grill in Florida; tongs fly, plates ring, grease fires lick at stainless steel hoods, and cooks hustle up and down the line. Good hygiene is appreciated, but not exactly essential, as you're saturated in oil, onions, and chicken skin fifty hours a week. Cooking is an all-right gig, with skills that translate to home. If you really can't cook, maybe you can wait tables; I was a hugely unsuccessful waiter. Is food-service work degrading? Usually, yes. And in this equation, greater population density = more transactions, more tips, more resentment. Sometimes the darnedest things happen in the big city. On Christmas Eve, Steinbrenner himself came through the kitchen and gave every employee a crisp hundred-dollar bill. A few days later a room-service employee, a guy who wore the scorpion, went on a killing spree, murdering four in the hotel and a lady he failed to car-jack. I was in the deep-freeze, oblivious, with the fans whirring, when he ran through the kitchen spraying .38 and 9mm rounds, fired out the back door a bit, and then sprinted through the kitchen again. I came out to no one cooking, no one chopping, silence, and my buddy J lying on the tile in a pool of blood and snot. He'd worked there for fifteen years. He survived the hole through the back of his head, and was still working there when I last passed through.

Any day could be the last. Quads flip and tractors tip. But cities host the ultra-violence, more people means more fucked-up

people. Guns and grease. I'm not going out in a kitchen. Rangers, look long at your loved ones before you go down into Gomorrah; carry their memory close. Subotai got it right: "Civilization; ancient, and wicked."

Pushing out from home, I got lucky and found a job that wasn't in a city proper, but at a golf course on a nearby Army post. The opening was for a tractor operator, and I talked my way in. Maybe the superintendent wasn't fooled about my qualifications, but he saw something he liked. I learned a lot—from some great guys—they taught me about irrigation, diesel equipment, tree climbing and pruning, architecture, small engines, pH and nutrient uptake; valuable lessons. From the top of a cottonwood on a brutally cold February day you could see miles of the winding Missouri river, trafficking great bergs of ice, and the rolling countryside locked in deep blankets of snow, sometimes reflecting the wild pinks of the Midwest twilight. But the Fort is a strange conservative utopia. Ft. Leavenworth hosts the Army's elite schools for mid-career officer training; the place is crawling with field-grade officers, the "iron majors" that make up the snarling core of land-based American aggression. And they love to golf.

I acknowledge that these men and women work hard in their chosen profession, and everyone wants to enjoy their leisure activities with a minimum of distraction. But the culture of the warrior/bureaucrat teaches that all others are an inferior species. A maintenance crewman is just another servant. They can't help but sniff at you, even as you sweat and bleed, work long, and try to take pride in your effort. I put up with that shit, to work on my saw skills, to climb trees, to get seat-time in the skid loader. I endured my status as a "domestic" to get strong in knowledge and experience, but chiefly, for food, for propane, for clean water.

My first job was on a llama ranch when I was fourteen. It was eight miles up in the hills above my house, and I shoveled uncountable mountains of shit, pellets of digested grass. I realize now that all that shit-shoveling was good preparation for work as a sound guy at concerts, a pastime that began at fifteen. I was old enough to love death metal, old enough to hitch a ride to Oakland, too young to get in the door at any metal venue. Solution? Provide a service for bands that necessitates all-access credentials. I didn't know shit about doing sound, but I was willing to hustle. That stupid kid, the teenage me, looked at audio engineering as a key to the rock'n'roll world, where I would meet other musicians, check the scene, and build the sickest grindcore squad in the bay. Many tours and thousands of shows later, I have to laugh at it all, the mob fights, the arrests, the illegal border crossings. But I got paid for all that. And in desperate times, I turn again to nurse at the breast of audio.

When the going got tough, I was a textbook fugitive: "go to what you know." I eventually picked up additional work as an apprentice-arborist, and as a tech for a tv-broadcast company, but the first day I hit the city, I scored a shift working sound; cash in hand. I kept it up, pounding the paving stones, asking questions, nodding my head, making eye-contact, saying "yes" to every filthy opportunity. The music industry is full of assholes: promoters, managers, delusional stars, and degenerate road-crews, each rat in the experiment greedily clutching its little slice of cheddar. I burned out on working shows a long time ago, tired of shoveling the shit, sick of the clowns, tired of the image-maintenance in the green room, and the ego-maintenance on-stage. But back then, I was doing it for me, for bills, for rent. This time, these long months, I'm doing it to protect our way of life. To protect the sheep and the goats, the pig, the chickens, ducks, dogs, and cats. I look right through every shrill-mouthed little prick and tough-guy pretender, and see prairie grass, and oak trees,

and bare-foot boys running in the garden. I'm doing it for the privilege of turning rows and pulling weeds; for dark nights, for a little space around us. For my family.

I pray, friends, that everything in your world is at peace, and all needs are met. That no one gets sick and no one gets sued. But take a second and think about it. If you had to make a move, quick, what would you do? What's the contingency plan? Look around, your house, your dirt. When they try to take that from you, what's your mode of fight? Strictly defensive? Or can you take your offense to the street?

I'm not proud of a lot of the things I've done for money. But my motives are pure. I move in cities like a polar bear swims the oceans: I get what I need and get out. This will be over soon. I'll be together with my clan, with only crickets and coyotes between us and the horizon. Dancing in the mud, on the bed, around the fire. A survival dance. A victory dance.



This issue I want to talk about metal roofing. You may be lucky enough to have the options of slate, clay tile or thatch, but round here it's either metal or asphalt shingles, and shingles are garbage, made out of toxic crap and destined for the dump in ten years. Cancel that.

Depending on how you framed your roof, you either have plywood or strapping on top of your rafters. I recommend 2x4 strapping, with the insulation down on a flat ceiling as the easiest and best design. If you are going over plywood I recommend rows of vertical strapping 24" on centre and horizontal strapping 20" on centre to give lots of airflow. Some people will think that's overkill and that's their opinion not mine. 2x4s cost the same as 1x4s so might as well use them and get more airflow. Most metal roofing comes in 36" coverage which means the sheets are about 39" with a 3" overlap or so. If you're smart, and most people aren't, you can design your overhangs so that you don't need to cut the last sheet, by adjusting the total width to match the total width of your sheets. Most people decide what width their overhangs are and then have to cut the roofing to fit.

To get the length you need, you will need to measure from ridge to eave edge (assuming a gable roof, the eave is the bottom edge). You'll want to account for you fascia boards if you're using them and they aren't on already, but ideally they will be on there by now. 1" past the face of the fascia is standard. At the ridge, leave the metal 1"-2" back to allow for airflow, which is then covered with a piece of ridge cap. Take the width of the roof in feet and divide it by three to get the number of panels you will need for each side, obviously ordering one if you need a partial sheet. You'll also need screws and flashings for chimneys and pipes, which I don't have space to describe here. Drip edge flashing can be installed at the eaves and looks good, but isn't totally necessary. You'll also need enough roofing felt for your whole roof which acts as a secondary barrier and stops moisture condensing on the underside of the metal and dripping back into your house. A really good tip is to get the 44" wide rolls and install them vertically, alternating felt and then a sheet of roofing as you work your way across the roof. This way you have an easy way to see the correct overlap and avoid stepping on the felt and breaking it.

If you are worried about bugs, you can find foam that is in the shape of your roofing that goes underneath it at the eaves to close the gap. You will want to think about installing bug screen wherever your air is venting through from, often this is between the rafters where they exit the building.

There are a few ways to cut metal roofing. The easiest is probably with a metal cutting blade on a circular saw, which is fairly easy to keep in a straight line. Cut from the back of the sheets so you don't have to ride up and over the ridges. Cutting metal is hard on circular saws, so use an old one if possible. An angle grinder is also an option but harder to keep straight. Tin snips can cut roofing by hand, but you can only get about 6" or so before it's too difficult to keep cutting straight, and there is also a neat trick where you can score the metal lengthways with a utility knife, start the cut with a tin snips and then tear the roofing apart by hand. It's best to get the thinnest metal cutting discs you can, and to file the edges after you've made the cut to get rid of sharp burrs.

Your roof should be square but it probably isn't. It's worth taking some long tape measures and measuring the diagonals to see what's going on before you start. If you place your first sheet on the roof and clamp or hold it in place with the right overhang along the eave you will see how much of a difference there is along the gable side from top to bottom. If it's good enough, make sure you have your minimum overhang. If it looks too ugly, mark the two ends where you want them and cut it to size. The first piece is really important so take your time and get it right. If you don't have an equal overhang along the eave you'll end up either with the whole thing getting bigger or smaller as you put more sheets on, or with a step at every sheet to compensate which looks like crap. The sheets have slightly different edges, one has a little extra lip. This side goes underneath and the smaller side goes on top. If you have a strong prevailing wind it's best to start on the far side away from the wind and work towards it so that there is less chance of the wind getting under and peeling the sheets up. Once you have the first sheet down it should be fairly easy to keep going with more sheets until you reach a pipe, chimney, or the other end. On the other end install your last piece and mark where you want the overhang and cut it to width.

If you get the smaller 1/4" headed screws then you can come along later, years down the road, and replace them with the bigger 3/8" headed ones and give your roof a new lease of life. The holes get slightly bigger over the years so best to start with the smaller screws, which are easier to install anyway. Roofing manufacturers recommend a screw beside every ridge and on every strap but most people think this is overkill, and compromises the roof by putting more holes than necessary in it. I do a row every 60" or on every third strapping. You definitely want to screw through the flat part of the roofing panel and not through the ridges. If any old timers come along and try to tell you that send them packing, that process was for the old rounded corrugated roofing, and you'll ruin your sheets if you do that.

If you are re-purposing old roofing, make sure to use the bigger screws, and silicone if there's any chance that the screws aren't catching fully. The screws should be tight so the washer squashes down and creates a seal, but not too tight that the washer starts to get broken. Also unfortunately you probably shouldn't reuse roofing screws. It looks a lot better if you can install minimum amounts of screws until you are finished, and then run a string between the end ones so that you can install your screws in a nice straight line.

More metal for the punks!

Breathnach lives and works as a carpenter in Sinixt Territory, BC. Feel free to email building (questions to beyondthebale@gmail.com)



Do you like sex? I do! Did you ever get your rocks off under bridges or clad in train grease? Wicked. Live off the land now or in the bush? Nice. Does it get gross? YEP. Could you imagine it any other way? Nope. Does shit get real more often than not? Don't rub it in... Do we stop gettin' all steamed up and rowdy because we have shit to do, kids to feed, seeds to plant, frames to build, equipment to fix, traps to set, guns to clean, furs to stretch, wine to brew, livestock to feed, eggs to collect, books to read, gas to buy and tunes to play? FUCK NO! We are human. We are ambitious, intelligent, uniquely skilled and driven folk with beer bellies, face tattoos, dreads, bones hangin' off of us and are (obviously) hot as fuck. This column will offer you sexy stories packed to the brim with the reality of it all. No holds barred on gender or sexual orientation, because let's face it - we're all sexy as all hell just how we are and shouldn't ever have to hear otherwise. We are who we are; how we are, live how we live and love the fuck out of it. Our lives get complicated and our (faces?) get messy. These stories expose it all...and more if you're lucky!

We'll also get to dabble into that old school 'go ask alicia' style advice column from time to time. You can send your dainty-to-debatterous dilemmas to [thecrookedgoose@gmail.com](mailto:thecrookedgoose@gmail.com). You will get wicked advice from yours truly (Janatalia Trash) from the far far FAR northern bushes of Saskatchewan, Canada. I will share light hearted words of sexual play, get down to brass tacks with whatever issues you may be facing in your love life and with a touch of the ol' blarney and whole lotta hilarity I'll getcha the dirty deets of it all. Let's gitter done.

#### OL' North Cuntry Beaver Fever:

As the sun went down I missed that man more and more. He was off to the North again for the week, trapping beaver. All the while my lonesome beaver remained restrained to our beautifully frozen 12x14 cabin in the northern backwoods of Alberta. 'Stay home and trap this!' I yelled as he drove off. He couldn't hear me but I laughed anyhow. Most likely the wackness taking hold and speaking for me, but it was fricken' funny either way. Ah, the wackness. Bordered by nature and bound by lack of funds. When winter hits the name of the game is to settle in and stay sane (well, to try at least). Count the days 'till the isolation gets the better of ya. I, clearly, rarely win at this game. To look us up on GPS maps would be a joke. We are a tiny dot that makes you question whether or not our place is even a thing, or if it's just a speck of dirt caked onto the computer screen. A stone's throw from the Territories, nestled between forests and far from town is our little paradise. However, middle of nowhere life brings out the secrets. Some are hilarious, some are dark, most are gross, and all of it gets dirrrrrty reullll fast. I sat in front of my plate of beefaroni and pickled beets and caught myself accidentally offering a helping to an empty place setting. If I squinted my eyes just right, I could see him sitting with me. His wiry beard and overgrown hair create the perfect canvas for a manscaping project of sorts. I could see his faded stick and poke tattoos peeking out from behind his tattered-carheart style buckskin overalls that he'd spent most of last winter tracing out from the patterns in our old Harrowsmith magazines. This

man I love, that I can practically see before me, is strong in a thousand ways. He is rank with sweat, reeks of shine and oozes sex. Oh my fuck, and the sex!!! How the cabin walls would shake. I would fear losing my life to them crashing in on us as we passionately thrust and shook. We'd lose ourselves in the wild mess of ooohs and aaaahs and forget to tend the fire. It would burn far too hot. We'd pour sweat onto our musty blankets of converted army mummy sacks and hudson bay blankets. The euphoria of the heat encouraged us to holler vulgarities at each other, to bite and squeeze and ...

We would rock that fucking cabin till the fire somehow knew we were near climax. Before we knew it, it had died out. We'd shriek as we came to and felt the cold snap of -55 winds attacking us through poorly insulated walls. I had warned him to use better insulation and skip the case of beer. But of course he had to have both. I snapped out of my daydream as the water hit my skin. The rag from my evening sponge felt so rough against my tender skin. Like that man's touch. I could just about feel him now. With every wet stroke of the cloth I trembled. I imagined his hand. Washing, teasing, grabbing. Up and down, back and forth. I become fully intoxicated in my lust for sex, for touch. I lean back, I reach further and further down my body.... I lean back even further now and I..... trip over a half repaired corn husk broom. GOD DAMMIT! The fucker was supposed to fix this for me before he left. Dickhole.



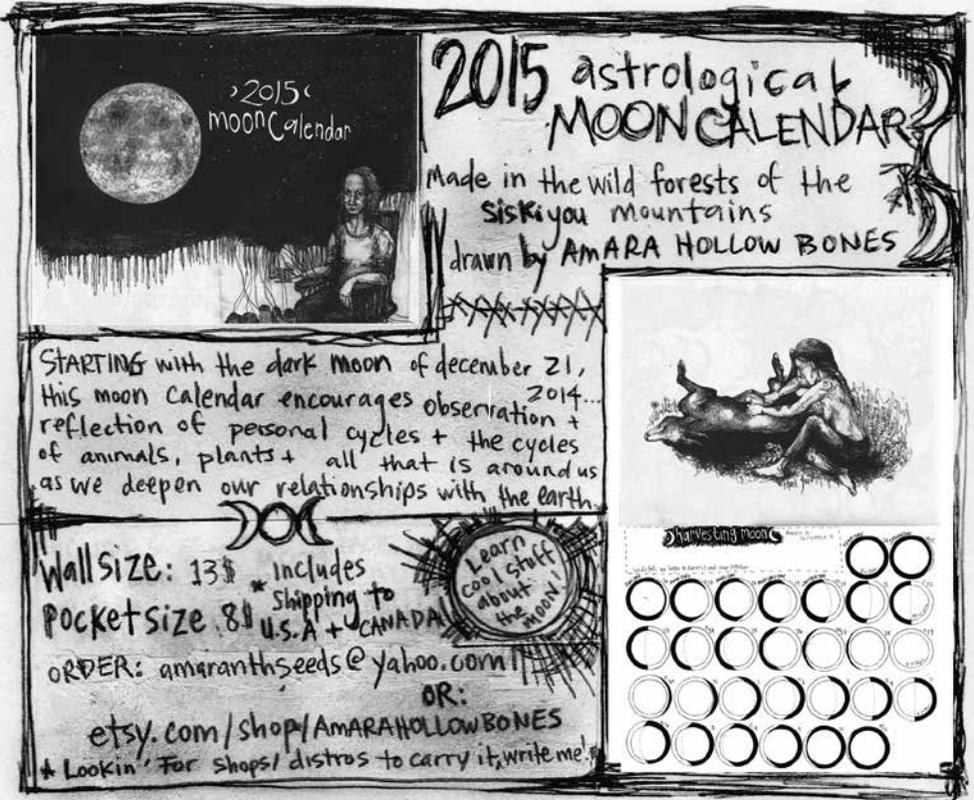
*"Still born we lie cold and dead in our world, a womb made of concrete and steel. Lifeless mankind has become obsolete, prey of tech.no.logic.kill."*

#### Tech-No-Logic-Kill

It's the title of my favorite Nausea song. Its a song about how technology numbs our lives, and we forget how to live in reality. Nausea, if you're not familiar with their work, wrote a lot of songs along those lines, but I've always loved the phrase Tech-No-Logic-Kill. I've loved it so much I got it tattooed across my collarbone 3 or 4 years ago (Thanks Sylvie!). It's one of my favorite tattoos, but ever since I got it, it has made me feel guilty about every piece of technology I own (and when I say technology in the context of this article, I'm mostly talking about computers, cellphones and other electronics. But Tech-No-Logic-Kill is so much more than that. It is the trucks we drive, and the oil we need to drive them. It is the cities that most of us have rejected. It is the mines that destroy our mountains and pollute our rivers. It is industrial agriculture and genetically modified crops, it is my own job at John fucking Deere!)

I was always extremely against cellphones (and still am in a lot of ways), until me and my partner at the time moved to Ochre River. There was no option to get a landline in our cabin deep in the bush. After not having any phone for a while, we buckled and bought a cheap cellphone. It made total sense to do that, we were both desperately looking for jobs, had no way to keep in touch with our friends, and lived several miles away from our nearest neighbors. But despite the legitimate need for one, I was always down on myself for having it.

