

GRISLY SEMI-FICTION BY JE ANDERSON

he aging weapon was heavy, but swung easily enough. It was of ancient design, cruel and efficient, forged by forgotten masters long lost to the dark chasms of a past unbridged by living memory.

Worn smooth through uncounted years in leathered hands, its wooden hilt bore a history of sweat and toil deep within the grain. And though its blade was blackened with the life of innumerable thousands felled beneath that wicked curve of steel, the cutting edge yet gleamed stainless in the sun of this August forenoon.

Every man ever to put the strength of his arm behind this evil tool had dutifully kept it sharp through the generations. I don't know - maybe every generation reaps its own Harvest of Doom. But in any case, it was I who did the sharpening now ...

I don't know how much of my youth I'd wasted in the Plant Wars. But it was a waste, that much I was sure of. Those were dark days, memories buried deep and for good reason. Since that time, I'd made my own private peace with the vegetable kingdom. I'd shared my bedroom with a pair of pothos, and even raised a garden of my own to flowers and fruit from seeds lovingly planted and faithfully watered.

But this summer, I was called back. The Autarch had some work he needed done, and the most vile tasks in his dominion he'd reserved especially for me. The Autarch didn't care about my new life of studies and pleasure; all he needed was an experienced wetboy to fight

his battles. Halfway decent mercenaries cost good money, so he drafted me

I don't know if the Autarch really cared about anything. I know I didn't. Couldn't afford to. All that mattered was the cosmetic and systematic elimination of all biodiversity in the lands surrounding the palace. Back then I called it my duty. Like I said, I don't know how much of my youth I wasted ...

much — too many severed limbs and unearthed taproots, too many tattered heaps of slain photosynthesizers rotting dank and pungent in the tropical noon heat. Sometimes I'd wake in nightmare, still feeling the hydrocarbon-powered chain saw spray mangled xylem and phloem tissues across my arms and chest and protective eyewear.

And the sap. So much sap! Sap that stained my clothes, dried on my gloves. Sap that made the wet weeds sticky

I had hoped I could get out. I prayed to every god of mercy in the heavens that I might put it all behind me,

Yes, I thought I could get out of the killing business.

retreat to a place where I could bless the rains for the verdant life they brought and nourished.

So I ran away. Ran away to embrace ahimsa; grow myself a new soul, like that pumpkin vine which sprang from our compost and raced toward the front lawn when the days were long and bright and warm. Yes, I thought I could get

out of the killing business. I was wrong.

Like fresh growth from the deep-buried roots of a thorn tree chopped down long ago, a person's past has a way of popping back up in places where it's no longer welcome. Maybe this was a fight I didn't ask for in a war I hadn't started, but either way, I was back in it now. Back in deep.

The campaigns I'd fought in the North and the East had been all too easy. Aided by the 4.6 amp Homelite and my newfound ally, the Toro SuperBlowerVac, we'd thoroughly thrashed our green opponents; driven them back with hurricane force, back to the forest where the dead

See DOOM, p.2A



There's a distinct feeling in the air.

It's more than the dank humidity of El Nino's first whispers. It's more than the anticipation of another quarter of intellect and inebriation. It's more than the muggy body heat oozing everywhere thanks to the university packing too damn many people in the tiny confines of campus and Isla Vista.

... it truly is we who sculpt this planet's destiny.

No, I'd say this feeling

is much more than any of this. I'd say it's more of a rumble in the air, a tingling, a buzz, if you will.

People are talking. And people are acting. It's almost as if we, as a community, are just starting to awaken, slowly rising to the massive potential we hold as students and as human beings. We are realizing more with each passing day that the power to make positive change lies in our hands; that it truly is we who sculpt this planet's destiny.

The conduit of this power is embedded deep in communication, and not just through the popular mediums requiring electricity and paper. The most powerful method of spreading The Word is through the streets; the many ramblings we hear, from the slurring of stony keg party randoms to the bellows of Storke Plaza speakers, shape the way we see this oceanside hamlet and the world.

But within these many announcements, we often hear tidbits bearing no nutritional value to our intellectual physique. Many times, people try to hype up worthless causes just to provide fat for the masses to chew.

But together, we can see through this tainted talk that only riles bullshit politics. And in this column, our goal is to cut through that fat - and provide The Skinny.

And speaking of nutritional matters, upon moving into their Purple Palace offices, some of our Associated Students executive officers were surprised to find out that they would have to tighten their belts this

See SKINNY, p.3A

Let The Daily Friday's Nick Robertson be your tour guide through our realm of the unexplained... ucsb's world of myster



1:13(41):1430 ENTROPIECE

Although the lines to the UCen Post Office often extend to the hallway, this window never opens to add service. Only one student has ever reported seeing it open, when a phantom-like creature dove out of it and ran away while gobbling stamps.

