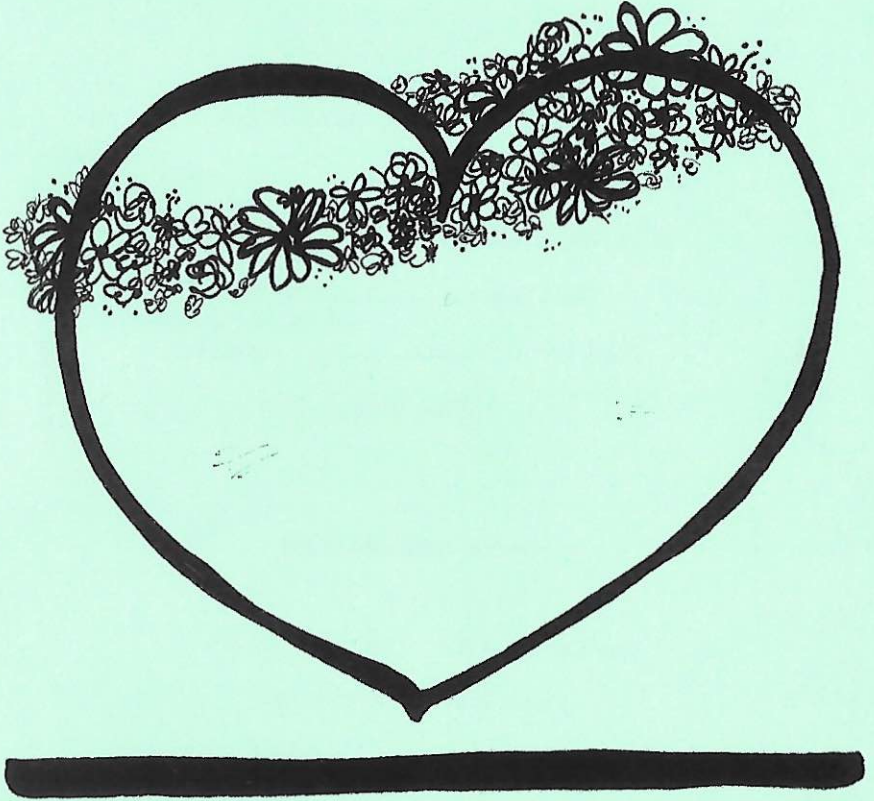


the
Rad Mag



BREATHE

ISSUE #5 | SPRING 2022



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issue created by

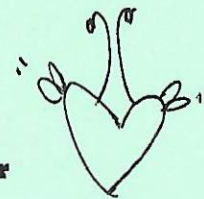
Candi Bartlett * * * writer, editor, illustrator

Marisa Bush * * * contributor

Vegan cheese and crackers ♦ ♦ ♦ patience management

Happy birds * * * morale officers

 = featured in every issue



Letter from the Editor

Ethereal spring is all around us. It is in my dreams and in the sunshine. There is too much to process lately – so much that stifles. Spring’s warm breezes and baby bees are helping me to relax my brain space. If you stand outside for a short spell and close your eyes, you can feel spring offering its new life as comfort. Every fluffy seed on the wind, every bug buzzing by, each bit of spring is reminding us to breathe. To feel the world around us. To remember that we are nature.

I hope this season’s issue leaves you with happy spring vibes. The kind of vibes you will spread.

Look at you, vibe butterfly.


Candi



Dear Spring

Dear, sweet spring.
Your dewy mornings glisten in a way no other morning can.
The flowers you bring, with their honey scents and bright colors, wake up my brain and make all of the fog go away.
You, my dear spring, bring a special coziness with your fuzzy freeway-side growth and dandelion lawn covers.
You are playful, spring.
Worth every sneeze and sniffly eye-water,
The sweet sharing of earth glitter carried by your bees and hummingbirds, your butterflies and beetles, you spread light and life and love.
I give you my heart, dear spring.
And if you could pick up some Zyrtec on your way over, that would be great.
xo



The Cleanup Man

by Candi Bartlett

The motel room smelled horrible. It somehow smelled darker than it was. And thick. It smelled thick.

"It's like, in my mouth," Donnie said.

Tom rolled his eyes. He didn't even realize he picked up the habit. "Donnie, put the stuff under your nose and let's move on."

Dark, fake wood paneling made it hard to see in the room. A forensic tech opened the curtains to let the light in. The entire room sparkled. "That is a lot of glitter," she said.