That was three years ago, now I have a smartphone and a laptop. I check my email every day, text with my friends and coworkers all the time, and my phone is usually the last



thing I look at before falling asleep, and the first thing I look at in the morning (it's my alarm clock). Oh gawd, when I think about it like that I throw up in my mouth a little bit.

I think about when I lived outside of Victoria, BC for a little while. I swore off email and My Space, and I didn't have any phone at all, and I lived an hour and a half long bike ride outside of Vic. I pulled wrenches at a bike shop 3 days a week, and the only way people could get a hold of me was by coming by the bike shop when I was working. Looking back, I really liked that.

I really don't like spending all (or any) of my freetime on computers. I feel like it is a waste of my life. It is super tempting when you are right there, with a laptop connected internet, and nothing else that needs to get done. I've defiantly been guilty of my fair share of getting lost on YouTube, but ultimately that's not the way I want to spend my life. I have another tattoo, this one on the top of my hand so I can always see it: Do Epic Shit. What's more epic, downloading and binge watching the latest season of Game Of Thrones, or going outside and having an adventure, or even just reading a good book that teaches you something (all these Foxfire books don't read themselves).

I think at this point that the biggest reason that I haven't sworn off of using email and computers is The Grind. This magazine requires an insane amount of hours of staring at a computer screen, destroying my eyes. In all honesty, if I had realized how much time and energy this zine would require, and that 90% of the workload required being on a computer (with the internet, no less.) there is no way I would of started it.

When I started the Grind I was in living away from home in a proper house (you know, with separate rooms, electricity, indoor plumbing, drywall, and the like). It was easy to come home from school and work on the computer. I had electricity, the internet, and it was -40° outside.

Now I'm back to living the way I feel comfortable. In the bush, off grid, no plumbing, cooking and heating with wood. You know, the simple life. But still, here I am sitting in my cabin after a hard day of work, house lit up by candlelight, listening to Rudimentary Peni on my Bluetooth speaker with my computer on my lap, writing about how I hate technology. I guess I'm just a hypocrite like everyone else.

But as much as I hate it, I guess I'm stuck with it now. Quitting working on The Grind isn't even an option at this point. There is too much at stake. I'm too excited to see where it goes. And let's be honest, I live alone in the woods. My nearest rural punk friends live either 100 kilometers south of me or 200 kilometers west in Saskatchewan. Making

this magazine is the only way I get to keep in touch and contribute to the greater punk community.

I think it is also important to realize that folks my age (I'm 28) were the first generation to really grow up with the internet. I was nine years old in '95, when the internet really started coming to peoples homes and schools. I grew up with a generation of kids who were never taught any of the traditional "obsolete" ways of doing things. Only the newer, "more efficient" way of doing things on the computer. Case in point, I know there are ways that I could do the layout for The Grind without having to strain my eyes on the computer, but I really don't have a clue what those ways are. And to be completely honest, I immediately assume that it would be too hard.

While part of me hates myself for admitting that, I also know that in order to successfully communicate with the world I need to play their game. I need to not be so hard on myself for having a cellphone in this day and age, as long as I'm not an obnoxious douchebag with it. And I shouldn't feel bad about watching a movie on my laptop to wind down after a hard day, as long as its not the only thing I do every day after work.

Technology does make us stupider, for sure. But there can be smart, or a least reasonable, ways to use it. Being that this technological trend is likely only go get worse before it gets better, it seems to me we are better off learning how we can live smarter with all this technology around us, using it in some ways, rejecting it in others. Rather than just rejecting the whole lot and completely alienating ourselves from the world that is growing around us, with or without our participation.

I don't have any words of wisdom or anything. I'm no fucking philosopher, but I guess the moral I'm trying to get across is technology is not our friend. It is an evil cast upon our world, constantly trying to distract us from reality, but we shouldn't beat ourselves up for using it, as long as we use it consciously and smartly. (is smartly even a word?)

In closing here are a few more lyrics to chew on from another fine diddy by Nausea, Cybergod.

*"Praise the cybergod...liar, usurper. Praise the cybergod...for a false reality. Praise the cybergod...for a world of misery."*



# HOW TO MAKE WINTER HARDER

By Reece Steinberg

Last winter I had some, um, “learning opportunities” that I thought I might share so that other people can avoid them. Winter was manageable, but could have been more comfortable than it was. Some things did work out right too, so I included those at the end.

## 1. Use a Leaky Woodstove

We dumpstered a woodstove a few years back and had used it in previous autumns and early winter with no problems. It had a hairline crack in the seam that I patched with woodstove cement. Despite repeated patch jobs and its earlier decent performance, the wood stove was barely functional by mid-winter. The tiny crack turned into the entire side of the stove almost falling off, with gaps on three edges big enough to stick four fingers into. It was a huge fire hazard, with ash and embers falling out the side. Everything inside the cabin was sooty and it definitely wasn't as warm as it could have been. This was compounded by ...

## 2. Don't get enough (quality) wood for the stove

I thought I got enough wood. I asked around, and got more than anyone said I would need (3 cords), but it was the coldest and most sustained winter in decades. Two of the three cords were not properly seasoned and, as I said above, the woodstove was not working as well as it should have. So in frigid weather in February and March, it was necessary to cut and burn some trees from our land. It was OK, and due to the sap not running yet, they were actually drier than some of the firewood. Still, it was not ideal to not know when winter was going to end, while

your wood is running out. To compound the problem, there was an island-wide wood shortage where I live (this was why I settled for wood that wasn't that well seasoned) – lots of people were running out. It seems like the best solution people have is to keep several years of wood at a time, so no matter how bad the winter, and no matter how short of wood the area is, you always have a reserve, and you know it's been seasoned.

## 3. Let your water freeze

I haul water, so I didn't have to think about pipes bursting or any of the other troubles that the cold weather was bringing. Unfortunately that meant I was caught off-guard when I woke up one morning and couldn't get water out of my blue plastic jug (the kind with a tap that people bring camping). The tap was frozen shut and the lid was frozen on. It took a while for the litres of ice to melt, especially since the plastic container couldn't go too close to the stove. After that I filled a kettle at night, so that there was some water that could be unfrozen quickly on the stove. Hot cocoa with honey is definitely the best when it's cold and you're trying to get that morning fire going.

## 4. Let the Propane Freeze

I have a tiny (RV-size) propane cook stove – the woodstove wasn't that great for cooking on, so I depend on the propane stove. Once the propane ran out, I went to take the canister in to be filled and realized that despite putting it on a pallet under a porch, it was in a low area, so mud and water had pooled around it and frozen. I borrowed a canister from friends, which also promptly froze to the ground, but at least I filled it first. It took two months for my canister to

thaw enough to pull out. So, in the future I would plan for better places to put the canister, but also keep food in the house that doesn't require much/any cooking – when I ran out of fuel and couldn't get more, I had a hungry couple of days because there wasn't much ready to eat or quick-cooking food in the house. Things like couscous, pasta, rolled oats, and (pre-soaked) red lentils can cook quickly even over a bad wood stove or camping stove. Crackers and peanut butter are also good to have around. There are a lot of things that last well in a cupboard and cook quickly, obviously, it's just a matter of figuring out what you eat that would work and that you can keep around.

Here are some things that actually worked out well:

## 1. Find Out Who Has a Plow

If you're like me and you have a small front wheel drive car, knowing who has a truck with a hitch, a plow, or both can be really valuable. Usually I was able to dig the car out with a shovel (I parked near the end of a long drive way), but there were a couple of times when I needed help. Fortunately, I knew a couple of neighbours who could lend a hand, and even had the nice experience of strangers dropping by with a plow after they saw me shoveling.

## 2. Build for the worst weather

I live in an area with high winds (100km/h is normal in winter) and heavy blizzards. Last winter was particularly brutal – the normal temporary periodic thaws didn't happen, so snow built up and roofs of greenhouses and other outbuildings collapsed all over the place. Part of the roof of a friend's partially-finished (but occupied) home blew off.

Trees came down everywhere. I was really happy I built a shed roof, which is good at shedding snow, and also that I looked at building books to figure out what angle I needed to build my roof at so that it would shed snow well. It's a pretty simple bit of math to determine the necessary slope depending on the style of roof you are building.

## 3. Hang out in the community

Hanging out in the wider community has a bunch of benefits – if no one is at home, you don't have to heat the place, you get some of that beneficial human interaction that it's so easy to avoid in the winter, and maybe there is something cool to get involved with. This winter I did some work for my local watershed group. It was nice for me because I could walk or snowshoe to the office, and it was a warmish place with electricity – while I worked on stuff, I was also charging my phone and computer, and hanging out with the people who spent time there.

## 4. Projects Galore

So far, I think I have made winter sound shitty, but actually it was awesome (at least until March or so). I had more spare time than I was used to, so I got to work on art projects and apply for shows, art residencies and grants. I had a part of the project that I could do without electricity during the day – art, and something I could work on at night – application writing on the computer with my limited battery power. This paid off because I got to be involved in art residencies and shows later in the year, upped my community involvement, and made me a little money as well.

# WHOLE ROCK THIS CRADLE? WHOLE SING THIS SONG?

## HOW A PUNK GUITARIST FELL IN LOVE WITH OLD-TIME MOUNTAIN MUSIC

By Daniel

“I'm not sure that this music is for you,” the seventeen-year-old stated flatly, staring at my Vitamin X t-shirt and tattered blue-jeans.

Through some unusual twist of fate, I was Tory's ride to a place that she very much wanted to go. We had never met before that October evening, but I smiled and held open the passenger door of my car. We glanced at each other over. Tory was short enough to be mistaken for a pre-teen. I was not the person that she expected to be driving her to a dulcimer jam.

“It's alright,” I assured her. “I'm into bluegrass.”

“This isn't bluegrass,” she reminded me. “It's Old-Timey music.”

Several months prior to this meeting, my girlfriend moved across the Potomac River to the mountains of Jefferson County, West Virginia. It was something of a rebirth for our relationship, which was languishing in the together-five-years-not-sure-what-comes-next phase. We enjoyed taking random, unplanned drives through the hills and forests. We read novels on cliff over-looks, followed train tracks, and dipped our feet in flowing water. In only a few short weeks, West Virginia was feeling very much like a place that I wanted to call home.

She and Tory met in an art class at a local university, and they bonded over late-night hours in the studio. Tory held a deep pride in her mountain upbringing, and she took every opportunity to share Appalachian traditions – especially Old-Time music. Like many, I was unaware of Old-Time and sim-

ply lumped it into the bluegrass category. Old-Time enthusiasts generally hate that. Although these styles of music share similar instruments, the melodies and lyrics of Old-Time often originated hundreds of years before Bluegrass. At least, this is the position that Old-Timers hold. From this perspective, Bluegrass is a twentieth century phenomenon, arising out of an urbanizing southern population that mixed country tunes with Jazz, Blues, and Gospel. Old-Time songs, on the other hand, are often the direct descendents of ballads and melodies that immigrated from England, Scotland, and Ireland during the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

That said, many Old-Time fans enjoy Bluegrass. They simply insist on differentiating the two – as I would often be reminded.

At the time that I was learning all this through my girlfriend, I was also the guitarist for a Maryland punk band that absurdly dubbed its genre as “Doom Crust.” Neither of our two songs was shorter than twenty-five minutes long. We only played about a dozen shows in our short existence. I only mention this history to emphasize the fact that Old-Time was far from my normal musical fare, as Tory originally guessed. As she climbed into my cluttered car, I thumbed through loose CDs in the vain search for something with a banjo. Since the closest thing that I could find was Metallica's *Master of Puppets*, I gave up and decided on conversation over music.

Despite her initial caution, Tory was obviously brimming with excitement. We were scheduled to meet a group of four seasoned musicians – none of which she had ever met. Squinting in the dimming light, Tory read directions from a folded scrap of paper. The car wound through a dark forest, which was dappled with fading red and yellow leaves.

Our destination, a well-kept cabin, came into view after the car crested a small hill.

The people in the house were warm and hospitable. Where I grew up, less than an hour away, neighbors rarely even communicated – let alone complete strangers. By the time that we made it to the living room to drop off Tory's mandolin, we had already been offered stew, pie, tea, coffee, and beer. Tory, however, would not be delayed. She immediately began tuning her instrument, and the other musicians quickly returned to their seats.

The first thing that I noticed about the players was the gray hair. In my various punk shows over the years, it was uncommon to meet anyone older than thirty. They existed, but they were far from the norm. Around the dormant fireplace in the cabin, the majority of the musicians aged over sixty-five. The one exception was the owner of the cabin, a female guitar player with hair pulled back into one long braid. She was probably somewhere around forty. Then there was us.

The music began almost immediately. Someone would name a song or key, and the group would jump right in. An elderly woman with short hair used two small mallets to play a hammer dulcimer. A man in a white button-up shirt strummed his banjo. Occasionally, the cabin's owner would sing. “Hangman!” she piped, “Slack up that rope. Won't you slack it for a while? Look down yonder, don't you see Pa' comin'? He has walked for many a mile.”

Since this was my first exposure to this music, I cannot name the tunes that were played. I can only say that I sat and listened for more than two hours without moving. As I watched each player grinning behind his or her instrument, my mind drifted to my own

experiences in a band. Although I enjoyed playing the music, there was a lot about being in a “doom crust” band that seemed so disingenuous – at least the way we did it. We all claimed to be dedicated anti-capitalists, but our band felt captive to commodities: t-shirts, vinyl 7-inches, buttons, and patches. Not that there's necessarily anything wrong with these items, but it always felt like we measured our success by the same standards as the society that we were rebelling against. How many visitors did we have on our website? How many Facebook likes? How many kids were wearing our gear? It all felt so hypocritical to me, but it also seemed inevitable. These priorities also led to compromises that made me feel dirty. Our singer would trash-talk a band throughout their entire set and then schmooze them over with compliments as soon as they turned off their amplifiers. Maybe they could set us up a show? Maybe they could connect us with some indie label? It all seemed to be about getting ahead.

But here were a group of incredibly talented musicians – Tory included – who played for no other reason than to make music and keep alive the traditions that had been passed down to them. They would never sell a t-shirt or press a seven-inch. They might not ever play together after that one night, though that would be hard to believe. As much as I enjoyed the songs, I really treasured the purity of it all. They weren't surrounded by clapping fans. They weren't travelling the country. They weren't selling albums or stickers. But they were so happy to be right where they were.

The evening passed quickly, and we returned to the mountain roads. I never returned to the cabin, but I can still hear traces of the music in my mind. That said, I still blasted Skitsystem in my car stereo on the way home.

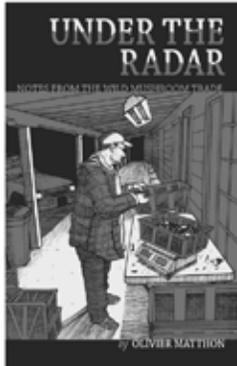
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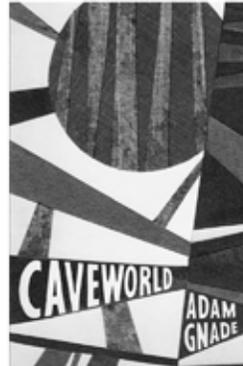
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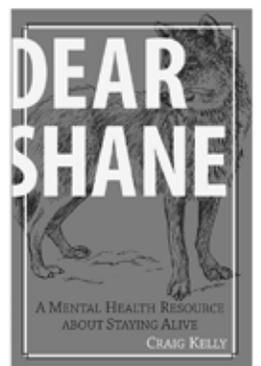
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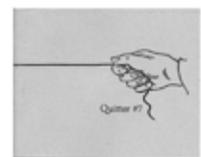
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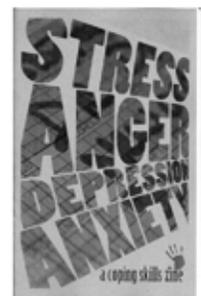
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# THE BIRTH STORY OF MILES ROYAL MCKERRACHER

By Ragtime Rach

I have had many adventures in my short life of 30 years, and parenting has definitely been one of them. Its crazy hard, fun, frustrating, hilarious and confusing all at the same time, and it's always full of messes, poop and otherwise. Which is exactly what kids do to your life at first, they make it unpredictable and haphazard - it takes a lot of guts to trust it will all work out. Which is exactly how my son, Miles, came to be earthside.

My pregnancies have gone relatively smooth except for the not-so-smooth mood swings, and in the last months I tend to get claustrophobic and irritated, this pregnancy being no exception. I was having tons of intuitive thoughts that I needed to be more alone for this birth; more in my own head and less reliant on my husband and doula. Little did I know, that mental preparation was exactly what I needed to get through the upcoming labor. Physically, I was waddling around running after two kids and trying desperately to get my furs in order, using a fleshing beam while 9 months pregnant is no easy task. I had also pulled my groin muscle trying to \*gently\* boot a chicken back in the fence, some friend made a passing joke about karma and animal rights and I ignored it.

I have birthed three children in the last four years in the safety of my home, and with each of them I went into labor, which got stronger, until voila, a baby. No complications except variations on normal; my daughter had the cord wrapped around her neck which isn't as scary as it sounds, and my son had his hands up at his face which made him have an asynclitic presentation, long story short he came out with his dukes up like a tiny, wrinkly boxer.

With Miles, I went into labor very slowly one night, a very light, easy thing that had no oomph behind it, like a little nagging reminder I was about to have a baby in the next few days. It came on a bit stronger eventually and lasted all night, then disappeared as soon as the sun came up. I was pretty tired but continued with my day and did a lot of walking hoping to bring labour on, but nothing.

As soon as the sun went down I had labor again, a bit stronger this time and settled into a 5 minute apart pattern; not intense enough to get ready for birth but too much to get any sleep. The next morning I walked and walked, drinking raspberry leaf tea and loving myself up to prepare for the marathon ahead. I would have a contraction every two hours at this point, and they were strong. I knew I would go into to full labor as soon as the sun went down.

Maybe I should mention that each of my children's births have been on epic days of the year, Audrey was born in -45 weather, Finn was born on the solstice, and I was in

labour with Miles two years later and a day before Finnegan's second birthday, in the middle of a flood. Roads washed out and dug up, detours, even our root cellar partially caved in with the swell. It probably says something about his personality.