THEAMAZING D SAPEAR NG 6004353

Less than three years ago, the fourth floor of Davidson Library was laden with comfortable couches to study or sleep on. Then without warning, the couches completely vanished without a trace. Forensic scientists have concluded that the disappearance was the work of a sadistic cult maliciously spreading back and neck pain by forcing students to sleep in wooden chairs.



Photos by Alan Jacoby

DOOM

Continued from p.1A

would lie unburied and unremembered till some titmouse or squirrel carried the corpses off to their unseen nest among the trees.

Yes, those battles were easy. But what kind of resistance could you expect from a bunch of dandelions? Scattered pockets of ragwort or onion grass might hide cowardly behind their ivy hostages, but with the way I was connected, they never had half a chance. Indeed, my lord's contract with the Department of Water and Power had paid off well. With their help, even the baneful cedar hedge, whose sheer size and chemical defenses wounded my father and burned my brother, had been easily tamed from atop an alloy stepladder using my semiautomatic Black & Decker.

But today's fighting would be different. Bristling with microcarbonate spines and towering 30 feet tall, the enemy I faced was far tougher than even the mightiest weedwacker. The closed ranks advanced slowly, like a glacier, a thin leafed juggernaut that swallowed the border, smothering all in its path. The tool shed and tiki torches were already cut off and completely surrounded. The Weber and half the patio would soon suffer a similar fate unless somebody did something soon. That somebody was me.

Me alone.

Here in the Woods of Wessynton, today's combat would have to be fought the old fashioned way: muscle vs. meristem, brawn against bamboo. So as I sharpened the blade, once again did I prepare my soul for a day of massive violence ...

The act was as much a meditation as it was tradition; the repeating metallic grind honing my focus, stropping away the blunting doubts and dulling compassion with each caress of the whetstone. I tested the edge with my thumb. The fearsome tool seemed almost eager, hungry even craving destruction.

Then the bell tolled. Its clang rippled distant and directionless through the damp air, announcing to God and everyone else within earshot that the Hour of Reckoning had arrived.

It was high time the invasive shrubbery taste my

I moved in to attack. Knuckles whitening, my fingers closed tighter around the age-old plant-

slayer in my right hand, as if in anticipation of the pain it was poised to unleash. Then, whistling through the sliced air like some vengeful demon cast down from the sky, the first sweeping arc of my cane knife carried it straight through three spindly antagonists in the front rank.

But they didn't fall.

Cut in two, with no possible hope of survival, they were held upright by their crowding comrades. So I pulled them down and flung them behind me. I hacked again. And again. Scores of others met their destiny like those before, and soon the dead and dying piled up in my wake, a ghastly tangle of the doomed, blocking my only path of escape. But there would be no escape for me today, only victory.

I pressed my assault as the steel killer I swung sang out its glorious executioner's song with each impact. Yet for every six I slew, 60 more still stood against me, and already my sword arm was tiring.

My enemy could afford to take me apart slowly, piece by tiny piece, bit by tiny bit.

Spike-like extremities tore at my flesh and sought to pull me down, skewer me on a bed of razoredged pungi stakes where my enemy had stood, tall and defiant, only moments earlier.

Mechanically, I fought on. The wounds I'd already taken were nothing compared to those I doled out, but they were adding up fast. Hundreds more would have to die before the legions of flora would be routed, but their numbers were so great, such losses meant nothing. My enemy could afford to take me apart slowly, piece by tiny piece, bit by tiny bit.

If it came to that.

Every crash of steel on stem seemed to jar my very bones now. Drawn like carrion birds to the smell of battle, the flies had already begun their feast on the sweat and blood weeping thickly from my skin like so many tears of rage. Endless ranks of vicious vegetation mocked my resolve.

Thousands of whispery voices taunted me, falling on my ears like the wind itself. The utter hopelessness of my struggle weighed heavily now, my will to fight slowly spiralling down an everwidening pit of despair.

But I would not yield, I could not stop.

Deep within all men exists a doorway, a hidden portal through which few ever pass, and fewer still return. Yet, those who survive the journey come back with knowledge of a certain power, a dark river of strength flowing cool and steady toward some vast, unknowable ocean. When these waters are tapped, they surge upward, flooding out and beyond, bringing the impossible suddenly within grasp.

