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### *The 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Armchair Reader*

#### **Bad Boys that Women Love**

We all know women who have swooned over the local bad boy, but what about the more well known jerks? Author Sylvia Plath once wrote, "Every woman adores a fascist." That was especially true with Adolf Hitler.

Hitler reportedly had a relationship with his 20-year-old half-niece, Geli Raubal, who eventually shot herself. Undeterred, lover boy had several more girlfriends: Fran Hoffman, Jenny Hang and Helen Hanfstaengl (who prevented Hitler from killing himself, twice).

Of course, his most famous gal was the teenage Eva Braun whom he met in 1929. After years of pursuing her dream man, she became "Mrs. Hitler" on April 28, 1945. Thirty-six hours later they celebrated their honeymoon with a delightful double-suicide.

A contemporary of Hitler, Joseph Stalin, was married to Ekaterina Svanidze, who passed away. She was followed by Nadezhda Alliluyeva who committed suicide (some say Stalin murdered her). It was speculated that Stalin was married a third time, secretly, to his mistress Rosa Kaganovich; chicks love a man with a gulag!

In more modern times, Charles Manson was a favorite of the gals. Pre-murder, he moved in with UC Berkeley librarian Mary Brunner. Soon he had 18 more women living with him and Brunner. Later, Manson moved to "Spahn Ranch" with his infamous family, most who were female lovers.

After being convicted of the shotgun murders of his parents, with brother Lyle, Erik Menendez married a pen pal. Amazingly, Erik and wife Tammi have been married for over ten years even though the only contact they have is in the public prison visiting area.

There also some hot bachelors on death row, notably Scott Peterson, convicted of murdering his wife and unborn child. He had barely been on death row an hour when he got his first proposal! Eric Messick, spokesman for San Quentin State prison told SFGate.com that women throw themselves at Richard Ramirez, who killed 13 people, even though the "Night Stalker" is already married. Come on ladies, he's married, have you no shame?

#### **Worst Plays and Musicals in Broadway History**

Probably the worst play ever on Broadway, the one that all bombs are compared to, was Arthur Bicknell's *The Moose Murders*. In this disaster, one character tried to have sex with his mother,

while another, dressed in a moose costume, was kicked in the groin by a quadriplegic; this was actually in the script.

Frank Rich, then theater critic for The New York Times, would call it “the worst play I’ve ever seen on a Broadway stage.” It had one performance at the Eugene O’Neill Theatre on February 22, 1983 and closed that night.

Another early closer was the 1966-stage version of *Breakfast at Tiffany's*. Almost four hours long and constantly being revised, the play had its first preview on December 12, 1966. Producer David Merrick shut down it down four nights later "rather than subject the drama critics and the public to an excruciatingly boring evening."

Another movie adaptation that bombed on Broadway was the horror tale *Carrie – The Musical*, which closed after 5 performances in 1988. Actress Barbara Cook was almost decapitated by a set prop and 17-year-old lead actress Linzi Hateley’s body microphone stopped working after she was soaked with fake blood. The \$7 million show was the most expensive quick flop in Broadway history.

Rachael Lily Rosenbloom (*And Don't You Ever Forget It*) was a musical written for Bette Midler, who passed on the project. Good thing she did. This Broadway bore began previews on November 26, 1973 and closed on December 1, before it’s official opening. Theater critic Frank Rich called it “a musical fantasy of surpassing lavishness that made no sense, at any level, from beginning to end.”

An ancient stinker on Broadway was *Portofino*, a musical about an auto-racer. The bomb opened in New York City on February 21, 1958 and ran for three shows. Critic Walter Kerr wrote, "I will not say that 'Portofino' was the worst musical ever produced, because I've only been seeing musicals since 1919."

## **Body Doubles**

Hollywood stars seem to have the perfect bodies, but like most everything in film, there is a cheat here and there, especially when you need the perfect bod for stunts and/or nude scenes.

In 1983’s *Flashdance*, actress Jennifer Beals who played a welder by day, exotic dancer by night, but much of Beal’s dancing was actually performed by several doubles including: French actress Marine Jahan, male dancer Richard Colón and gymnast Sharon Shapiro (she did the famous mid-air dive at the end of the film).

In 1980’s *Dressed to Kill*, 49-year-old Angie Dickinson had a 23-year-old body double for her in the steamy shower scene at the beginning of the thriller. There is one brief wide shot of Angie in the shower, but the close-ups were the body of 1978 *Penthouse* Pet of the Year Victoria Lynn Johnson. The close-ups were so explicit that the film had to be edited to avoid an X-rating.

Perhaps the best well-known body double in Hollywood is Shelley Michelle. She has a list of long credits, but is most famous for Barbara Streisand’s legs in *Prince of Tides* (“They looked

like butter!’) and doubling for Julia Roberts in the film *Pretty Woman*. Another body double for Roberts in *Pretty Woman* was Tracy Scoggins.

It doesn't hurt to be related to a star to get work as a body double. Case in point: Linda Hamilton's identical twin sister Leslie Hamilton Gearren, who did her body doubling in *Terminator 2*. In that film, Linda was ripped with muscles, so Leslie had to get in the same great shape. When she's not doubling for her sis, Leslie works as a nurse.

If you enjoy Halle Berry films, her body double is Barbara Alexander who doubled for the Oscar-winning actress in *X-Men III* and *Catwoman*. Alexander is also an actress in her own right. Perhaps she'll follow in the footsteps of Catherine Bell. The *JAG* star began as a body double for Isabella Rossellini's nude scenes in the 1992 film "Death Becomes Her."

### **There's Something About Mary: Wacky Sightings of the Virgin Mary**

The Virgin Mary seems to pop up in the darndest places it seems, sides of buildings, underpasses, and muffins; here are some of the more interesting sightings:

One very famous appearance was on the side of a windowed office building in Clearwater, Florida in 1996. The image was reportedly 60 feet tall. We say, "was" because tragedy struck on March 1, 2004, when a teen rebel decided to knock the windows out with slingshot (enjoy burning in hell, kid!).

In September 2007, the Virgin Mary appeared on a Chicago woman's pet turtle that just happened to be named "Mary." Turtle owner Shirley McVane said her friends doubted it was the Virgin Mary on her pet's tummy: "They said, 'Oh, Shirley, you're getting nuts; you're 81 years old.'"

On March 17, 2005, Dorchester, Massachusetts resident Susan McGuinness claimed that the burnt label on her roasting pan looked like the Virgin Mary holding the baby Jesus. McGuinness promised not wash or cook on the pan again, but said she would probably sell it on eBay. Nice to see a woman with priorities!

Speaking of eBay, in 2004, a woman named Diana Duyser put her grilled cheese sandwich bearing the Virgin Mary's image up for auction on eBay. The 10-year-old sandwich actually drew bids of up to \$22,000, before eBay pulled it. But then, in a miracle of sorts, eBay allowed the sandwich to go back on the bidding block.

In September of 2007, Marty Nance of Watauga, Texas, saw the Virgin Mary's face in a lemon that he was cutting at his father's bar. Nance said, "Some people say it looked like Mother Teresa or Virgin Mary... and some people say it looked like Nicole Kidman."

In Fountain Valley, California, candy makers said that a 2-inch-tall column of chocolate drippings reportedly bore an amazing resemblance to the Virgin Mary. The miracle happened in August 2006, at Bodega Chocolates, where employees spent much of their time hovering over the small figure, placing candles around it, and praying. Talk about heavenly chocolate!