Anyhow, the sun winked for the last time, yawned, and turned in for the night and I was in full labour, like clockwork. At about 9 pm and 10 minutes apart I was feeling restless so I went outside, and Mike started a bath for me. See, we live off grid with a really small solar set up and no running water, so we built this bathhouse in the woods out of a horse trough and a wood stove, basically you full up the bath with cold water and there's copper pipe going into coils in the wood stove, then a copper pipe going back into the bathtub. It's a simple convection setup where the hot water expanding pulls cold water in, so it's always circulating, just like a hot tub. It takes a couple hours to get good and hot, but stays hot for however long you stoke the fire for. Perfect for a birthing mama.

I got in the tub eventually, and of course it was heaven, I just grooved in there making jokes and being sassy in between contractions - my friends were there, my husband was there, and my doula was on her long drive to get to me. All was right with the world. Eventually things started to amplify and I had to do personal mildly embarrassing things like puke and shit in a bucket while naked, so my friends left and for a while it was just me and Mike, excited and getting quiet.

We got a phone call that Mike took outside, and it was our doula saying she couldn't make it because she had hit a deer halfway. This is where my mental preparation came in. Mike was worried - he trusted birth but was also concerned something could go wrong. I knew everything was fine. I was peaceful and in labour. Quiet labours make babies come out, and worrying about potential C-sections do not. I reassured him that everything was OK, and my body was hella awesome and was working perfectly, so he left me alone for a while to go get the book "The Birth Partner" and read up a bit on what to look for in an emergency while I made peace with myself. It was kind of what I secretly wanted anyway. I had an internal grin.

I was feeling really tired from a few nights of no sleep, so I started drifting off in between contractions. I noticed they were really close together like right before transition, but as I got more tired they grew further apart. All of a sudden I felt a pop, my bag of water released, and I felt a surge of energy. I was fully dilated, and my awesome body let me sleep through transition! Thank you birth hormones!

I stood up and was refreshed. I felt like a wild cat, growly and pacey and full of ener-

gy. I did some swaying and leaning in the bathtub, it was raining fiercely outside with lightning and thunder, I felt just like an animal. Mike was watching me, taking pictures and audio, but I didn't notice. I knew the time was close. Later he tells me my moan through a specific contraction was an exact D note. What a musician.

I experimented with squatting a couple times and it felt OK, I wanted to check my dilation for some reason, so I put my hand in my vag and felt a little hole the size of a toonie and the baby's head. I said, "What the fuck. There's no way I'm 2 centimeters dilated." At that point my doula walked in. In shock from the accident, but in one piece. After writing her car off, she roped her ex-partner and son into driving two vehicles out to her and leaving her with one. She quickly put her gloves on and took out some stuff from her kit, then Miles' head was on my perineum, and it turns out that hole was in the water bag, I couldn't feel my cervix because it was wrapped around my baby's descending head. That's why it's better not to check. (Note: you can actually check your own dilation without sticking your hand up your coot by the Hobbs' line, it's a dark purple streak that runs up the top of your buttcrack!)

I puffed and puffed and breathed the baby's head out into my hands so I didn't tear, then flipped over and asked Mike to catch him. I yelled happily "this feels so fucking good!" Because it honestly feels like pulling the biggest splinter ever out of your butt. It's awesome.

I turned over, picked Miles up, and hugged and squeezed him. My Doula joked that we should name him "Buck" because she hit a deer rushing to meet him. He was hungry, so I nursed him right away, and sent Mike

in to get my friends. My doula packed up all the junk she had set up only 15 minutes previous. She used none of it.

Everyone was in the bathhouse then, laughing and talking and having a good happy cry over the new baby. My placenta, as always, took over an hour to come out. When it did, I waddled naked, clutching my baby through the puddles and mud, into the house, and into bed where we all investigated my awesome placenta and shared my special victory beers, Guinness.

I later found out while talking to my doula friend that I have a short feedback loop in my pituitary gland, not sure exactly what that means in scientific terms, but it explains why I could only labour in the dark. My hormones are regulated by day/light cycles more than other people, that's why I get seasonal depression and howl at the full moon.

I think because I knew I was alone and had nobody to "save" me from myself, I never felt out of control once through this whole labour and birth. I never screamed, I never begged, I was on my own journey with my baby and I knew we would be alright. It made me realize even more how wonderful women are, how our bodies are amazing and wise, and that birth truly is as safe as life gets. I was happy my husband wasn't hurt when I told him I needed to be more alone, and that everyone involved respected my birthing and how I chose to do it. No cervical checks, no heart monitor, no interrupting my groove. The birth process left intact and watched reverently is what produces the best outcomes for mamas and babies, even when there's lightning hitting the trees and the roads have disappeared.



SEND US YOUR BIRTH STORIES!  
HAVE YOU RECENTLY GIVEN BIRTH?  
DO YOU HAVE CHILD CARE TIPS YOU THINK ARE WORTH SHARING?  
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Submissions @countrygrind.net

# A DISSERTATION ON CLOTH DIAPERING

By Aura LaForest

“Do or do not, there is no try.” These were my sister’s, my Yoda of Motherhood’s, words of advice to me as I was deciding while pregnant to go cloth or disposable. Ultimately, there is no right or wrong answer to the question, there’s the intersection of what’s possible given finances, lifestyle, time and tolerance for intimately handling urine and feces.

For this particular household, circumstances and ideology converged in favour of cloth. As my sibling’s statement intimated however, that decision is a commitment in a number of senses. First consider finances. Although over the long run cloth diapering is more economical than doing the disposable dance (as long as your washing machine survives that is – you can see more about that later on), it does involve a higher up-start cost.

In order to help off-set some of the cost for families, some municipalities have incentive programs as part of either their family or waste reduction policies. Most will pay up to 50% of the purchasing cost or up to a maximum of 150\$ per family. Another way to get around it is to buy used – although I searched far and wide and if you live in the boonies, you’re usually out of luck finding a set to buy within driving distance.

If you think your friends and family will listen, you could always have a diaper-themed baby shower to cover the up-start cost. Not only would this supply the necessary items to get you going, but it would also avoid receiving yet another useless PJ or toy that will gather dust in the back of a closet because you can’t bring yourself to put it on or near your child. Furthermore, you go through WAY more diapers than onesies, contrary to what most people shopping for a newborn seem to think.

Another alternative for city-folk is to sign up with a diapering service through which one’s eco-conscience will be settled without even having to wash a single nappy. These usually end up costing pretty much the same as, or a little more than, disposable diapers depending on the service level and how many diapers you go through on average. Most of the services charge an initial set-up fee between 50\$-200\$ and then a weekly fee that’s usually 20\$-50\$. If you’re rural, no such service exists and learning to love laundry is the best alternative.

So armed with that knowledge I took to the Internet. When I first began shopping around on-line, the granola enviro-chick in me wanted to go for one-size-fits-all, organic and locally (or Canadian) made. When I did the math on that, the maintenance planner in me had a seizure, took over, and promptly replaced the vision with a made-in-China-but-distributed-in-Canada-mostly-bamboocompromise.

If you’re curious about the mathematical details, here’s the low-down:

#### **Granola Enviro-Chick Dream Vision:**

AMP Pocket Diapers x 24 = \$478.80  
Canada Post Expedited or UPS Standard  
(Free Shipping): \$0.00  
GST 5%: \$23.94  
Total: \$502.74

#### **Maintenance Planner’s Reality Check:**

(Bamboo Cloth Diapers x 24) + (Bamboo Inserts x 48) = \$259.98  
Canada Post Expedited or UPS Standard  
(Free Shipping): \$0.00  
GST 5%: \$13.00  
Total: \$272.98

-Now someone out there is going to object, “But there are starter kits for AMP pocket diapers that retail at about 180\$!” While I agree that’s true, I also declare that if you think you’re gonna make it through your diapering needs with one of those starter kits, you’re dreaming in Technicolor. One of the kits supposedly covers ten diaper changes (and looking at what’s in the kit, I seriously have my doubts on that). Here’s the catch – while you’re working on those ten diaper changes, the next ten had better be in the wash. I’ve been cloth diapering my little one for over three months now, I can tell you that I do between one and two loads of ten to twelve diapers each. Daily.

Another voice is piping up, “But isn’t a baby only suppose to pee seven or eight times a day?” Perhaps that’s true, perhaps that’s the minimum, or perhaps it’s that disposable diapers wick away moisture quite effectively, so you only change baby’s diaper seven or eight times a day, (when you remember to check it and see that the yellow indicator band turned blue). With cloth, your little darling feels it when he’s wet. Apparently that’s not a cool feeling. You therefore are *very* aware of when it’s time to change the liners. On the upside I’ve been told, that’s also a big part of why cloth diapered babies are toilet trained faster than their disposable diapered counter-parts. I’ll get back to you on that one.

The second consideration is the strength and durability of your washing machine. You don’t tend to think of things like that when you’re doing a few loads of laundry a week rather than supplying that volume to the washer every day. Relatively speaking, that’s the difference between residential and institutional use. Realistically speaking, it means that you’re in luck if you’ve got an old-school top-loading machine that flamencos across the floor during the spin cycle – those old bastards are indestructible. If you’ve gone all energy-efficient and have a typical front loader, particularly one of the earlier models, then I feel your pain (being in that situation myself). You may well have to factor in the cost of a new machine along with your diapers.

There are however some dos and don’ts that I’ve figured out along the way, particularly when dealing with less than ideal, old and getting-tired front-loaders. Don’t make the mistake I did of leaving pooh on diapers. Do use flushable liners if you want to avoid the worst of the whole pre-poooh-cleaning because scraping it off is not good enough. Most of those first generation EnergyStar™ washers don’t have a self-cleaning cycle. This means that any residue that comes off what you wash stays behind the drum and that when there’s enough of it in there it will stain your laundry with a smattering of black circles through the water drainage holes during the spin-dry. It may be thoroughly clean stain, but it’s still black and disfiguring to any clothes that were actually meaningful in your wardrobe, or that you want to wear in public – and the stain strikes indiscriminately and without warning.

If you’re **really** lucky, such stains could also mean that your bearings are shot and have leaked their life-blood all over your laundry in which case it’s a safe bet you’re going to need a new machine. But first, you’ll usually have to wring out a full load of diapers by hand and remove the excess water with pruned and blistered fingers. Experience speaks.

Also, don’t leave items in pockets to be laundered that are small enough to make it into the washing machine’s pump and block it

up. You’ll know this has happened when the machine vainly tries to go through the spin cycle while sounding like a broken accordion and smelling a little burnt. At this point, stop the cycle and put the poor appliance out of its misery. Do call a repair man, or do it yourself if you’re mechanically inclined. But first, do wring out a full load of diapers by hand and remove the excess water with pruned and blistered fingers. More experience speaking.

All this laundry does bring up the issue that although washable diapers reduce on garbage, they do represent a degree of water consumption that is not negligible. For those using bleach and/or traditional laundry detergents (even if they are not suggested for diapers, there are lots who use them nonetheless), it also adds up to lots of grey waters rife with chemicals that don’t help any aquatic environment that I know. Although many city systems will treat those waters, for those that run on a septic system it’s bad news for the surrounding area.

Furthermore, the “basic laundry routine” suggested by many cloth diapering sites is not only labour intensive but is also water-wasteful. One site suggests using your washer at the highest water setting, and running a cold pre-wash or 2 hour hot soak, followed with a regular hot wash and cold rinse along with an optional extra cold rinse. Another site foregoes the pre-wash but does specify a double rinse at the highest water setting.

I’m not saying that it’s a bad idea to go washable; I’m just saying that the cleaning needs to be thought through ahead of time if one desires to truly be ecologically-minded. Ways to do that (which are usually no-go if you follow the instructions provided by the diaper suppliers) include:

Doing full loads at the minimum water setting which provides a good cleaning;  
Wash with warm or cold rather than hot water;  
Use a combination of baking soda and vinegar rather than bleach as laundry boosters;  
If you must go alkaline, consider Borax as a laundry booster rather than bleach;  
Make your own laundry detergent; it’s less expensive than buying and it allows you control on the composition and pH level;  
When buying detergent look for neutral pH, phosphate-free and biodegradable alternatives.

It’s also quite important to remember that biodegradable does not mean environmentally nor medically safe. Lots of really nasty chemicals are biodegradable, that doesn’t make them friends to your skin, your pets or your plants.

Next, let’s get to the down to the dirty details of pre-poooh-cleaning because that’s where the truly epic stories that you’ll tell for years all seem to occur. Murphy’s Law also makes sure that it’s when both hands are in the sink scrubbing shit that your nose gets itchy.

So a bit of background, I have a pee diaper bin (dry) and then I deal with the pooh diapers on an individual basis as required. I can do this thanks to the mixed feeding arrangement for the baby, the formula component of his diet results in a total of one or two bowel movements every one or two days: but oh, what a shit storm that diaper is.

Dealing with that pooh diaper includes gloving up, scraping the solids off the diaper and into the garbage with a butter knife, placing everything in the sink and scrubbing the remaining soil off by the power of the

least amount of hot water possible, wringing everything out and then cleaning sink and counter to return them to a state fit for their usual activities. Total time elapsed: usually about five or six minutes.

Five or six minutes can be a very long time with a baby howling in the back-ground.

Upon assessing my modus operandi, my mother declared that the far simpler “old-fashioned” method of dealing with the soils would be to flush the washable liner, while holding it, and let the centrifugal force of the toilet do the cleaning for me. This of course uses yet more water in the total tally, much the same way that using flushable liners does, hence my reticence to try it.

For argument’s sake, I did do the experiment. Turns out that the same mixed feeding arrangement which limits the total number of massive diaper messes I manage also makes for a far stickier and more solid mass. That mass was still staring me in the face bright-eyed and bushy-tailed after three flushes. Defeated I returned to the kitchen sink with the sopping wet liner.

There are other ways of dealing with the soiled diapers too. A sprayer hooked up by the toilet is a popular choice. Having a devoted soaking bin is another possibility. The main thing is having a system that will work and that won’t result in dirties drying out or festering in a dark corner until they grow into a new form of life and start fighting back.

After all this, it may seem a mere insignificant after-thought to mention it, but cloth diapers also affect wardrobe choices. Anything baby wears will have to factor in the size of a massively padded ass. On a newborn, the diaper can look bigger than the baby and during tummy time at that age the diaper will be movement limiting. Thankfully, the humungous size of ass varies inversely with the baby’s age if you’re using one-size-fits-all cloth covers, and things start looking less ridiculous as of about four months. But cutesy little pants suits are probably still out.

Where are the advantages to all this laundry and labour? Besides developing a tolerance to all things bodily discharge and pee & pooh occupying a large part of your day? And an intimate understanding and respect of how much work women of bygone days tackled in a day? No diaper rash as of yet would rank high on the list. Avoiding the nasty plastic Pampers™ perfume counts as well, followed by the assuaging of my environmental conscience. But is it really better for the planet or is that more a matter of marketing and perceived reality than actual fact?

Here’s the kicker and conclusion: independent life cycle analyses of cloth and disposable alternatives actually shows that there isn’t much difference between the two when all things are said and done at the end of the day. While disposables create more landfill waste, a bit more resource use and slightly higher green-house gas emissions, washables generate a greater potential for water contamination and consume much more energy (electricity) and water than do their chuckable cousins.

Therefore, whichever method a parent uses can and is “The Right Way”.

# FARM PUNK FOREVER

## NOTES ON NINE MONTHS OF HOMESTEADING IN RURAL AMERICA

By Adam Gnade

**January, 4th, 2014** Cold damn day on the farm. Woke up to a frozen battery in the Jeep which postponed a very important trip to town for straw bales to fortify the new barn construction. Got a jump from Sam the hero in the nick of time and made it to town before dusk. All hatches battened, all Pioneers Press mail sent, all animals stowed safe in their cribs and stalls, we are surviving another night of the coldest goddamn weather we've had since leaving Portland and moving out to the country. Awe-inspiring cold. Life-wrecker. Really gets into your lungs and puts a hurt on you. But we're standing and warm and all is steady as she goes on the good ship Hard Fifty Farm.

**January 24th** Kansas is like Russia in the winter and I have the Spanish flu and we're fighting to make our way like it's the German front and I would like some French onion soup and Portuguese (port) wine to blot out the cold seeping in the windows but what we have is nothing much and we have it now/here/in real life and it's okay.

**January 28th** One in the morning. Listening to *Letting Off the Happiness* and roasting Brussels sprouts in the oven with diced red onion, garlic, and cherry tomatoes to warm the kitchen (and hopefully me). The heat's been off in the farmhouse for two days now and I'm wearing three layers of flannel pajamas under my jeans, two sweaters, a wool hat (with the hood of one sweater pulled over it), thick fingerless gloves, and a knee-length ski parka. Few weeks ago the local propane company sold out to a big corporation in the city and now when we want gas it takes "up to seven working days." The local company used to come out that day. Now, after we've scraped up enough money to pay the minimum propane bill, we're faced with a week before they can deliver. Big cold front hit over the weekend and the gas sucked right out the tank. So it's cold in the farmhouse. The kind of cold where you see your breath and wake up (in all your clothes) and the walls feel wet. It's daunting. And scary. Crazy thing is there's nothing we can do. The new propane company owns the tank, so no one else can fill it; we play by their rules or freeze. So we freeze.

**February 6th** Today while sliding (wheels and brakes locked) across the ice on Eisenhower Street en route to smashing into a Ford F-150 the size of a Sherman tank, I paused and wistfully took time to reflect on how *shit* this winter has been ... not emotionally devastating like last year but rather a slow series of pin pricks adding up to total collapse.

The \$250 a week propane bills due to the natural gas shortage. The bank accounts as empty as abandoned grain silos. The endless car troubles. The endless walks through knee-deep snow to do farm chores. The endless depression of those closest to me.

Just shit. An all-around shit winter. Shit, like being killed slowly as someone drops one marble at a time on your skull from atop a four-story building and all the passersby take turns peeing on your chest and making fun of your worn-down boots and threadbare sweater. Shit. A shit winter.