I reached down and threw these gates wide

The same river which had carried my distant ancestors to dominion over this wild and unknown planet now pulsed powerfully in my veins. Ascending the granite throne carved into that stony peak high atop the landscape of the mind, all pain and fatigue were washed downstream,

filling some remote valley far, far below. The machete became almost an extension of my will. Over and again the black blade rose and fell, cleaving a trail of triumph and leaving behind me a path of unthinkable devastation. I was a berserker amok, killing bamboo like a rabid panda on a ravenous return from Hell.

The horde of verdure was thinning now. At once, I realized I'd long since crossed all

In my fury, I had taken this war deep beyond the lands the Autarch had charged me to defend. As my battle-lust ebbed, I took a long look at the fruit of my struggle. Once again my eyes swam in the pulpy anguish my own hands had inflicted. Thunderclouds glowed crimson in the tired light of a fast-sinking sun, red as the shredded meat on my exhausted arms. I threw down the blade.

It lodged upright, quivering in the damp earth, waiting eagerly for another hand to pick it up and carry on with the killing. The cicadas began their nightly chorus, as if to cheer my supremacy in this twisted arena of death. Turning my back on the vanquished, I carefully picked my way through the lifeless litter of my dreadful harvest, and headed home.

I needed the rest. Cleanup operations would begin tomorrow.∞



His Holiness the Dalai Lama...

> His Chancellorness the Henry Yang?

PASEO NUEVO

SKINNY

Continued from p.2A

According to the 1997-98 A.S. budget provided by the administrative office, the post of external vice president for local affairs, held by Leila Salazar, took a \$450 cut from last year's budget. And the vice president for statewide affairs, Felicia Perez, took a whopping \$2,070 chop from the previous year's funding.

This may not seem like very much money, but keep in mind the nature of these offices. Salazar's post is the one most directly involved with Isla Vista, a region the university often treats like an unwanted mutant stepchild. Keeping over 10,000 I.V. student residents informed about local issues takes a lot of dedication - and money.

And Perez's office inherently demands travel expenses throughout the year for the monthly UC Regents meetings and related affairs. She is our only direct A.S. link to the UC Student Association, often the only organization that stands up for up to things fishy. If se officers don't have the resources to get what they need, we students who elected them will suffer.
Where did their money go? It's hard to tell, the way

he A.S. budgets are drafted, t it's interesting to note the A.S. administration w has an extra \$6,902 to ay around with this year. he A.S. main office fund also jumped \$3,000, w the scantly-funded Women's Journal lost Makes you wonder no's setting the priorities around there.

Nonetheless, Salazar and Perez are making the best with what they've got, though they may have to seek more funding later in the year. Without regaining at least some of the money they lost, the two are severely restricted in working on their projects, which include plans to inform students of their rights when dealing with our beloved I.V. Foot Patrol and a possible hotline to voice local police complaints.

And it is high time that we, as students, have somewhere to turn when we feel violated by our own police force. Right now, the only place to file a complaint against an I.V. Foot Patrol officer is at their very headquarters, where Lt. Geoff Banks (who is actually a very friendly guy) is eager to hear any stories you have to tell.

I went to speak with Banks myself earlier this summer, after I was fondled and illegally searched by one of the UC Police Dept.'s finest. It was an August Friday night of light drinking and heavy conversation, and after I had split off from my friends, I decided to take a late night beach-cruiser

After riding for a few minutes, I noticed one officer was pulling over bikes en masse, and so I made every effort to ride to the letter of the law.

Of course, the officer noticed this suspicious allegiance to the law, and pulled me over immediately. He asked the standard quesudents when the regents tions; did I have any I.D. ("No.") and had I been drinking ("I had a beer about an hour ago."). And then, he d the line.

no probable cause, ed feeling the conpockets from the of my pants while ig me some spiel about dangers of BUI" and ine sobriety checks for safety." Don't get me ng, I'm all for bike ry, but I was pretty taken ck and stunned silent by hands patting down my His next action, howr, was too much.

fter feeling the change se in my left front pocket, ntaining about 37 cents and my lucky domino, he reached into my pocket and seized the pouch. "Officer, I did not give you consent to search," I said, to which he responded that he had felt something similar to a knife in his search and now he had probable cause. After not finding the drugs or other contraband he was expecting me to carry, he returned my belongings and told me to be on my way.

But I didn't let this travesty of justice end until I'd gotten Johnny Law's real name. Remember, even if you are being dragged away by six riot cops as they beat you senseless with their batons and taser guns, you still have the right to know their names, so don't hesitate to ask for their card. Thanks to this right I was able to report the cocky constable to Banks, who said he'd talk to

the Right People. Nonethe-

less, keep an eye out when

stumbling down Del Playa

Drive - "No Tolerance" is

in effect.

NICK ROBERTSON / DAILY NEXUS

There's another reason to keep an eye out on Del Playa - as many of us already know, our friendly community slumlords want to build a massive seawall along the length of the entire I.V.

