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WASTE NOT
WANT NOT!
DUMPSTER
DIARY



This one is from sometime around 2021. I was riding my absolutely clapped columbia bicycle to go rack from the walmart and left empty handed. On a whim, I checked the dumpster corral outside the nearby Starbucks on my way home. The dumpster was packed past the brim with crap, and sitting on top was an entire case of those little overpriced sandwiches. Score. I filled up my pockets and basket and rode back to our squat to grab my backpack and one of my squatmates to help me bring back as much as I could. The store manager actually confronted me, since the store was open and it was still daylight. I explained to her that we were not criminals, we were just hungry and fully intended on cleaning up after our dive. That seemed to reassure her, and she told us their freezer had broken and to take as much as we liked. We counted about a hundred sandwiches after we got home, didn't have to cook breakfast for a couple months.



One of my first dives, from a liquor store. I was probably 18. The chocolates were Jack Daniels, and claimed to have real alcohol in the centre. We shared them with some other punks outside a concert later that night, in a desperate attempt to catch a buzz. It didn't work, but the candy was pretty tasty. The salami was spoiled and the one or two slices I ate gave me a stomachache.





I've found restaurant supply stores to like US FOODS to be good sources of bulk food. Chuck rolls, pork shoulder, produce by the case and 5 pound bags of cheese. Impractical for most home kitchens, but convenient for supplying the Food Not Bombs chapter with ample ingredients for dinner. I've heard most waste actually happens in production and distribution, not at the storefront. Makes me curious about unmarked warehouses with secret bounties of trash.



More freegan grub.

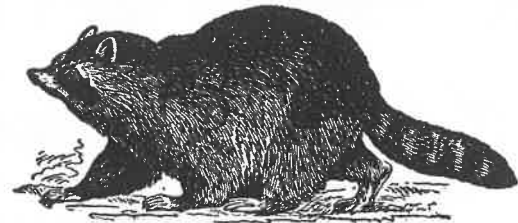


Dumpster cuisine. Leftover creamy kale and ham soup from Food Not Bombs, reheated and served in a bread bowl from a Panera bin.

These two are from the same dive. A set of compost bins outside an upscale food co-op in the city. Always worth the drive, or a stop if I was passing by anyway. I imagine these photos I take as evidence as it might be shown in court, evidence of crimes against our communities and environment. I have never seen these cans empty. It is even rare to find more than blemishes on the produce inside. Exceedingly wasteful behaviour that truly stands testament to how green capitalists stand as an enemy and blight to the people at large, wasting perfectly delicious produce to serve their illusion of freshness and quality inside the stores walls. This location also has a trash

compactor, so I usually only have access to the produce tossed into the compost bins. One night, however, an employee left the compactor open and un-mashed. Much to my diving partner's dismay, I took the chance and crawled in to dig around and see what I was missing out on. All I found were some disgusting turmeric and ginger health shots and some stale baguettes.

THE PEANUT BUTTER CAPER



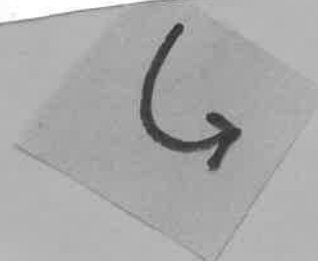
Outbreak Investigation of Salmonella: Peanut Butter (May 2022)

Outbreak over; FDA issues a warning letter.

Spring 2022. Our squat had just received its first in a series of eviction notices. Times were difficult and eager for a distraction, we decided to follow a hairbrained plan. We'd read online that an outbreak of salmonella caused all jiffy peanut butter to be recalled. Because it was a health hazard, all standing stock of the stuff would have to get tossed. A trio of us drunkenly rode our bikes a few miles to the closest market. We found nearly an entire pallet of jiffy peanut butter. Taking absolutely everything, we rode home with precariously top heavy packs and smiles on our faces. None of us had a car, so the next morning I called up my brother and offered to cut him in on our plan. We'd divide up all the jars, and drive around town returning them to various stores in reasonable quantities, and split the cash afterwards. A few hours of work netted us around \$200 and a sizable quantity of gift cards.

Hen of the woods mushrooms,
truly urban foraging!

FNB
RULES





Another photo from the same co-op.

Petco became a regular part of my route once I had bought a truck and could drive myself around all night. I didn't have a dog myself, but our squat had a pair of massive mountain dogs that served as its guards. Their owners were friends of ours, a struggling couple from the country that needed a place to park their RV. They always made sure the dogs would eat before they did, and I respect that greatly. I'd do them a solid by crawling into the petco dumpster armed with shopping bags. This Petco would slash its food bags, but the employees were too lazy to make sure all the feed was sufficiently dumped out and ruined. Usually this stuff would get mixed in with cat feed, and be from a mixture of unknown brands of chow. The dogs never complained, and their owners were thankful to me.

This compost bin has become one of my favourites for showing new divers the ropes, because it's fairly low risk and always yields massive amounts of produce. This is the compost bins of a Sprouts supermarket. It, like many of my regular spots, requires a trick to open. It's always locked, but you can disassemble the hinge pin with a pair of wrenches or locking pliers. See graphic. One diver has to hold onto their tool tight as the other one wrenches the nut off, then you pull the pin out, do your dive, and reassemble the hinge. I've had some locations try and thwart my crew by using loctite on the nuts or bending the pin. Usually we can manage to manhandle the hinge apart anyway. If we can't, I find it appropriate to award the storeowner with a cut lock or a broken cover.





Theo's chocolate dumpster was one of legend to me for a long time. Every experienced crustlord or oldhead had a story about scoring entire trash bags of the expensive chocolates. My experience wasn't so glorious, I recall the chocolate not even being bagged and having to scrape some off a huge block that had melted to the side of the container. I was actually taken to that spot by a school bus dwelling punk i'd met in the park earlier on in the day, a school bus dwelling punk that would end up being my partner over a

year later. They also gave me a 20oz bottle of IPA they had scored earlier and didn't want, looking back I'm pretty sure that was the moment I fell in love with them. The croissant was from a bakery we hit the same night.



One of my regular diving locations is a Little Caesar's, a very reliable source of calories for me over the years. This dumpster is shared between the pizza chain and a convenience store. Usually it's just pizza and trash, with the occasional donut or something from the convenience store. Honestly I still don't even understand why these got tossed, I think they have too many chemicals for any bacteria to ever be interested in them. Didn't matter much to me though, I was excited to get a break from instant coffee.



GROCERY
OUTLET