Then I crashed. I'm still okay. And happy, oddly enough. I'm where I want to be and doing what I want to do with the people I want to be with. But the pin pricks, goddamn. What a fucking strug-

gle. I'm tired. Tired and ready to be dropped into a bathtub-warm pond in the middle of summer from the hands of the tree and its rope swing, my friends all around, beers in hand, dusk hanging low and red to the west, the radio playing some Youth Lagoon or Lou Reed's *Transformer* as loud as it can go until the speakers turn to blown-out burlap sacks. **February 18th** Countrylifestory. In which I sit in the car for twenty minutes and wait 'til the shooting stops. I can't tell where it's coming from (to the east?) but they're really banging off.

**February 26th** Up all night in the farmhouse packing Pioneers Press book orders and making Jessie's dad's famous "Survivor Soup" in a giant cauldron for tomorrow. Kinda cabin feverish and walkin' around the house like a ghost with the big '70s headphones plugged into my phone playing Swans' *The Seer* and I go into the kitchen and it's totally full of smoke like the place is burning down. Only it's not. It's steam. Steam like in a sauna. More steam than I've seen in my life; steam spewing from the pot and filling the room, fog-machine-style. I guess because it's 38 degrees in the house (still no heat; won't have it for a couple more weeks) and I'm cooking a big pot of soup, the steam worked overtime and filled the place up. It was fucking beautiful. Total magicland. Made me so happy I almost went outside to shoot my shotgun in the air a few times to shake things up. (Didn't.)

**February 28th** This is what you wear to bed when you live in the rural Midwest and you have no heat in your house: thick socks, two pairs of flannel pajama pants under jeans, t-shirt, four-button army surplus sweater, thick hoodie lined with fake wool (hood up under checked hunter's cap), and a quilted jacket. Top that off with six layers of blankets, afghans, and quilts and you're golden. Only not really. Golden will happen around late-April to middle-May. Thirty-five degrees in the farmhouse. Glamorous, romantic countrylife. Quote, unquote.

**March 2nd** Last night we were hit by a big storm and now we're cut off from town. Icy tundra as far as you can see. At 3am I took a hot bath in the farmhouse and it was weird because my body was submerged in the hottest water I could stand but I could still see my breath as much as you might outside. Then there was the pile of my clothes in the middle of the floor. Knee-length parka, gloves, two pairs of pants, two pairs of socks, a flannel, a hoodie, a knit hat, and a quilted coat. Three feet tall. It looked like a mountain. A colorful mountain. Life right now is pretty strange. Today it's 31 degrees in the farmhouse and I'm going to drink red wine and black coffee and read Tolstoy. I think it'll work fine. "It" being totally open-ended. "It" being anything you want it to be. Take your pick.

**March 19th** Listening to My Bloody Valentine's new one on the big '70s headphones under sixteen tons of blankets and quilts. Outside (and inside) the temp keeps dropping. It's one of those "negative eight, feels like negative twenty" weather report nights. I keep telling myself that all this hard shit will make me a better person or a better writer or ... or a whole list and litany of "better's and that gets me through it.

Of course this is why the Midwest (and homesteading) is not for everyone and this year is the first year I've wondered whether I'm one of them. That's a hard thing to admit: that you're not tough enough while other people handle it fine. Heatless houses are nothing new. Neither are empty cupboards. People have been doin' it for years under much worse circumstances. ("I've been hitting some hard traveling/I thought you

knowed," sang Woody Guthrie and didn't [most of] Steinbeck's Joads make it west just fine in the end?)

It's below freezing inside the house, yes, but millions of people have it a thousand times harder than this and I've got no room to complain. It feels like something out of Dostoyevsky's *Brothers* half the time and it's a little scary being on the edge of something ... scary, yeah, not "bad" or "unfortunate" or anything of the sort. (Living out in the country was never going to be safe or easy anyway. Easy would've been staying at ol' 4920 SE Franklin Street back in Portland.)

I have blankets and I have one more bag of Yorkshire tea and a sleeping rescue pitbull at the foot of my mattress and I have goddamn MY BLOODY VALENTINE on my headphones sounding like the ooze-deep birth noise of the *universe*. I'm weak and I'm cowardly and I'm insecure and cold and I'm fucking lucky to have what I have. I may have shit luck but I'm fucking LUCKY. I'll sleep well tonight in the knowledge of that.

**March 29th** Incense, black coffee, red wine, no one here but me, and just quiet, quiet, quiet. Sun through the windows of the solarium, re-reading *The Savage Detectives*, and so quiet. Dusty light, smoke from the incense stick, quiet. Manuscript for the new book is three inches thick. Switchblade from TJ sitting on the pages to weigh it down. Plan: spend all day in bed drinking wine. I can feel springtime in my bones.

**April 3th** Good couple of days. Yesterday Sam Ross-Brown, one of the new Pioneers Press staff members, came out to stay at the farm and he, Thad, and Jessie and I stayed up 'til a million o'clock in the morning toasting new endeavors (with a bottle of San Nicolas El Espolon tequila) and talking about Big Things that Change Lives and how to find your place and thrive in the Mean Damn World. We also talked about riot cops and anarchism and the AETA and John Reed and my family's house in Mexico. Good talk. Drunk talk, but good talk.

Today we had everyone else out to the farm to plan new secret projects and the whole place was full of activity and talk of progress and there were people working in different rooms to the same end goal. It felt RIGHT. Breakfast was a shot of El Espolon then endless coffee and work, work, work... new events from Marc Saviano, new books pitched. (The night before, we laid new clover seed in the pasture; 3am, pitch-black night and all of us walking the field in a dragnet line, tossing seed from the bucket and talking about growth and newness to come).

Now, 1am, thunderstorms, thunder rolling out there in the black, shaking the window panes, coyotes howling; a drizzly, mysterious country night. Life is where it should be. Things are falling into place. Tonight I told Jessie, "This is how I always hoped it would be." That felt damn good to say.

Tomorrow more of the same. The end of isolation. Big projects taking root. New people involved and the farmhouse full of discussion. "Shit is happening" in the best sense, especially after 2013, which was more like "shit happens." Forward motion? Forward motion.

**April 8th** I just took a hot bath in a bathroom with six sleeping chickens in it. Was reading *A Hundred Years of Solitude* and it wasn't until I was out of the water and sitting up in bed before I realized I was living a scene from the book.

**April 30th** Last night I went outside at 4am to clear my head and I saw something big and grey running silently toward me from under the trees. I thought, "Well, this is it, the wolves are back" and got ready to run

inside when who should appear but the pig Hank Williams, out for a late-night romp. Pigs are smart like everyone says and despite our best efforts he'd broken out of the barn for the second time this week. Pigs are also friendly as dogs and he jogged up to me and oinked happily and nuzzled my knee and wanted to play. I ran around with him for a while (which felt totally bizarre at 4am after writing about Nazi resistance all night) then I put him back in the barn and we both went to sleep.

**April 28th** Being alive is fucking scary. That's what my brain says all day on repeat and I'm constantly thinking of new ways of telling it to shut the fuck up.

**June 12th** Back from the East Coast book-tour. Been back a week but the week has raced by like a motherfucker. Up against some awful, panic-attack-inducing bullshit right now but I feel pretty okay about the future. And I'm excited for it. A lot of "big change" ahead and some of it is going to be pretty damn hard but what's adventure without adversity? Here's the play by play/rundown/tally: Four AM, broke to the point of scariness, big progress on the next book/never want to read aloud from the Big Motherfuckin' Sad again, wrecked from stupid panic attacks, can't sleep/don't care, wild thunderstorm blowing in, raining like hell now, decided life is too short to be afraid, fresh in from a hot bath where I read half of Matt Gauck's *Next Stop Adventure* book, New York Dolls songs in my head, crazy lightning, whoa the whole farmhouse is shaking, lying in bed with the lights off and a nice rainy breeze through the window. Verdict is something like: I'm alive and doing fine. Is that a quote? I feel like I'm quoting something without wanting to. Regardless, I'll say it again: I'm alive and doing fine.

**June 16th** Woke up at noon with a head full of good dreams, hot breeze through the window. Drove to town and watched a vulture eat a dead blacksnake on the side of the road. Chimed in on the Microcosm AMA. Walked through the tall grass and clover with Jessie while she picked wildflowers for the farmhouse. Watched the bats flit in the dusk while Jessie did farm chores and Thad made dinner. Tried to find decent photos of myself for a magazine interview. Got interviewed by another magazine; this one in Romania... what, right? Romania?! Heard coyotes yipping in the distance while walking to the mailbox; then gunshots. Read a few chapters of Troyat's study on Tolstoy. More gunshots. Tested the triggerlock on my shotgun. Counted my shells. Offered to stick up for a friend with a scary ex-boyfriend. Wrote a few chapters for the next book. Took Benedryl. Tried to sleep. Couldn't sleep. Read some *Ulysses* while the storm rolled in (because it's Bloomsday). Tried to sleep again. Couldn't. Still can't.

**June 18th** Woke up early to do farm chores. Handed off the goats we were goat-sitting. Put books in envelopes and sent them out to places like Indonesia, Iowa City, and Rome. Had big talks about our future in regards to the Microcosm lawsuit. Did a photoshoot for the *Razorcake* interview but not much came of it. Packed the Pioneers Press merch boxes for Plan-It-X Fest. Learned about FIA and Ayrton Senna. Made dinner for everyone with the last of what we have: quinoa, rice, TVP, broccoli. Lost my nerve twice. Decided I was doomed about nine times. Got over it. Gathered pennies, dimes, and nickels for groceries tomorrow (the quarters are spent). Threw my switchblade at the wall. Lost my nerve again (after midnight) and walked out into the darkest part of the hay-field and closed my eyes then came up with a plan to

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continued from previous page

get through the next day—if only that. (The stars were sharply defined like white gems on black velvet, a cliché but pretty). Took a hot bath and read a story in the *Paris Review* about flight and divorce. Took Benadryl. Got in bed. Typed this into the phone from the bed (I don't have a computer anymore). Now, work on the next book happens. Three AM. Chapter about white supremacists, the Southern Pacific railway, small town paradises, cotton candy, and Civil War uniforms. Bugs circle the lamp and knock against the shade. No sleep 'til pass out.

**July 5th** Fuck it all. I'll just sit on the hood of my cooling Jeep and listen to Lower Dens on my tinny-ass phone speakers after farm chores and watch the lightning storm to the east and the fireworks to the west. Shit is heavy right now but I'll take this any day and be cool with it. Somebody send me a 40 right now. Bring on ecstatic moments. Illumination or bust.

**July 6th** 1) On Friday afternoon Jessie, Thad, and I were interviewed by *The Pitch* about *Pioneers Press*. The interview happened here on the farm under the trees in the lower field. Nice day. Beer and water-

melon. Happy chickens clucking in the vines and greenery. Shade and good stories and publishing scene shoptalk.

2) Fixed my switchblade on Saturday night.

3) Marc and I tabled the zine mobile at PLUG Projects Art Book Fair yesterday. Today: a birthday party for Jack. Drank beer from a double-size mason jar and ate berries and floated on my back in a big inflatable kiddie pool in the pasture watching the light from the water dance on the tree canopy above.

4) Today: ate green beans off the vine like a deer.

5) Today: roasted some of the farm's yellow squash, pole beans, and carrots in the slow English way I learned from Jim English in London and missed England. (While singing a line from my favorite Scout Niblett song where she goes, "we would have a flask/ if we were goin' out/as English as could be.")

6) Today: listened to Castanets' *Cathedral* LP. Read half of Dolly Freed's *Possum Living*. Read *Hit It or Quit It*. Read the shit out of some old *Paris Reviews*. The Ursula K. Le Guin "Art of Fiction" is pretty excellent. Same with the Emmanuel Carrere interview.

7) This weekend: was ruled by insomnia, defeated by insomnia, owned by insomnia. No more. Tonight I'm going to SLEEP if I

have to get Thad to punch me in the face and knock me out. Tonight!

**July 18th** Midnight tonight. Wherein (unable to get started working on the new book) I listen to a 12" of bombastic pre-war German Alpine folk music until the walls of the farmhouse shake, bust, and fall in on themselves.

**July 22nd** I built a batcave on the farm. Built it three years ago. This summer was our first year with bats and at first we had one or two but now the sky is full of them, swooping, diving through the yellow-purple dusk. I wish you could see it. It's like some horror movie where only good things happen.

**July 31st** Sometimes you stay up all night cleaning the farmhouse and playing *T.B. Sheets* so loud the walls shake and that's better than any party, any glory, any "success." Clean the farmhouse alone. Listen to Van aching out "I've done *more* for you than your daddy has ever done." And feel it. Feel it. Yes. "Stay on the move."

**August 19th** Jessie's down in the garden being interviewed and the film crew has one of those old-fashion cameras where you lean forward and put a black drape over your head and shoulders. I'm in my bedroom planning out tomorrow's siege of Kansas

City. Things are happening. **September 5th** This week has been something like:

1) Staying up all night and getting bummed out when dawn comes. Dread at a pretty sunrise because you know you have to sleep at some point.

2) Thunderstorms every morning around 3am. Nothing bad about this.

3) Work on the new book begins at 2am every morning. Ends around six or seven when my eyes catch on fire.

4) Dread about the upcoming *Microcosm Publishing* vs. us shit-show trial but mostly dread at having to go to Portland under unfavorable circumstances. Like Marc says, "always be bothered but give no fucks."

5) Dread.

6) Shaking off dread.

7) Dread again. Shaking it off again.

**September 6th** "Always be bothered but give no fucks," part 2.

**September 7th** "Always be bothered but give no fucks," part 3.

**September 15th** "Always be bothered but give no fucks," part 4.

**September 24th** I'm trying.

# LEAVES OF THREE

## POISON IVY KNOWLEDGE AND CARE

By Scrupp

I've always believed that real deep knowledge comes from experience; getting into the true, raw, nitty gritty core of something. I've danced the merciless dance with poison ivy every summer for 12 years. This plant is so powerful and deserves awesome respect. Here's some wisdom I've gathered over the past years of having my body be host to this plant spirit!

### Urushiol

Poison ivy, poison oak and poison sumac are different plants but all contain the same oil called urushiol. Urushiol oil is the toxic plant which causes the rash initially and allows the poison ivy to spread from surfaces onto your body. So once you've broken out in a rash the poison is already in your system. The rash itself is not contagious at all. This means, however, that handling anything that has the oil on its surface can cause the rash to spread or re-infect. So those clothes you were wearing while romping through the forest, face cuddles with your dog who was also romping with you. I got it once all over my forearms in the dead of a Quebec winter from carrying fire wood. It takes a very small amount of urushiol to cause a skin reaction. Wikipedia states that, "Approximately 80% to 90% of adults will get a rash if they are exposed to 50 micrograms of purified urushiol. Some people are so sensitive, it only takes a trace of urushiol (two micrograms or less than one ten-millionth of an ounce) on the skin to initiate an allergic reaction". Also urushiol can stay active for 1-5 years on surfaces including dead plants!

### Prevention

I've learned that the best prevention is awareness. Learning how to identify the plant in its four stages, knowing where it grows, keeping some poison ivy soap on hand and washing (clothes and body) with cool water even if you only think you may have come in contact. Poison ivy can grow up trees in vines and can definitely live through the winter. There are also poison ivy homeopathic remedies that I take if I know I'm going to be in an area with the plant around.

Poison ivy is caused by an allergic reaction to the oil. I've read and experienced that people can live into their adult life unaffected and then develop an allergy.

Don't count yourself safe because that killing frost has come and winter is approaching; poison ivy lives in four different stages and takes on a slightly different appearance each

season.

### Care

I think this is where most people seek out knowledge about this plant, I know it's when I first did. Itchy, burning, pus-filled blisters spreading all over your body is a total buzz kill, there is no convenient time to get this. I've tried it all, banana peels, potato skins, oatmeal baths, calamine lotion, oils, salves and all kinds of plant and kitchen creations. There's no quick fix, systemic poison ivy, with the right care and prevention of spreading will work itself out between 8-10 days. Here's what has worked:

Plants have an amazing tendency to grow where they are needed, just like the strong rooted dandelion growing up through the cracks in the pavement in the midst of a congested, dirty city, offering its healing potential of strength, detox and digestion. Not far from poison ivy you can usually find jewel weed. This plant was a childhood play thing, picking it's orange flowers, dipping it's leaves and stem under water to watch it turn shimmering silver and squeezing it's little pods until they popped and curled. In later years it became a serious plant ally. This is probably poison ivy's greatest plant life combater. Crushed and made into a poultice or brewed into a tea and left to cool then put into a spray bottle makes for a super soothing spray on the rash.

Any astringent plant will be great to ingest or poultice. This summer I used a lot of yarrow and plantain, also available in abundance all over your good ol' green earth country side. I'd recommend to always do some research anyway on a plant or herb you are about to use.

It's true that banana, potato, cucumber and other skins will have an astringent and anti-inflammatory effect, black tea bags are also great for this. This summer I took a cross-Canada road trip with poison ivy on my face and took to nabbing napkins and tea bags at every gas stop to strap to my weepy cheeks with medical tape, what a sight I was.

Tea tree oil has worked for drying. Oatmeal, calamine and aloe vera are good for soothing the itch in the drier stage but don't promote a lot of healing.

Your body is going through a shit ton while trying to fight off this infection, so it's common to feel exhausted, headachey, mildly



sick and just a general feeling of "fuck this sucks"! I never feel quite myself.

If you can, stay out of direct sunlight and take lukewarm or cold showers. Heat will aggravate the infected area and cause it to swell.

### Diet

For real, this is the secret cure all and the real hard truth.

Sugar, caffeine and alcohol! Poison ivy (or the infection that's going on in your body) loves this stuff as much as you do, and continuing to consume these things will keep feeding the infection. Some poison ivy infections are lot worse than others. I am at the extreme end of the spectrum and if I don't get real serious about healing I end up in the hospital getting a bunch a weirdo injections which I have no interest in. So, I immediately go into cleanse mode. I cut out these things and eat real simple. Cooked veggies are always safe. Just a few days of this can take care of the infection. Avoid nightshade veggies (potatoes, tomatoes, eggplants) and drink lots of water, teas and bitters! For tea I go for dandelion, burdock, and yarrow. Also drink a ton of water.