The next phase of approval lies in the hands of our County Board of Supervisors. There is a slight chance that they'll deny the project and tell the landowners to look into other (possibly effective) ways to slow the inevitable erosion. But it's gonne take a strong stance on the part of us students.

The board will decide the I.V. beach's fate at its meet-ing on Tuesday, Oct. 7, and ing on Tuesday, Oct. 7, and there needs to be a heavy student protest there to have hance of swaying the that-be. If you want nformed about the watch "Behind the a student-produced awall documentary. Then, come to the parking lot at the Embarcadero Loop (near I.V. Theater) at 1 p.m. on Oct. 7, where a massive carpool will be transporting protestors to the downtown meeting

The seawall would destroy our beaches so that the landlords can overcharge us for their overcrowded DP property for another few years. A pretty shitty situation for us overall, huh? Come out to the top of the Loop on Oct. 7, because, in the words of A.S. Environmental Affairs Board Chair Eric Cardenas, "We are gonna RALLY!!!" ∞

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6:45 8:15 9:55

Mon-Thurs -2:00 (4:00) (5:00) 7:00 8:15 Playing On 2 Screens

* A THOUSAND ACRES (R)
Ffl-Sun - 1:40 (4:20) 7:10 9:50
Mon-Thurs - 2:10 (4:45) 7:30

THE GAME (R)
Frl-Sun - 1:00 (4:00) 7:00 10:00
Mon-Thurs - 2:20 (5:10) 8:00

CINEMA TWIN

Kevin Kline * IN & OUT (PG-13)
Fri - (4:45) 7:00 9:15
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Mon-Thurs - (5:20) 7:45 only

THE GAME (R)
Fit & Mon-Thurs - (5:00) 8:00 only
Sat/Sun - 2:10 (5:00) 8:00

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* THE EDGE (R)

Frl & Sun - 1:00 (4:00) 7:00 9:45 Sat - PlayIng at Flesta 5 Mon-Thurs - 2:15 (5:10) 8:00

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★ KISS THE GIRLS (R) 7:30 PM

★ IN & OUT (PG-13)
Fil & Sun - 1:30 2:30 (4:00) (5:10)
6:30 7:30 9:00 9:50
Sat - 1:30 2:30 (4:00) (5:10)
6:30 9:00 9:50 only
Mon-Thurs - 2:00 3:15 (4:20)
(5:35) 7:00 8:00
Playing On 2 Screens

★ THE FULL MONTY (R)
Frl-Sun - 1:45 2:45 (4:15) (5:20)
6:45 7:45 9:10 9:55
Mon-Thurs - 2:15 3:30 (4:40)
(5:45) 7:15 8:15
Playing On 2 Screens

RIVIERA 2044 ALAMEDA PADRE SERR

SHALL WE DANCE? (PG)

Frl-Sun - 2:30 (5:15) 8:00 Mon-Thurs - (5:15) 8:00

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* THE EDGE (R)
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Mon-Thurs - (5:30) 8:15 only

THE PEACEMAKER (R) Fri - (4:15) 7:00 9:40 only Sat/Sun - 1:30 (4:15) 7:00 9:40 Mon-Thurs - (5:15) 8:00 only

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7:00 8:00 9:55 Mon-Thurs - 2:00 (4:00) (5:00) 7:00 8:00 On 2 Screens

★ SOUL FOOD (R) Frl-Sun - 1:30 (4:20) 7:10 9:50 Mon-Thurs - 2:20 (5:10) 7:45

WISHMASTER (R)
Fil & Sun - 1:45 (4:45) 7:30 9:45
Sat - 10:00 only
Mon-Thurs - 2:45 (5:30) 8:10

AIR FORCE ONE (R)
Frl & Sun - 2:15 (5:15) 8:15
Sat - 1:10 only
Mon-Thurs - 2:30 (5:20) 8:15

* THE EDGE (R)
Sat Only - 1:20 (4:10) 7:20 10:00
All Other Days Playing at Arlington

PLAZA DE ORO

KICKED IN THE HEAD (R) Frl & Mon-Thurs - (5:40) 8:00 only Sat/Sun - 2:45 (5:40) 8:00

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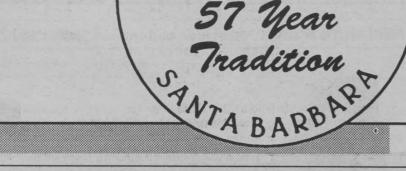
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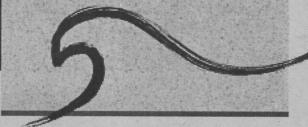
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