Doctors will treat poison ivy like a dermatitis rash. Typically shots or pills of Benadryl, cortisone or penicillin will be administered (as well as cortisone cream). Systemic poison ivy can be life threatening. Sometimes in our busy lives we just don't have the convenience of taking time to heal ourselves with natural remedies, so there is a time and place for hospitals, but I really like to have it taken care of before that point if possible.

This has been the deep lesson for me from poison ivy. Healing is more than a quick fix, more than a convenience that can be dealt with by taking a pill. It's about finding the source, dealing with the core cause of what's going on, and slowing down by reconnecting with our body. Close your eyes and check in with what's going on inside. Your body will tell you what it needs.

Leaves of three, leave 'em be!

# BOOZE, BRIMSTONE AND TURNIPS

## THE TALE OF STINGY JACK

By Dylan

Stingy Jack was a miserable trickster, drunk and all around bad bastard who the Devil himself came to our realm to claim as his own one dark and windy night. At the time Stingy Jack was at getting on the piss at a shady tavern and protested, begging the Devil to let him stay for one more drink. Being a bad bastard, and a stingy one as well, Stingy Jack persuaded the Devil to turn himself into a sixpence to pay for the drink. The Devil must have been wasted as well, 'cause he turned into a coin-and was swiftly scooped up by Stingy Jack and placed into his coin sack. The coin sack had three crosses on it - which overcame the Devil's devilry and rendered him trapped. Stingy Jack drunkenly told the Devil he would remain trapped in the coin sack FOREVER, unless he fucked right off and didn't come back for Jack for another solid ten years. Powerless, and rapidly sobering up, the Devil agreed, was released, and roared back to hell-from whence he came.

Ten years flew by for our man Jack, who used his time for the betterment of worsening the world - debauched boozing and all description of (minor) sin; often refusing to pay his impressive tab at his local haunts. The Devil found him while he was weaving home late one autumn evening-

in all likeliness, it was in fact, the witching hour. Jack was not pleased to see the Devil, and again bargained for more time on this

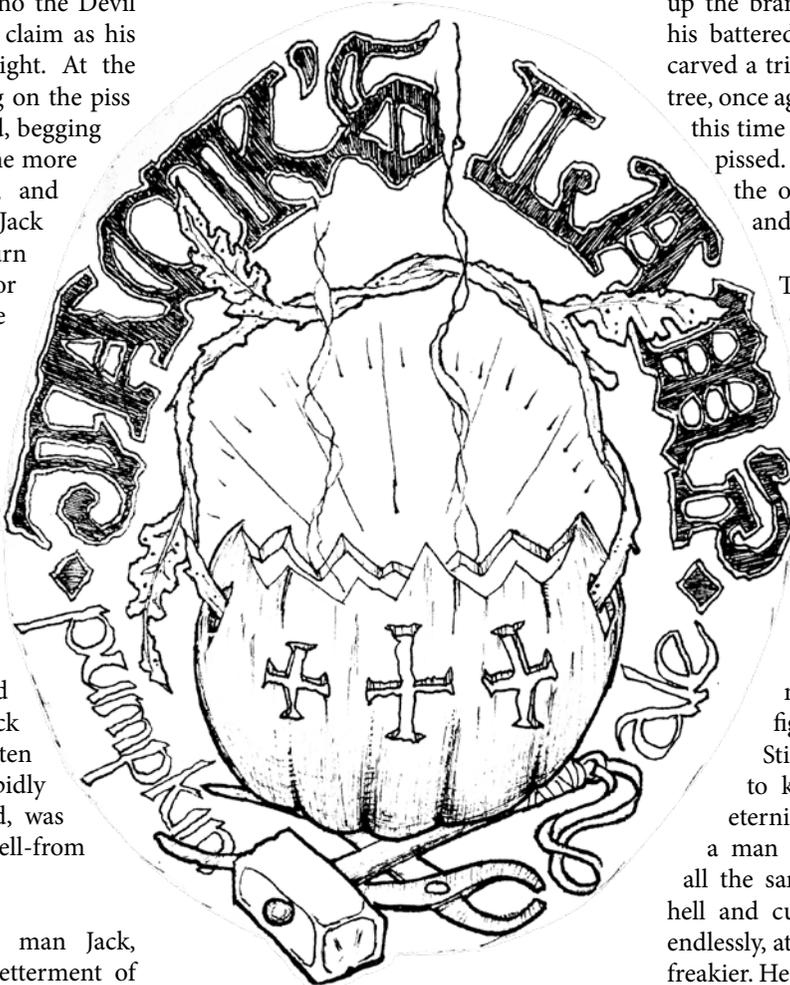
and somehow (lost to history) persuaded the Devil to climb the tree and get it. As soon as the Devil was scrambling his cloven hooves up the branches, Stingy Jack whipped out his battered and blackened old blade and carved a trio of crosses on the trunk of the tree, once again trapping that fool of a Devil, this time up in a damn tree. The Devil be pissed. Once again, they worked out the old 'fuck off for ten years' deal, and Jack merrily staggered home.

The next ten years were exceptionally hard for old Stingy Jack. He was thrilled to have beaten the Devil again, and as it turned out that year's batch of cider was pretty much weapon's grade. Jack's liver finally retired, and with it Jack lost his precious grasp on this life. His spirit found the pearly gates firmly locked and so he descended to a world of fire and brimstone. He was met by the Devil. The Devil figured he had seen enough of Stingy Jack's despicable antics to know he didn't want to spend eternity with this joker. Stingy Jack; a man too bad for hell, was doomed all the same. The Devil cast him out of hell and cursed him to roam the moors endlessly, at night of course 'cause that's way freakier. He scooped up a smouldering piece of brimstone from the fires of hell and thrust it into Stingy Jack's hand, a light for him to hold in the darkness. Jack seared his palm on the sulfurous ember and begged for a

lantern, but the Devil was in no mood to be generous with Stingy Jack. Stingy Jack went through his tattered old homebum jacket and found a turnip. Perhaps he was such a sick drunk that he liked to just eat raw turnips, or maybe he picked it up wasted, mistaking it for a cider apple, or maybe he just thought it would be funny to throw at somebody later. At any rate, he took out his battered and blackened old blade, hollowed out the turnip and cut out a few holes to light his way. Armed with his turnip lantern, Stingy Jack roams the moor to this night, leading drunken booze hounds to their deaths in the black muck of the bogs...

Stingy Jack is said to be the spirit causing the ghostly lights sometimes seen by travellers at night, especially over bogs, swamps or marshes. It resembles a flickering lamp and is said to recede if approached, drawing travellers astray from the safety of their paths. The phenomenon is known as will-o'-the-wisp ("wisp": old word for a bundle of sticks or paper used as a torch) or *ignis fatuus* ("foolish fire" in Medieval Latin) hinkypunk(!?), or jack-o'-lantern. Stingy Jack is believed to have created the first jack o lantern, and for years carving turnip lanterns was part of the traditional Irish celebration of Samhain. The pumpkin was adapted after Irish immigrants crossed the sea to the 'New World'. Turnip lanterns are harder to carve, have a shorter shelf life, look waaay creepier and are highly recommended.

*The drawing used is the authors own homebrew label paying homage Stingy Jack.*



sweet, sweet earth. Jack was "about to make" another noxious batch of his notorious cider and he spied at that moment a lone apple atop a gnarled apple tree. He had to have it,



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# I REMEMBER HALLOWE'EN

## A HISTORY OF SAMHAIN

Also By Dylan

Samhain (pronounced "Sah - win" or "Sow-in" in Irish) is the end and beginning of the Celtic year, a twilight of the year and the seasons. (The Celts occupied land in modern day Europe from the Iberian Peninsula in the east to Galatia in the west and from northern Italy to Scotland, beginning in the Iron Age around 400BC) The year was divided into quarters based on the movements of the sun and further divided into eight in relation to the cycles of growth and harvest upon which the Celts depended. The Sun marks the year at four clear points, which the Celts called the Quarter Days: Winter Solstice (longest night), Spring Equinox (equal night and day), Summer Solstice (longest day), and Autumn Equinox (equal day and night). Four Cross Quarter Days between the Quarter Days divided the year into eight and marked the high point of each season; Samhain (Nov 1), Imbolc (Feb 1), Beltane (May 1) and Lughnasad (Aug 1).

By November 1st, the harvest was in, the seeds of the winter crops were planted and the livestock was led to the stables or slaughtered. The seeds lay dormant until Imbolc, (called Candlemas by the Church), when (in the British Isles) they began to sprout and become a living entity. By Beltane, (May Day), the plants were up and fertility was encouraged and celebrated. The harvest would begin at Lughnasad, and conclude by Samhain when the sun was at its lowest over the standing stones in Britain and Ireland; and the yearly cycle began once more.

The farmer decided which of her animals would not survive the winter and would cull her herd; to slaughter and feast upon or preserve, rather than waste fodder throughout the lean months. The last fruit was picked, except that which would be left as an offering for the spirits, and the grain was gathered and processed for fodder, flour and beer. Fishermen put up their boats and stored their gear. Debts would be paid up. Wanderers and warriors returned home or sought shelter, the harvest was complete, the stables were full and the hatches were battened down for the Dark Days Ahead. Story telling began at this time of indoor life in crowded conditions and in many chieftains' halls it was mandatory that a story be told every night during the dark half of the year.

Samhain is the time in the year when it is said the veil between the world of the living and the dead is at its thinnest. The dead of the past year, our ancestors and the inhabitants of the barrows and mounds wander and haunt the countryside throughout the Time of the Dying of the Land. Humans celebrated the eternal cycle of reincarnation and appeased the Gods, the Spirits and the Ancestors through bonfires, sacrifices and feasts. Chanting, masked people holding torches were led by the Druidic Celtic priests, and threaded their way through standing stones along a spiraling path. Here the past year would be praised and blessings would be sought for the year ahead. Two combatants would ceremonially clash; one representing the warmth and fire of the past year and the other representing the cold and darkness of the coming season. The outcome was inevitable. They made effigies, bonfires, sacrifices and feasts to win the favor of the Gods, honor the Ancestors and

ward off evil spirits. People would dress up in costumes and imitate malevolent spirits in an attempt to frighten them away and protect themselves and their livestock from sickness and death in the coming time of darkness and cold. Animals and sometimes people were sacrificed and ceremonially met death and were sent to the other world to appease the Gods, the Ancestors and the Spirits. Wicker Men are said to have been built, filled with live sacrifices and set alight; surrounded by dancing, chanting people and bats hunting insects drawn to the light. Effigies were constructed and burned, praising the past year and welcoming the new one through a purging fire to scorch away the ills of the past year. The fires of the old year would be extinguished to be replaced by new ones as the Old King died, and the Crone Goddess mourned him greatly for the following six weeks. Divinations would attempt to channel other worldly help to predict the year ahead. Offerings of food were ceremonially prepared and set at empty seats of the banquet table, or at the fire as offerings for the Ancestors, the Ancient Gods and spirits such as the Sidhe, or People of the Mounds in Irish and Scottish mythology.

This is the time of year that the Scots believed that the Cailleach, the Hag, arises from stone to walk the Earth. She has a blue-gray or almost black face (a recent corpse turns bluish-gray when the blood pools to the lowest point, one dead longer in moist climates will often develop a blue-black mold). At Samhain - the Season of the Witch - witches once gave one another acorns as gifts; during the Burning Times this was a secret means of revealing themselves to a trusted person. Acorns are fruits of the oak, one of the most sacred trees to the ancient Celts, symbolizing protection, fertility, growth and friendship.

In the 9<sup>th</sup> century, Christianity's grip on the people of Europe resembled a light at the end of a dark path to many others it looked like (and still does) destroyed lifeways, witch burnings, disrupted traditions, desecrated holy places and murder. Diverse "Pagan" traditions were erased or co-opted, corrupted and absorbed into a new monotheism. In 1000 A.D the church designated November 1 as Hallowmas (All Hallows Day or All Saints Day), and the 2nd as All Souls' Day to honour the dead. As sacrifices and Crop Spirits were stamped out, "souling" began in Britain on the night before All Hallows Day (Oct 31); whereby poor folks would go door to door visiting wealthier folks and offering to pray for the homeowners' dearly deceased in exchange for baked pastry 'soul cakes', food, money or ale. In Scotland and Ireland, young people went "guising" from home to home wearing costumes and telling jokes, singing, reciting poetry, or playing any type of "trick" in exchange for a treat such as a bit of fruit, nut or coin.

On November 5, 1606, Guy Fawkes "the last man to enter Parliament with honest intentions" was tortured and hanged for his role in a Catholic led conspiracy to blow up England's parliament building and remove the Protestant King from power. His death was celebrated from that day forth with large fireworks and communal "bone fires," which were lit to burn effigies of Guy Fawkes, the Catholic pope. Large, illegal bonfires and fireworks remain a central part of days long Halloween celebrations in Ireland and the British Isles when the streets are again wild.



In the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century Irish, Scottish and British immigrants continued to celebrate their traditions of honouring the dead in the 'New World', where the growing tradition of trick or treating evolved into a night of mischief, pranks, arson and vandalism. Parades, community organized events and urban legends (razor blade apples...) have tamed some of the wildness of Halloween, but the spirits of Samhain are eternal.

Samhain is a time of change for us to cull our lives for the upcoming season of cold and darkness and for the year ahead. We may evaluate our habits, possessions, and feelings and anything we do not wish to drag us down in the year ahead may be destroyed. It is a time to recognize the bountiful harvests in our lives and prepare for the Black Days Ahead. Because it is the time of the year when the veil between the two worlds is at its thinnest, it is a time to think of our Ancestors and of the places we have come from; and it is a time to remember and honor our beloved deceased and continue our lives carrying the spirit of theirs.

### The Corn Spirit

A harvest time tradition, common but diverse across northern European agricultural regions, was documented in *Spirits of the Corn and of the Wild* by James George Frazer, 1912; in the seventh volume of his *Golden Bough*, a study in religion and mythology. The "Corn Spirit" tradition varied widely from region to region, but essentially consisted of investing a crop (often grain or corn) to be harvested with an animal spirit such as a gander, goat, hare, cat, fox, wolf, dog, fox, cock, goose, quail, cat, goat, ox, bull, pig or horse. That animal was celebrated both as the fertilizing power of that crop, and as the malevolent force fatiguing the harvesters. Children would be warned that if they played in the field the Crop Spirit would punish them. The animal's likeness or representation would be made from the final stalks from the first crop harvested from the settlement

and ceremonially slaughtered in the field before being passed to the next completed harvest field and the next, until it arrived at the individual who was threshing or reaping the very Last Stalk in the settlement. In Skye this was known as the *goabhir bhacagh* or Cripple Goat; the Corn Spirit who had been crippled by the cutting of the corn stalks and had fled to the remaining corn. In some regions the last harvester was ridiculed and mocked by having their face blackened, and paraded through the settlement with the specific animal effigy made from corn or grain stalks (ex: Barley Cow) tied to their back. The real animal version would then be slaughtered (often by the last thresher) and feasted upon ceremonially by all the harvesters. Some region's Crop Spirits were a human female Corn Maiden or Corn Mother who would be symbolically sacrificed (not actually killed) and their flesh and blood symbolically consumed (perhaps inspiring a certain Christian tradition...) In other regions the final stalks were braided together in the field and the reapers threw their sickles at it, each trying to cut it and thus "kill the Oats Boar" (etc). This individual would thus be celebrated, as in regions where the person who scythed the last stalk was said to have "killed (or caught) the Rye Wolf" (etc). Part of the crop spirit was often kept to be mixed in with the seeds of the next season, to ensure luck, fertility and a bountiful harvest for the year to come.

*By Dylan with Lots of thanx to Rebecca and Brian for showing me the most authentic Samhain I could ever imagine; everyone who's made Hallowe'en dark and spooky for me over the years; and to the urchins of Dublin who set the city on fire every year and make this time wild and scary again.*

# FOOD & HARVEST RECIPES

## FROM COOP TO PLATE

### A BEGINNERS GUIDE TO PROCESSING CHICKENS

By Jenn-Ra

This past May I was invited to a pig roast at the home of one my husband's coworker's. The guy worked the day shift as opposed to the night shift that my husband works so we weren't too familiar with him, but he lived 3 miles up the road from us and we looked at it as a great opportunity to get to know our neighbors. Our friend Danny (recently named Reserve Grand Champion of Kentucky Barbeque) was manning the smoker and cooking up the pig, so we drank beers and shot the shit with him and our host, Dan.

Danny had hatched out some chicks for me and was showing me a picture of them when Dan took notice and invited us to check out his set up. The corner of Dan's house was a pen housing about a dozen young Amercunas (aka easter eggs chickens), further up the hill was a large coop with around 30 chickens of mixed breeds, and next to that was a trampoline surrounded by chicken wire with 15 Cornish X's. "I'm processing these guys next month." He explained to us. Instantly my husband volunteered us to help, neither one of us had done anything like that, so we were more than willing to get some experience before we had to do it ourselves. Dan was thrilled that he was getting some help and plans were made for June.

The day came and the three of us (Dan, my husband, and myself) slaughtered, plucked, gutted and packaged 15 chickens. I grew up hearing horror stories from my great aunts about having to kill chickens on the family farm; having to hold them between their legs while they cut off the head and hold

on until the chicken stopped moving. Fortunately we used the "road cone method" which is a lot less traumatizing. We were given four chickens in return for our services, but most importantly that day we gained the friendship of our neighbor Dan and his wife Shawnda and a great amount of knowledge that I will attempt to pass on to y'all.

I'm getting ready to process my own chickens in the next few weeks, so without further adieu, let's kill some chickens.

#### Materials Needed:

One or Two Friends to Help  
One Road Cone  
A really sharp knife (or two)  
A hatchet  
Two 2x4s approx. 2 feet in length (other similar sized pieces of wood can be used)  
Large garbage can or two  
A large pot of water and heat source (we used a turkey fryer, but a canning stove, camping stove or small fire would work as well)  
Garden hose or other water source for rinsing  
Large tub of cold water

#### Directions

**Step 1. Gather and Set up Materials** - Start boiling water. Cut the top off of the road cone so the chicken's head will fit through. Place the boards over the trash can and place upside down road cone on the boards.

**Step 2. Grab a Chicken** - Place chicken upside down in the road cone. Have one or two people lift the boards with the cone over the trash can. Grab chicken by the head and cut its throat with your knife (you can cut off its

head if you are able to but it's not necessary.) Set the cone back down and let the blood drain out of the chicken. We have all heard the phrase "like a chicken with its head cut off." This is an involuntary muscle reflex that happens after death. Once the chicken has stopped moving take it out of the road cone. Use the hatchet to cut off its head if the head is still attached. If you are slaughtering multiple chickens, go ahead and kill a few more before moving on to the next step. When we did it we would kill four at a time.

**Step 3 Plucking** - Grab the chicken by the feet and dip it in the boiling water for just a second or two, any longer and you risk cooking the skin that can lead to tearing or worse, actually cooking the meat. Hold it over your trash can and start pulling out feathers. Don't worry about the very tips of the wings or the tail, you're going to cut those parts off later.

**Step 4 Gutting** - Cut off the feet, wing tips and tail of the bird and discard. Lay it down on its back. Make an upside down "V" shaped incision on the bottom of the chicken. Hold the bird over the trash can and start pulling out the guts, being very careful not to rupture the intestines. Cut the esophagus out at the top of the neck. You can save the liver, gizzard, and giblets if you want, or you can throw them out. Once all entrails are removed, rinse out the cavity of the bird and place it in the tub of cold water.

**Step 5 Packaging** - Dry the chickens off with a towel. Now use whatever you want to pack them in, we used vacuum sealing bags, but you can also use plastic baggies or butcher paper. If you plan on cooking a chicken in

the next three days put it in the fridge and place the rest in your freezer.

#### **Step 6 - Cook that Chicken!**

##### Jenn-Ra's Fried Chicken

Separate the legs, thighs, and wings, from the bird. Next, cut the chicken in half, length wise. Split the breast in half. I like to use the back to make stock for gravy, but you can cut the back in half and fry it up too.

Place the parts in buttermilk for least an hour, this will make the flour stick and come out super crispy. Place about two cups of flour in a bag (paper or plastic) and then add several generous pinches of salt, paprika, cumin, ancho chili powder, dill, rosemary, thyme, and a small pinch of tarragon and cayenne (depending on how spicy your want it) Take the chicken out of the buttermilk and put it in the flour and shake like crazy. You can let the chicken hang out in the flour for about 30 mins (shake it up periodically), or you can start frying.

Heat up your oil in a dutch oven or deep fryer (pick one that can stand higher temperatures like peanut, vegetable, or corn). I don't know what the exact temperature is, I just wait until a little bit of flour starts to bubble when added to the oil. Cook the chicken a few pieces at a time for about 20 mins, (as juices escape from the chicken the oil will start sizzling violently, this is normal but keep an eye on it to make sure it doesn't boil over,) then place on a wire rack to drain. Keep your chicken warm in a 200 degrees F (93 degrees C) oven, Serve your chicken with your favorite sides, I like mashed potatoes and gravy, boiled greens and corn.

## METAL NETTLE KOMBUCHA

By Trevor Newhart

Nettle Kombucha is simply a batch of kombucha (fermented tea) made up of Stinging Nettles (*Urtica Dioicia*) instead of tea from the true tea plant (*Camellia sinensis*). I came up with the idea of this drink for an herbalism course in which I was tasked with choosing a plant and exploring its medicinal potential. Given the abundance of Nettle in my area, and its constant stinging pleas for attention, Nettle was a natural choice. Combined with my current adoration of fermentation, this deliciously nutritious beverage was born. The great thing about this drink is its intense flavor. It tastes considerably more pungent while not necessarily being more acidic or acridic (burning the back of your throat) than normal kombucha. Another cool feature is its tenacity in carbonating, simply pouring it from the jar into a glass will leave it bubbling for a good five to ten minutes. However, it is the potential medicinal applications that I find most exciting.

In Western herbalist practice, Nettles are most commonly used as an Amphoteric; meaning an herb that is "good for

everything". This is because Nettles are extremely vitamin, mineral and Chlorophyll rich. Ingestion of Nettles is also used to treat ailments such as Arthritis, Scatia, Anemia, Rheumatism and Kidney stones. While this beverage is not intended to treat these ailments, given Nettles' amphoteric nature and the general benefits imparted by lacto-fermentation (digestive, immune, mental/emotional aid and regulation) it is not irrational to believe that nettle kombucha could be a functional component of a treatment plan. One application for particularly strong batch would be as a menstrum (substance used to extract) for an elixir (vinegar herbal extraction) or Oxymel (vinegar and honey extraction). Another strong batch could be used to make a cooking vinegar, flavored with thyme, rosemary, basil and other common kitchen herbs, which could be used as a salad dressing base or for sautéing greens (possibly nettles [inception herbalism]). Though my favorite use of Nettle Kombucha is as an everyday tonic, specifically flavored to your specific taste and constitution.

#### **Process:**

The process for making Nettle Kombucha is entirely the same as making standard Kombucha, but I will include a broad description of the steps for anyone who is unfamiliar.

#### **Materials:**

2-3 heaping (preferably gloved) Handfuls of fresh Nettle or 1 handful dried/  
1 cup of sweetener (sugar, honey, maple syrup, agave nectar)/ 1 gallon non-chlorinated water/ A Kombucha SCOBY with Kombucha starter in a gallon jar/ bottles (flip-top or pop-off with bottle capper).

**Step One:** Trouble is Brewing: Bring the Gallon of water to boil and allow to cool for a few minutes. Add the Nettle and Sweetener (if you are using raw honey, you may want to wait for the water to cool to a safe temperature, as not to kill the microbes in the honey). You may strain the tea as soon as it reaches room temperature, or you may allow it to sit overnight, before straining, as to more thoroughly extract the nutrients in the Nettle.

**Step Two:** Feed the (Tea) Beast: Pour the cooled, strained Nettle tea into the jar with your SCOBY and Kombucha starter. Cover with a rag or length of cheesecloth to allow air, but not bugs, into the jar. Set the SCOBY in a warm, dark place. Note: you may have extra Nettle tea. Drink it.

**Step Three:** Bear Witness: Check in

on the SCOBY daily. Taste it often and wait for a pungency that you enjoy. It will usually mature in seven to ten days.

**Step Four:** Choose Your Fate: Pour the mature tea into bottles and add any flavoring would like. Fresh fruit or vegetables, juices, and seeds all make wonderful additions. My personal favorite flavors are fresh ginger, crushed cacao nibs, and blackberries (so PNW). Now seal the bottles and place them in a dark, warm spot. Now is the time to start brewing your second batch.

**Step Five:** Reap the Rewards: After a couple of days open a bottle and see how it has carbonated. If you are happy with the results, move all of the bottles to the refrigerator to chill out. If the bottle is flat, re-cap it and check another bottle in a couple of days.

**Step Six:** Share the Bounty: Drink a bottle with your friends, family, animals or anyone you can convince to try some. Also, share your successes, failures, questions, hate mail, or sci-fi/fantasy short stories with me at:

Trevor Newhart  
760 Redwood Dr, box 17  
Garberville, Ca 95542

# COMFORT THE SOUL, NOURISH THE GUT

By Amy Snowdon Isaikina

This is one of my favorite times of the year; the changing leaves, last warm sunny days, and the cool wind blowing in giving us a taste of the season to come. Autumn is a busy time of harvesting, preserving, cutting wood, prepping for the snow and trying to squeeze in the last desires of canoeing and summer activities.

The key to remaining happy and healthy in all of the rush is ensuring that we all take some time to step back from our day to day lives and appreciate the simple things to take pleasure from. Whether it is the return of the aurora borealis, wearing big woolly sweaters, hiking through the fall colors, cuddling up by a fire with a book, watching the wood pile get larger, or seeing the frosts glistening on the grounds in the morning, we need to look around and express gratitude for the things that we truly love.

One of the things I treasure most is coming inside after a cool nippy day and enjoying a steaming bowl of soup that brings comfort to the soul. Comforting nutrition is the ability to achieve satisfaction from the easiest of meals to eat. As a world traveler, my passion has been collecting recipes and learning family cooking secrets from around the globe. Pairing them together is a form of creativity that I enjoy. Right now I am hooked on ginger carrot soup, soft bread rolls and olivye salad. The spicy ginger carrot soup allows you to take fresh carrots from the garden and blend them in a melody of spices and creamy coconut milk into a hearty stick

to your ribs steaming bowl of goodness. I discovered this soup from an Australian friend who was visiting me here in the north of Canada, who taught me about the importance of detoxing and the value of root vegetables for the digestive system. Soft bread rolls are a long lasting tradition for every festive meal that has been passed through my family, currently in Ontario, for many generations. Their fast creation leads to perfect roundness, that is never flawed, and marveled at with every spongy bite soaked with butter. Olivye comes from Ukraine, a new palate that I was introduced to upon marrying my husband. Ukrainians have the most unique combinations of ingredients that produce dishes that have never failed to amaze me. This salad uses the bounty of your fall harvest to make a salad that will give you more warmth and power in cooler weather.

Wishing you and your taste buds all the best for the coming season. Love and Light, Amy

## Spicy Ginger Carrot Soup

### INGREDIENTS

2 tablespoons coconut oil  
1 small onion, chopped  
2 tablespoons ginger, minced  
2 garlic cloves, smashed and chopped  
1 teaspoon ground cumin  
6 carrots, washed and chopped into pieces  
1 can coconut milk (12-14 oz)  
1 cup vegetable broth

4 tablespoons fresh lemon juice  
Sea salt and black pepper

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat coconut oil in a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add the chopped onions and sauté until translucent.
2. Add the ginger and garlic to the onions, and cook for another minute. Add the cumin and stir well for 30 seconds.
3. Add the chopped carrots and sauté for a few minutes, then add the coconut milk and vegetable broth. Lower heat to a simmer and cook for 20 minutes, or until the carrots are just tender.
4. Puree soup with an immersion blender or standard blender. (Use caution when using a standard blender. The soup will be hot!) If soup is too thick, add extra broth or coconut milk.
5. Add the desired amount of lemon juice plus a little sea salt and black pepper. Serve hot.

## Soft Dinner Rolls

### INGREDIENTS

1 cup milk  
1/3 cup butter  
1/3 cup sugar  
1/2 tsp salt  
4 1/4 cups flour  
2 1/2 tsp dry yeast  
2 eggs

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a pot combine the milk, butter and sugar and heat until melted and warm
2. Separately mix 2 cups of the flour and the dry yeast

3. Then add them together along with the 2 eggs and stir until pasty
4. Pinch in the salt and try and mix in as much of the remaining flour as possible
5. Knead into dough and let rise in an oily bowl until doubled, approx. 1 hour
6. Punch down and divide into half, leaving for 10 minutes to rest
7. Grease 2 round 9" baking pans and divide each half into desired ball sizes
8. Place into pans and let rise until double, about 30 minutes
9. Bake in an oven that has been preheated to 375 degrees F for 12 - 15 minutes

## Olivye Salad

### INGREDIENTS

3 potatoes  
2 carrots  
6 eggs  
1 cup green peas  
1/2 kilo ham  
2 small onions  
Green onion (optional)  
1/2 cucumber (optional)  
Mayo

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Individually boil the potatoes, carrots, ham, eggs, and peas until they are fully cooked
  2. Let cool and peel those that need it
  3. Dice everything into small cubes and mix together in a large bowl
  4. Stir in enough mayo to mix into a creamy salad
- \*Note - For longer keep, mix everything together without the mayo and place in a sealed container in the fridge. Take out amount you desire and add mayo.

# BLUEBERRY ICE CREAM

MADE IN  
SLOVENIA

By Katja Zupancic

I'm a rural punk from Slovenia and in the past few months I have been living in a village in Triglav National park. I'm new and fresh here.

This year nature was very generous with us, in the forest we have many mushrooms, blueberries, wild strawberries and other plants.

Slovene punks like to go to the forest from the cities and villages. Forests are public and private, but anyone can go to pick the mushrooms or berries. People like to compete: who has more mushrooms in the basket, or who found the biggest one. But most of all, you are never supposed to say where you found them. You have to keep the spot a secret. We have a special basket and knife for cutting and cleaning them in a proper way. It is a tradition in Slovenia and you learn it from your parents or grandparents.

It has been raining a lot this year, and in Slovenia we have a temperate rainforest just like Alaska. When the temperatures are mild, and when it rains a lot, you can pick some mushrooms in the morning and in the late afternoon you will find new, fresh ones.

After bringing them home we make many different dishes, but our most popular is mushroom soup; you will find it on the menu of every local restaurant in Slovenia.

What we can't eat we put in the freezer for the long winter.

Our friend has a mountain hut close by. There is no shower, the toilet is very plain, no electricity or TV, and even cell phones do not work. We cook on the fire and we eat what we get from nature. We bring only the

basic stuff, some flower to make the bread, butter, beans, etc.

There are so many different fresh herbs and plants in the mountains that we can drink a different tea every day.

It is a blueberry season now and we've been there a few times. We take a basket and a small cup. The bushes are very small, so you have to be close to the ground. It takes two hours to pick one liter of blue berries. Time passes fast, and only when the basket is full you return to the hut where lunch is waiting. Your knees and back hurt, but you feel good when you see the basket full of blue fruits.

We like to eat them plain or cook marmalade. It is absolutely delicious. My favorite is for sure the blue berry ice-cream. Here is my recipe for my blue berry ice-cream:

One cup of blueberries  
One sweet cream  
four spoons of plain yogurt from the local farmer  
a few spoons of honey or brown sugar  
You put blue berries, yogurt and honey into the blender. I don't like it to be too liquidy. You whip the sweet cream and mix it with blueberry mixture. Then you need plastic molds for the ice-cream lollipops. You put them in the freezer for a few hours.

There is nothing more splendid than to sit in your garden on a warm summer day, listening to the birds and enjoying the taste of blueberry ice-cream while admiring the view of the Julian Alps peaks.

# REAP THE AUTUMN TREATS SIMPLE FALL RECIPES

## by Scrump

It's getting dam cold out! The killing frost has come. There's been an unmistakable nip in the air whispering that winter is on its way. The wood stoves are being stoked up after a summer of being used as extra coffee tables collecting stacks of paper and half drunk mugs of tea. Food prep can be and is abstract, creative and expressive, just like an art project or anything you put your personal twist on. So I have provided quantities and ingredients, but a lot of recipes have room to play, dance away from the recipe, substitute, add or subtract ingredients. Turn your kitchen into a mad scientist experimentation station!

Here's a few recipes for the food projects I've been getting into these days;

### Apple Pear Whiskey Butter!!

4 lbs apples  
2 lbs pears  
1 cup apple cider vinegar  
dash of salt  
2 tsp cinnamon  
1 tsp cloves  
1 tsp all spice  
juice of 1 lemon  
WHISKEY!!!  
4tbls maple syrup (optional)  
Add apples, pears, spices, salt, lemon juice and apple cider vinegar to a baking pan and mix it all together.  
Set the oven for 350 and bake for apx 45 min stirring occasionally.  
Throw it all in a blender and add your whiskey (or rum)  
I canned by submerging my jars in a big pot of boiling water for 15 min.

### Chai Tea

I love having a big ol' pot of chai sitting on the wood stove with a ladle, free for all to

dip into.

10 cups water  
20 cloves  
20 cardamom pods  
20 peppercorns  
5-8 cinnamon sticks  
8-10 slices of ginger root  
Sprinkling of star anise  
2 tsp Black tea (Rooibos tea is a great un-caffeinated version)  
Bring to a boil then let simmer for 20 min.  
Add 1/2 cup honey  
Cup of milk/almond milk.

I let this just sit on the stove top with the contents inside to let the tea continue to steep and get nice and strong.

### Black Bean Brownies!

Real simple, and no kidding this recipe is bomb diggity!

540 ml (a little over 2 cups) of cooked black beans  
3 eggs  
1/2 cup cocoa powder  
1/2 cup of coconut oil  
3/4 cup sweetener  
1/2 cup of chocolate chips  
1 tbls vanilla x-tract  
optional: nuts, cinnamon or a dash of cayenne

Pulverize this all in a blender and pour into a greased pan  
pre-heat oven to 400, bake at 350 for 30-40 min!

By Monty Crustfoot

Black metal as a genre is highly stigmatized by its associations with toxic ideologies that many folks involved in radical politics detest--- homophobia, national/racial pride, Nazi sympathy, among many others. These aspects alone are enough to bane even the most metal-loving punks out there. Despite this, the genre has evolved far beyond the precedents set by the Norwegians in the Second Wave. From what I can gather, it appears that black metal is entering a new wave that welcomes deviation, challenges cultural norms, and even embraces "progressive" politics. I can think of no greater example of this movement's anarcho-spearhead than Panopticon.

Austin Lunn is the sole force behind Panopticon--- the lone wolf providing all instrumentation and vocals. This isn't an uncommon occurrence within the genre of black metal, yet Lunn raises the bar an extra notch by also taking the role of being a full bluegrass outfit, complete with banjo picking, sliding guitar, and the elegant sounds of the mandolin. Black metal has many roots in folk music, but to hear bluegrass so finely juxtaposed with the raw cacophony of blast beats and tremolo picking is an experience one has to hear firsthand to truly understand.

Admittedly, I am slightly biased when it comes to this project. Panopticon's release of 2012, "Kentucky," was the first album that I had heard in quite some time that had struck me directly in the soul of who I perceive myself to be as a person, and especially as a rural Appalachian. It was so apparent in this music that the grandeur of the Appalachian Mountains had played such a crucial role in forging the identity of Austin Lunn, much as they have in my life. After listening to this record countless times while hiking, it became permanently sealed in my memory as a reminder of a time when I strived to be as intimate as I could with the landscape that I called home. Ever since, I have followed each and every release that Lunn has brought forth and waited eagerly to experience his new albums the way they were intended to be heard: through the crisp sounds of vinyl record.

"Roads to the North," released in August 2014, is a reflection of what it means to discover the intrinsic definition of home. In the case of Panopticon, this meant momentarily settling in the far reaches of Norway. In the ever-changing world that we share, it is sometimes necessary to leave behind the familiar and embark on new challenges in order to experience personal growth and development, even if that means temporarily relinquishing interpersonal

relationships to do so. A simple change in scenery can have a profound impact on the way one appreciates their own culture and upbringing, and the radical shifts in perspective these experiences offer are something so crucial for everyone to undergo, especially us rural folk who so often feel disconnected from lifestyles that contrast our own. "Roads to the North" could easily be defined as one of these "radical shifts in perspective."

The record itself gleams in a shimmering electric blue splatter, evoking the splendor of a starry Norwegian night. The disharmonic introduction is laced with forlorn echoes of nostalgia, which is beautifully juxtaposed with the euphony of folk instruments singing their praises to majesty of Norway's towering mountains. "The Long Road," my favorite track on the album, is an odyssey through a range of emotions presented through three movements. The first of the three movements, "One Last Fire," is a composition that captures one of the most familiar and cherished experiences shared amongst us rural punks--- the primal ecstasy conjured by relishing in the comfort of a roaring fire with one's closest friends. On a surface level, black metal and bluegrass seem so far removed from one another, but when placed adjacent to one another, it becomes apparent that bluegrass is truly the equivalent of heavy metal in the realm of folk music.

Lunn's personal development since this project's inception is wonderfully manifested in this album, with this release offering the greatest production value in the Panopticon arsenal, and presenting a refreshing, matured outlook. Black metal has become trite with its empty, vapid cries of misanthropy and an overall mission statement of hopelessness. In a world so bleak where the natural realm has been forsaken in favor of limitless consumption and profit without restraint, these feeble cries of pessimism offer no advantage in overcoming the obstacles of capitalism and the rape of our earth. These nihilistic outlooks only lead to political burn-out: the dire enemy of progress. "Roads to the North" is a rallying cry to abandon our feelings of futility when it comes to making a change in this world. Forget seeing our lives through the veil of cynicism. The abundance of natural beauty is too great to become disenchanted with the idea of autonomy and self-sufficiency. Don't let the fire die out. Woodland denizens unite!

"Roads to the North" is available on CD and gatefold double-LP through Bindrune Recordings and Nordvis.



## THE FROST DIGS DEEP IN THE GARDEN

By Rebecca Kneen

Autumn is a special time of year. When I was a kid, it was probably the most frustrating season: I had to be in school, missing some great weather and all kinds of pleasant work being done on the farm. Haying was over, most of the weeding was done for the season, we were busy tightening up the barns for winter, processing food like crazy, selecting which sheep to put to which rams, and taking lots of walks to enjoy Nova Scotia's fall colours. It always felt like the earth was taking a deep breath and relaxing after all the crazy productivity of summer and getting ready to snuggle in for a nice deep winter's rest. All those drifts of beautiful leaves fall into a quilt!

Now here, on the other side of the continent, in BC, the same joyful, peaceful melancholy strikes me - but without all the gorgeous leaves. We are busy collecting seed, selecting rams and ewes, drying and preserving food, building mouse-proof containers for the cold cellar, and putting the garden to bed. In a month we'll celebrate Samhain, and the end of the year cycle. Winter will raise her arms over us, and it will be time to sauna and dive into the snow once again, to sit by the stove and spin, to plan for another year's farming. But first, we have to let go a bit.

In the spring, all our focus is on the year's projects. We'll finish the hops press, make a new cider room, build another root cellar, fix all the fences, make new paddocks so we can properly rotate the sheep through the pasture, transplant a bunch of new trees into the buffer zones, clean up this field and replant that one. We'll grow two new varieties of melons just to see if they'll ripen, and three new spices we might be able to use in the brewery. So many things to do! Start everything in the greenhouse, get more compost on the house garden and green manures into the areas for next year's garden rotation. Did all the trees get pruned? Do they have their codling moth traps on?

Then summer launches, and all that spring preparation starts to bear fruit. Mostly in weeds at first, then suddenly in FOOD!

Lambs, chicks and ducklings all suddenly arrive and need tending. Then the coyotes, ravens and hawks arrive too. We spend all summer trying to keep up with and finish what we started in the spring, running full tilt. Sometimes we even forget to go jump in the lake at 4:00, because we have just a few more things to do before dinner. Long evenings are an excuse to head back to the garden to finish thinning the carrots, not a leisurely visit over drinks (although this year I did finally manage to make a tonic water syrup so I can have a great gin & tonic without all the high fructose corn syrup). Come to think of it, the appropriate application of G&T at the right time of day usually results in a long evening visiting, since nothing else suddenly matters.

So autumn is special. Summer's work is winding down, the foods have started to change, and the rush of festivals, events, visitors and chores is easing off. Now we look at the projects left to complete from spring's giant list and evaluate them. What can wait? What is too late to do altogether? What wasn't maybe the best idea we've ever had, and can we now abandon with a sigh of relief? There's a sweetness to this season that's different from any other. Apples, pears, late raspberries all have a tang to them. Herbs are sharper, meat is gamier. Wood smoke tints the air again after summer's fire bans. We look again at the woodpile and feel safe. I go into my cold cellar repeatedly and count jars, bags and bins to see what I have, and what still needs to be processed before snow.

And then the big frost. Not the little one that (finally) knocked back the zucchini, but the big one that says goodbye to everything left in the garden. That's it, folks. Anything you didn't get done is off the list until next year! Hurray first snow! Cover this year's errors, omissions and weeds. Let me let go of too-ambitious plans and one or two failures! Cover up all that wonderful garden and let it sleep, so it can grow even more next year. Let the apple trees sleep, let the pond freeze over, let the chickens move back into their house. Let's all rest a bit, so we can rise at Beltaine and do it all again, a bit better next time.



# MONSTERS REBORN

A SERIES BY JONAH RATFACE CUTLER



The Event Horizon (top left): God from another dimension, her mechanical eyes see all time and reality unfolding on top of its self at once. She is ancient, born before the stars of our infantile universe were even considered. She wears the children of her former self impaled upon her crown. Event Horizon, the Seer of Doom who was known in the before as only Horizon the Light Bringer, the Mother of the Morning. Madness is her new child, conceived in the death of a star, twin reptiles forever dead and alive.

Old Snake (top right): A ghoulish of rot. A lesser demon messenger to the lord of the unrealm. He is made of all things in transition from living to dead, decay is the tunnel his physical form travels through. The small beasts are his avatars. Blind to all but rage and hate, they carry his message along all passages of reality. Made to be a servant to the old corruptions, Snake Eye has grown devious and treacherous in the eons since his creation. He has plans of becoming a great usurper, to bring down all veils that divide the unrealm from our own. His secret desire is to hear the howling winds that exist between worlds escape their confinement and scream across all lands.

Tak (bottom left): Old man, old man of the desert. Born in a collapsed coal mine. Young as far as the great monsters go, but old next to the apes that freed him. He is the vulture and the coyote. He is glowing yellow eyes in the night and home to nocturnal poison in the day. He is the sexual prevision pulsing in your loins when great violence is committed before you. Tak is the burning heat stretched out endlessly in all directions before you.

instagram: ratfacedraws

# SOMEONE WITH WHOM TO TALK DIRTY

By Anonymus

When we moved to the country, we made a list of schemes for how to support ourselves. Pretty much everything was on the table: harvesting firewood (with minimal chainsaw experience, at that point), a small farm (with minimal resources for start-up), a local food and performance cafe, a brothel...the list was long.

So, as it turned out, we financed our move to the country mostly with money from pot work and porn shoots (two-minute masturbation videos and pictures of our ass cheeks spread, in front of cheesy living room backgrounds). That's another story, but it's some background.

A year and a half into our rural collective living dream house, an extended exercise in encountering our illusions about cuntry life and figuring out how work with what is and try to move past surviving toward thriving, I posted my first ad on the local sketchier-than-Craigslist for domme and fetish work. Along with two other friends, our ads comprised all three of the local ads for domme/sex work within about 60 miles.

My first client I met at the fast food restaurant at the north end of town. I was nervous about seeing coworkers/friends/neighbors in my femmed-up lipsticked attire but luckily, none in sight. He got off his motorcycle and I climbed out the passenger door of my busted-up gorgeous truck because the driver's door is caved in from a pre-insurance collision. We drove to a local hotel where he had booked a room and I proceeded to give him a gentle massage and then put my fingers in his ass, stroke his cock, and generally play and talk dirty until he came. I got paid \$225, which was more than I had made in two weeks of the occasional landscaping, driving around disabled neighbors, and tying pot plants to stakes I had been doing.

So, that was my first handjob. Some hilarious background here, to add to this strange story, is that I have had almost exclusively partners with cunts of one kind or another for my entire dating life, and though I have seen plenty of cocks in settings ranging from sex parties to orgies to eating ice cream naked in the living room with friends to time spent at radical faerie land, I found myself figuring out how to stimulate a prostate, give a hand job, and give a blow job—while on the job.

Doing sex work in a small town has been full of surprises. For one, my two friends and I who have been working it have been contacted by mostly all the same people. It makes verifying people a little easier—usually one friend or the other has already seen the john or at least screened him by running his information to make sure he's a real person and is not a cop. Once, we were both contacted by the same guy about the same appointment time, and we waited to see who he would flake on (me). Another time I saw a client and then recommended he see my friend, who was a better match for him and I could give her my take on what he was into.

Furthermore, I'm a pretty androgynous boy-girl transgender person. Day to day, I tend to choose clothes that are a) dirty and b) masculine, ish. I definitely have an inner queen who emerges at home when we play dress up in our drag closet but I've been told I look even more boyish in a dress and wig than without. I am lucky to have an awesome queer community where I live, but we rural transgender folks are still somewhat few and far between and have a less visible presence than in cities or towns with advocacy networks and pride marches. I tend to

connect with people through other things... loving where I live, walking in the woods, learning how to fish, talking about fires, endless car talk.

In my work, and amid the more normative gender expectations of this rural area, I get to talk to most of my clients about gender and power. There's a different vocabulary—many are excited to play with a 'dominant, boyish woman' or a 'femme transgender boy.' It's okay for me to be more ambiguous than when I'm in education/advocacy mode and present myself as an openly transgender person, trying to keep it uncomplicated by my other shifting identities. Working in the realm of the erotic opens up other ways to think about how gender manifests (tranifests)...in terms of power, physical presentation, genitals/body parts, voice, strength, identity, clothes...whereas in day-to-day interactions often people are confused or, at worst, judgmental, through working in an erotic sphere I have gotten to have more complex conversations about gender. For me, it has been an opportunity to play with eroticizing my femininity sometimes and my masculinity with other clients, depending on what they are into. I assume that my clients' erotic interests/curiosity/acceptance of my partially shaved head and tattoos doesn't necessarily translate to a general anti-oppressive queer-friendly way of being in the world, but my hope is that meeting (and finding that they desire) me might open up some new ways of thinking.

My clients are lawyers, businessmen, ranchers, BLM employees, forest tenders, farmers, firefighters, retirees, computer programmers. All men, a diversity of class backgrounds but all reasonably well off—enough so to pay me, anyway. Some are lonely; some are hungry for play, or not sure how to play; some are missing a sense of adventure in their lives; some can't find a date, or don't have time to. Most seem a little surprised to be asked what they want, asked about their fantasies, asked how they like what I'm doing or if I should try something different, encouraged to talk about their experiences and desires. Most seem a little surprised to meet me—that I am totally healthy, young but a little wise, cheerful, strange, bedecked in stick and poke and witchy tattoos, fully myself. The unique gifts I have gathered from my years of travelling, being a punk, learning how to protect myself while hitchhiking, allowing my wildest dreams to flourish, figuring out how to live as my truest self, practicing radical honesty, exploring the poetry of bodies and BDSM with radical queers in the basements of squats and the fields of communes, studying magic and ritual, growing into a d.i.y. antiauthoritarian with an entrepreneurial streak and a low tolerance for bosses, and committing to live a life worth living (in my own eyes)...funny enough, these are phenomenal qualifications for my job, whereas they haven't been super helpful in finding other kinds of employment locally.

With all that said, my new enterprise also feels risky here. Of course, this line of work carries its risks everywhere where sex work is still unjustly illegal, and yet connecting with people to meet their erotic needs is a well-funded black market. And here...well, this is a small town. I wear many hats and do many kinds of work locally, and of course the circles overlap. I'm definitely nervous about showing up to see a client and realizing that the "Michael" or "John" I have been corresponding with is my manager at my other job, or my next-door neighbor, or someone from my racial justice organizing collective. There's definitely one degree of separation at most. Hasn't happened yet, but last month, I decided the risks were too high and have moved to working only with the few 'regular' clients who I established

the presence of police is low here, entrapment is a real risk for all sex workers and the stigma of getting busted would be extremely damaging to the slow work of building connections across cultural difference with my woody (and largely Christian) neighbors. There is less support and much less advocacy here for sex workers than there is in many cities; my guess is that even in more progressive rural areas, there is not much public dialogue around the social role and legality of sex work, despite the probable demand for sex workers everywhere where people have desire (everywhere) and where the structuring of relationships doesn't quite work to meet everyone's desires (most places) and where there is some forum for connection, whether the street or the internet.

Being a rural sex worker has been an interesting new dimension in my relationship to class and work rurally. I think that the conversations about privilege and class, as well as their intersections with race, gender, sexuality, ability, and age, are always whirring around how people manage to live rurally. One's mobility (ability to get out of the city, or get out of the small town one grew up in—challenges either way) and the kinds of work you have access to...what risks you take...what investments you make...it's all determined by lots of factors. I'm making more money as a sex worker, but my

work is also more stigmatized than farming was. It has felt important to me to be doing sex work as a supplement to other kinds of work, so that I don't feel coerced or stuck past my genuine interest and desire to explore this kind of work. With that said, there have certainly been a few times I've driven a long way or scheduled a client when I'd rather be doing something else—of course, that's how work is for most people, I think. I feel pretty privileged and lucky that I can choose this line of work and step out of it to protect myself as needed. That's not the case for many, many of my near and far coworkers; but for some of us, sex work is a choice, and just another part of the daily cuntry (here it comes) grind.

This author lives in the rural US, on occupied indigenous land, with his chosen queer family and an awesome local web of queerdos, land-tenders, permaculturists, performers, farmers, and witches. He grew up in the countryside suburbs of a major industrial city and lived in several other cities before moving out to the country two years ago. He likes reading, growing food, picking up roadkill, wild foods, walking, putting on plays, canning and preserving, watching cats and chickens, local history, culture making/shifting, and making art informed by wildness.

## CUNTRY BOYZ

By Clint Hardwood

from Bumpass, Virginia (look it up, it's a real place!)

It's hunting season again, which means all the boys are out flaunting their vehicular expressions of masculinity: jacked up Toyotas with monster tires, dog box in the back, radar antenna on the roof. All these fresh faced redneck boys in head to toe realtree. And every year they come looking for their dogs down our long driveway. Most of them stop at the "end state maintenance" sign, sit there in the truck, running the engine and whistling until all my dogs mob their truck and they give up and go home. The bolder ones go right past the "no trespassing", past our old rusty gate, right up the house. Sometimes they seem surprised to find a house here, the driveway as bad as it is. And then there's you. You don't look surprised. You've been here before, last year. You're looking for your bluetick bitch again. Radar says she's down here, huh? She might be. She mighta killed one of my chickens, before I put her in the kennel around back. This the one? Yeah. You're sorry, offer some money. Whatever. It's just a chicken. But then you let your eyes drop to the front of my jeans, let them linger a moment too long, and I catch you looking. Now I remember you. You boys are all the same. Come down here wasting my damn time acting shy. Bullshitting me about some dog. You probably set her loose at the top of the road half an hour ago. I don't even kiss you, just grab you by the hair, unzip my wranglers with the other had. Your eyes are hungry, begging. My cock is huge, black, silicone. The leather straps hug my ass, soft and supple from years of wear. And then your flushed red lips are on me, devouring me, and I have to reach for your tailgate to steady myself. I lean back on your truck and let you go to town. You straight boys sure know how to suck cock good. Just the sight of it makes me weak in the knees. You're really working hard now, letting me grind into you, gagging a little then catching your breath. Good boy. One last thrust and I push you off me, pull you to your feet and kiss you finally, your lips hot, your eyes watering. I want to bend you over the truck but it's too tall, stupid impractical lift. You gotta think about these things before you jack a truck up that high. Let's go around back instead, to the

old swing set where I've got a deer hanging. There's a spare set of hooks hanging next to it, just a foot or so over your head. I pull off my belt in one swipe, let it crack across your ass once, just teasing, before I wrap it tight around your wrists and loop it over the gambrel hook. You groan softly and lean into me while I run my hands down your chest. This is how I like you best, vulnerable, just a little scared, and all mine. You gasp when I shove a hand down your pants between your ass cheeks. Next I've got your belt undone, struggling for a moment to unzip your jeans with your cock pressing so hard on the zipper. But then they're off, down around your ankles. You're grinding your ass into me now. You little slut. You need this. Too scared to ask your girlfriend to fuck you, so you come to me. I know what to do with boys like you. No lube handy, I reach for a little piece of deer fat which melts easily on your steaming hot flesh. I've got a hand on your dick and one on your ass, one finger pressing hard on your prostate and you are moaning hard, hanging all your weight on the gambrel hook. I let you rock into me for a little while before I pull my finger out and grease my cock, find your tight asshole with it and listen for your gasp. You breath out, I push in, and you take it, you take the whole thing. Your eyes roll back and you're grunting, you don't even hear the noises coming out of your mouth. Your back muscles are rippling, I'm slamming your tiny hips onto me, your dick in my right fist until you cum hard with a shout, blowing your load onto the dry leaves below us and I hold you tight while you shudder against my chest for what feels like forever. I unhook you, tenderly now, and unwrap my belt from your hands, rub the welts on your wrists. Keep your dog away from my chickens, ok? You nod, breathless and starry eyed. Pull your pants up, buckle your belt, and go get your dog. You've got her in the dog box and one foot up in your truck before you turn back to me and whisper thanks. I smirk. Tell your redheaded friend to come back sometime I say, the one with the freckles. You blush and start the engine. I watch you drive away with one hand under my cock circling my rock hard clit. When you're gone I lean into the nearest tree and come hard, twice, three times before unbuckling my harness and getting back to skinning that deer.

# PULLING WEEDS

By Cat Meow

**weed:** wēd - *noun*  
a wild plant growing where it is not wanted and in competition with cultivated plants

“There is nothing sustainable in taking oranges grown in the southern hemisphere, pulverising them into an artificially sweetened and nutritionless juice, packaging them in petroleum products, and shipping them thousands of kilometers to the (sub)arctic in the dead of winter to finally be sold for \$9.75”

The Earth spins a precarious round, and each animal is left to navigate the equivocal act of nourishing themselves. It is clear with the looming threat of rising sea levels, ozone depletion, carbon cycle feedback loops, concepts like peak oil, etc., that humanity (or individuals exercising enormous power in human society) has not achieved an effective balance in its attempts at subsistence. We are nearing a time where we may have to face the fact that we have cultivated our inevitable destruction, and this is conjuring a growing discussion around the idea of ‘sustainability.’

That isn't to say humanity has not had beautiful examples of individuals, communities and nations participating in reciprocal relationships with the life around them, drawing what they need from those relationships in a way that ensures the perpetuation of all beings

involved. Unfortunately, we live in a world where there exists a certain idea that humanity should have dominion over the Earth, and this in turn has sullied our conversations on sustainability.

The contemporary power which I (and many others) identify as claiming a title over the land and beings whom encompass it has taken many names and forms; the West, imperialism, colonialism, capitalism, eurocentrism, ‘civilization’ etc. For this piece, I will borrow a word from botany, I will call this power the cultivars. This power, this system, we all participate with it in one way or another, we contribute to it, we fight it, we live in and around it.

**cultivar:** cul-ti-var *noun*  
a race or variety of a plant that has been created or selected intentionally and maintained through cultivation

The culture of the cultivars is one of ascendancy, the belief that manipulating and controlling one's environment places humanity and civilization on a higher tier of existence, one which no other animal or being could achieve. It is a competitive culture, a hierarchical structure which uproots ideas and people, things and creatures, and places them in neat lines, constantly rooting through the soil for the deviants. It is a culture of pulling weeds.

The narratives, or garden beds, sewn by the cultivars are in place to tell us where there is value, or rather, where they see no value. It teaches us what to consume: employment, entertainment, relationships and food. We are taught that nutritive value is found only in the well tilled soils of agriculture. One cannot trust the wild, the Other, the weeds, to sustain one's self.

Plants that are indigenous to the boreal regions which I call home are rich in nutrients essential to the maintenance and growth of human systems. Of course, this is not new knowledge and since time immemorial Indigenous peoples who inhabit this eco-region have carried this understanding through the oral tradition. The way Dene communities, for instance, interacted with the local flora was a meaningful relationship, tied to medicine and health.

Upon their arrival to the territories which these nations occupied, in the spirit of keeping everything in its designated place, the cultivars refused to accept this semiotic reciprocity; food and medicine was to be cultivated and commoditized, the rest was merely weeds.

In the North, there is a certain dependence on the industry which the cultivars have created. It is no secret that food security is a major concern for the people that live here, the plant foods (and frankly, all foods) found in stores that people enjoy are only available at ridiculously inflated costs. As they are distributed through a monetary system, they are only accessible to those who participate in that system. This characteristically resembles cultivation; the environment that is created only supports the intentionally selected traits that are deemed worthy. If one wishes to eat and maintain health, it is becoming increasingly necessary to offer money in exchange, money that is only obtained through predetermined ‘useful’ outlets.

If you wish to buy food from a store, you must pay. If you wish to

hunt, you must pay for bullets, gas, sometimes permits. In the arid conditions of the north we find that even small scale farming and gardening is limited and indeed costly. If you wish to accrue currency for payment, you have little choice in how to collect it.

Not only is collecting money to sustain oneself difficult to navigate in terms of choice, as the monetary system which has been imposed is a product of the cultivars, it inherently can only really serve their purposes and not those outside of their plan; it cannot support alternative means of self-sustenance, it will not support the tradition of reciprocity for that would break down their systems, that would mean the weeds would overrun the garden.

Especially in smaller, more isolated northern communities, employment tends to lean towards resource extraction (or something related). Indeed, the culture of the cultivars in the collective territories of the north is built around those industries, pillaging the Earth for its plenty is the fertilizer to the soil. And what a well plotted system! In order to bring these costly foods so far from the places where they were harvested, many resources are required: petroleum products in the form of plastics and fuel for transportation, minerals and metals to build the carriers and computers that process all of this information- these are all things one can find deep in the untilled soils of the north.

How do we escape this dependency? It is through human tampering that our climate is wavering to its current degree. Ecological change is not only on the horizon, but has already come. The aggressive digging, tilling, pulling, rooting, coopting, slashing and clearing that the cultivars are so dependent on to grow their culture is the direct cause. Our participation in these systems is causing us to kill the soil, and quickly. As we burn fuels and dig immeasurable holes into the ground, as we suck all the nutrients from the soil, we watch the animals respond, the water, the plants, the Earth all suffer at our dirt stained hands.

The cultivars would have us think that ‘sustainable development’ is our answer, but how can we sustain anything if ultimately it is through a force we know only has the end goal of exploitation? Is then ‘sustainable development’ only a ruse? Sustainable exploitation would be a more appropriate title, but an oxymoron doesn't have the same marketability.

“Over a decade ago I was teaching a class with Nishnaabeg Elder Robin Green-ba and a scientist at the Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources in Winnipeg.

Our class was discussing what is meant by the term “sustainable development.” The scientist was explaining that it means meeting the needs (and wants) of humans without compromising the needs (and wants) of future generations.

In other words, developing only to the point where that development starts to impinge on future generations.

I asked Robin if there was a similar concept in Nishnaabeg thought. He told the class that sustainable development thinking is backwards, that we should be doing the opposite.

He explained that what makes sense from a Nishnaabeg perspective is that humans should be taking as little as possible, giving up as much as possible to promote sustainability and promote *mino bimaadiziwin* [the good life] in the coming generations.

He felt that we should be as gentle as possible with our Mother, and that we should be taking the bare minimum to ensure our survival.

He talked about how we need to manage ourselves so that life can promote more life.”

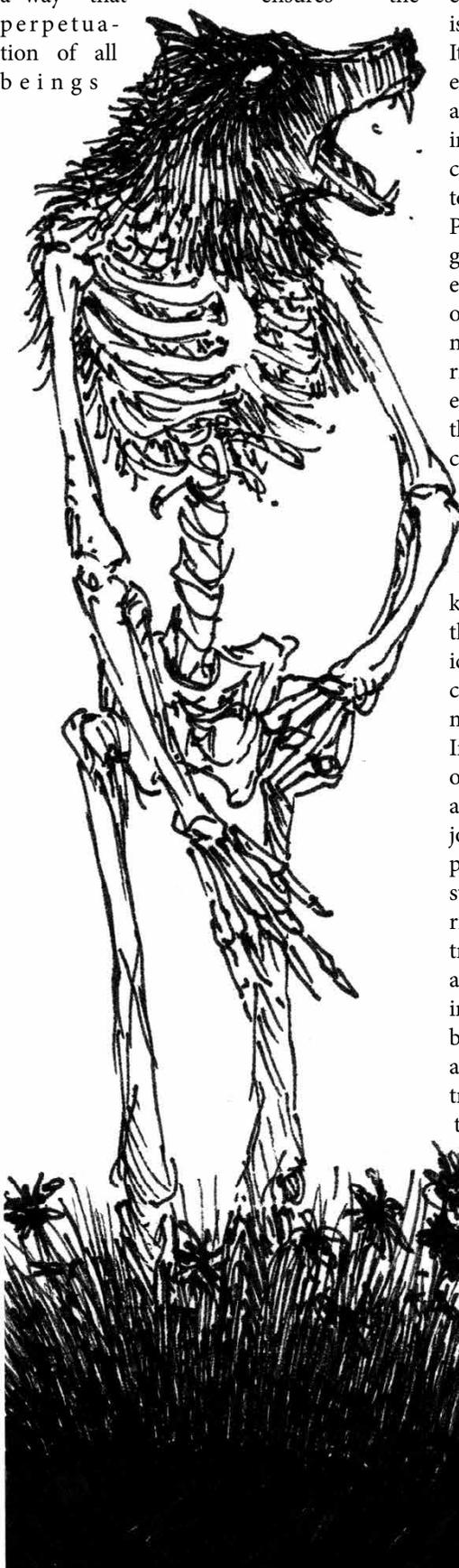
Leanne Simpson, *Dancing on Our Turtle's Back*, 2013, ARP Books, Winnipeg, p.14

What do we eat when the means to sustain ourselves is anything but sustainable? To practice this fully, one cannot eat from the store, it is even near impossible to hunt without buying in, we turn to conforming to the neat little rows that have been ploughed for us. It seems we'll resist and starve, or grow round and doom ourselves and relations. There is, however, one food source that requires nothing but your fingertips to collect- the weeds.

“It is true that the first part of self-determination is the self. In our minds and in our souls, we need to reject the colonists' control and authority, their definition of who we are and what our rights are, their definition of what is worthwhile and how one should live, their hypocritical and pacifying moralities. We need to rebel against what they want us to become, start remembering the qualities of our ancestors and act on those remembrances. This is the kind of spiritual revolution that will ensure our survival.”

-Taiaiake Alfred, 2005

note: There are many books on the subject of harvesting wild plants, but as Marilyn Walker writes in *Harvesting the Northern Wild*, “The primary source of information on native food plants is, of course, the Dene themselves.” It is important to bear this in mind when looking for information on the subject. You can read as many written texts as you like, but the reality is that a traditional knowledge holder will be able to provide a much clearer picture of what you seek, as well as a deeper understanding of the relationship between humans and plants. It is also important to keep in mind that many books (including the one I quoted previously) rely on “contemporary written records” or “the writings of explorers, traders, missionaries and adventurers,” which makes the text extremely coloured and likely largely inaccurate to the lives and relationships of the people whom they depict. I will stress again, you are best to find a living, breathing human being who might be willing to share their knowledge.



## AND LETS CLOSE THIS RAG UP WITH A POEM...

i get to dreaming of weaving  
with whales  
on the bottom of the sea floor  
sitting with sisters  
shot gunning beers  
on street corners  
rejected by lovers  
i am naked in the middle of nowhere  
light and morning birds  
sing me awake  
i stumble into dirt crusted jeans  
to begin planting a field of kale

jaylene scheible

# RURAL PUNK CLASSIFIEDS

Are you looking for that special someone to share a rural punk life with? Maybe you're a lone punk looking for a place to settle down? Or maybe you have a few extra acres on your land and you're looking for just the right punk to share it with? Well, the Country Grind Classifieds are for you!

Also you can have ads for other things as well, i.e. selling a truck, buying/selling guns, getting rid of excess building materials, whatever. But if you have a distro or a blog or something that your trying to promote I'm going to say that you should just buy an ad, (\$10 for ad space is fucking cheap!)

Classifieds are totally free!! Please try to keep your ad brief. If it is too long/not straight to the point we will require you to edit it before publishing. Folks can have multiple ads about different things.

email us your classified ad at [punx@countrygrind.net](mailto:punx@countrygrind.net)

**Epic babe seeks epic babe.** I am looking for the right lady to share my epic rural punk life with. I'm a sacrilegious, homo, diesel mechanic. Not very girly. In my free time I hunt, collect records, work on my trucks, and edit the Country Grind. Email Gretchen at [gbonegardener@gmail.com](mailto:gbonegardener@gmail.com)

**We are a little bunch of Farm/Bush anarchist living on a 5 acres organic CSA farm in the marvelous Témiscouata valley in the Québec's Appalachian ridge.** We are living a couple km from the TransCanada highway where we know, lots of kids and travellers are passing by on their way either west or east. You are welcomed to stop and spend some time with us, work on the farm for some good fun and food. Just drop us a mail [jcaldwell1@hotmail.ca](mailto:jcaldwell1@hotmail.ca), or walk 6 km on the way to Squatec and watch for a greenhouse on the hill or your left

**SURVEY TIME:** I'm curious how country punks make their cash. What do you do for money? Email me with your inventive (or not) country hustle schemes. I need some creative thinking so I don't always have to be pretending to be normal. If enough folks email me I could submit the data to the CG so we can all be inspired. Please and thanks! [complicated.hai@gmail.com](mailto:complicated.hai@gmail.com) (to get you started, I'm a caregiver and a postal worker)

**Long shot:** has anyone converted a 4x4 1st generation Chevy LUV to diesel? I'm lookin to do that this year. Contact me: [complicated.hai@gmail.com](mailto:complicated.hai@gmail.com)

**Lookin to trade birch syrup-** Seems I have too much of this bloody gunk, offer me trades and this sweet goo could very well be yours! Limited supplies of late harvest and birch maple blend, various sizes. Commercially goes for 100\$ a litre- you might be thinking 'shit daaaang' My literal blood, sweat and tears are in those bottles, so offer whatever. Get at me: [catabisful@gmail.com](mailto:catabisful@gmail.com)

**Dear dream-hunks,** Do you feel the itch to settle down, but aren't quite ready to scratch it? Does living on a houseboat/sailboat sound like a dream come true? Do you like horses, building stuff, feminism, and the idea of becoming a parent? Would people say that you're like a young Bruce Springsteen who dances like a young Patrick Swayze? If you answered "yes" to at least two of those questions, you should let me know: A. Grueleater 78 Meadow Plains Rd, Laramie, WY 82070 or [grueleater@gmail.com](mailto:grueleater@gmail.com)

**My dogs are singers too but they don't ever let me solo.** I used to pluck a lot of autoharp and sing loud, but now i have a piano and a little accordion too. Really love harmonies and folk/oldtime/bluegrass/old jazz/ragtime/polka/reels. Living in Greenwich NS (near Wolfville) and miss playing with folks. Come sing with me? Search roule avec stringband on the internets if you want to hear something first in case you hate it. [tzomisara@gmail.com](mailto:tzomisara@gmail.com)

**Do you love classified ads?** Recently defunct super freaky SF Bay Area BAITLINE!!! Free advertiser still has some back issues kickin around! Send trades or stamps. Practically guaranteed to raise an eyebrow if not a full belly chuckle. Ads may still be valid! Inquire at Baitline/Sy Wagon PO Box 54, Loma Mar, CA 94021 Also, if you are queer and/or might enjoy an explicit booklet depicting cartoon faggot unicorn orgies, let me know

**Do you have a trailer or a tent and a desire to live simply?** Come on over! We are a family of three (I'm an artist/musician, my partner is a carpenter/woodsman and our babe is 1 and a half and loves to dance) living in Manitoba, on a quarter section (160 acres) of old growth boreal forest, shared with three other families. We are in between two lakes and only a few miles south of the Riding Mountain National Park border. We live in an almost entirely off grid shack (we have a landline phone), we haul in our water, use candles for lighting, wood stove for heat/cooking, we have a small solar power setup, and bathe in a river a mile down the hill. We've got artist lesbians, bush men, feminists, punks, etc, as our rad neighbors. While you're here you could either get a job at the many places in town needing help, or you could hang out, work the garden, help build a chicken and goat pen, chop wood and general farm help. Contact us for more info or to let us know you're coming by. [callandramayhart@gmail.com](mailto:callandramayhart@gmail.com)

**Calling all trailer tramps!** Yo. I'm about to move into a gutted out trailer and try to make a fuckin cute cabin on wheels. with a woodstove. What? You say you've done that too and have so much to share about your experience? I'm interested in connecting with anybody who's lived in trailers and has advice / valuable lessons learned about it. Especially interested in tips on winter comfort. [complicated.hai@gmail.com](mailto:complicated.hai@gmail.com)

**Live in amerika?** Do you have experience with mining claims or BLM stewardship contracts? I, and some other babes, are trying to get a situation goin here. Give a holler if you've done it before and have tips or advice, please! Thanks. [complicated.hai@gmail.com](mailto:complicated.hai@gmail.com)

**Two baddass artist lesbos in love,** with two dogs (one wild) , a school bus and trailer need a place to call home, looking for somewhere in canada, middle of know where type of thing, off grid, and space to grow a garden and have some goats, clean water coming from somewhere like a creek or river. open to work trade (lots of farming experience), if my dog kills your chickens please dont try to kill her with a pitch fork. [bubzeela@gmail.com](mailto:bubzeela@gmail.com)

**Want to live in (or just visit) the middle of nowhere with other like-minded people?** Do you like the Northwoods? We're a young family of 4 + 1 friend with 60 acres in northern Minnesota trying to start a community/land share. Check out our IC listing: [www.ic.org/directory/long-haul](http://www.ic.org/directory/long-haul)

**Interested in connecting with like minds** .. even though i don't identify as punk, just old biker trash, hippie folk. Yeah, i can be crass, opinionated and abrupt... or maybe passionate, forthright and for real is more accurate. Cold sober and drug free for 25+ years. Looked upon as a non-conformist radical by many, but it's the older generation (70-90 yr olds) who understand me best. I have a mostly wooded homestead in maine, unconnected to the world except by a cell phone and a 1/4 mile wood trail driveway. In a solid construction yurt built with lumber cut onsite. Heat and cook with wood from the land, raise meat and vegetables (2+ acres garden space), goats. Get in touch! [CISCO, 868 E. River Rd., Whitefield, ME, 04353](mailto:CISCO, 868 E. River Rd., Whitefield, ME, 04353)

I saw your classified in the last issue of the grind. You didn't respond to the smoke signals from my homemade gunpowder. I even tried morse code explosive percussion blasts, and yet no reply. Do you not know of the 2 years worth of home canned food and ammunition in my bunker? My moat is newly flooded and the watchtowers on my stockade are nearly complete. I am working on some greek fire for my trebuchet, maybe that will get your attention.

OH YES ITS HAPPENING...

## 2015 NORTH AMERICAN RURAL PUNKS GATHERING

JUNE 19-22<sup>ND</sup> IN MINNEDOSA, MANITOBA, CANADA

The rumors are true! The Country Grind is pleased to officially announce the first ever (to our knowledge) gathering for rural punks across North America. Come to sunny Manitoba for a weekend of workshops, skillsharing, music, networking, and delicious food.

More info to come soon. To stay in the know keep reading The Grind and/or sign up for to our email list at:

[WWW.GMAILINGLIST.COM/RURALPUNKGATHERING](http://WWW.GMAILINGLIST.COM/RURALPUNKGATHERING)