Donnie nodded and crinkled his brow. "What is that *smell*?"

Another tech from across the room, two beds and what seemed like endless glitter covered pillows away, raised his head. "It's mostly sweat, alcohol, and sugar." He stood up straight and pushed the red glasses up on his nose. "And fluids, Donnie. Lots of fluids." He was very matter-of-fact.

"I could have read that in a report."

Tom stepped over a pink puddle. "You could have stopped asking."

Red glasses tech agreed. "I have to collect it. The least you can do is share in my horror." He gave one nod and went back to collecting pieces of a broken mirror. The pieces were covered in lipstick smudges.

"So, what, there's a party and the manager doesn't like the—" Donnie stepped in a cotton candy ashtray. "—clientele, so they call the secret not-government for help?"

"Not just a party, oh no, hundreds of motels and inns, every spring, destroyed." Tom was looking for something. He pulled back another curtain covered in ages of stains. Some of the were newer. Some of them were shiny. Behind the curtain, sticky shot glasses were covered in moss and little pink flowers. Somehow, the mellow morning smelling flower reached Donnie's nose for just a second.

"It's really strange in here, Tom."

Red Glasses agreed. "It's fun though, right? Seeing things you've never seen before." He collected clear goo filled with glowing pollen. Red Glasses was having the time of his life.

"Tom, what are we doing there? This place is gross, and it's really early." Every minute, the sun changed position just enough to light up more of the night before. Soft serve ice cream papers were stuck to the night stands. A pack of cigarettes sat with an eighth of really good smelling cannabis. The pillows were filled with tiny pastel marshmallows. "Why is this where we are right now?"

Tom opened a small suitcase and pulled out a box of condoms and a fifth of Jack Daniels. "Fairies, Donnie." He looked over at Donnie and smiled with zero glee. "Welcome to Spring Fling."

Donnie slid his eyes from one side of the room to the other. "Like, the Tooth Fairy?"

"No, not the Tooth Fairy. Fairies. The bringers of seasons." Tom shoved strange items out of his way, getting more irritated each time. Beach ball, teddy bear, ball gag - he tossed them aside as he spoke, "They get all riled up as the seasons change - we haven't figured out if the season changing hypes up the fairies or if the fairies getting all hyped up brings on the new season." His eyes watered and his voice was scratchy. "The spring fairies though, they are something else. Look at this place." He ended with a sneeze. Tom cleaned a lot of things that were horrifying, nightmare inducing scenes of terror. But nothing was quite like the fairies. He had no idea how fairy jobs ended up on his beat, but he did not get paid enough. He couldn't eat anything sweet for weeks after the spring equinox. That's his favorite pie season.

"And we just, put up with it because..."

"Because we want spring, Donnie."

"So, the Tooth Fairy is not real?"

Tom knelt on the ground and stuck his hand under the bed. "The Tooth Fairy is very real. Every ten years or so some new creep puts on the wings and kills a bunch of people on the East Coast. That's a different case. This is exactly what it looks like." He pulled a velvet bag out and made a face. The bag had chewed bubble gum stuck to it. "Fairy orgy."

Donnie laughed. Red Glasses did not. Donnie cleared his throat, "And what's in the bag?"

"Fairy dust. Can't leave this here. Won't matter how long everybody works if an unknowing human finds this, well... there will be paperwork."

"You mean more paperwork." Donnie smiled.

"Right. More paperwork." Tom stood up.

"For me."

Tom smiled. "Yes. More paperwork. For you." He put the bag in an evidence bag and put that in his pocket. "Let's go, Donnie. We're on fairy debrief."

They walked out into the bright morning sun. The motel parking lot was mostly empty, the highway in the distance. The sedan nearest them had no

numbers. In the back seat Donnie could see the tips of six little heads and twelve sparkling wings. The car was lit up like a disco. The driver wore dark goggles.

Donnie pulled a pink marshmallow rabbit out of his pocket and took a bite. "Well, look at that."

Tom made the mistake of closing the door behind them. The handle was covered in frosting. He looked at the sky. "Why?" Red Glasses opened the door and handed him a wet wipe. "Thanks. Don't forget the knobs."

"Never do, sir."

Donnie walked toward the fairy car. The opposite direction of his car. "It's so beautiful." He laughed hearing Tom fumble and sniffle. Grumpy was having a *morning*.

"Get in the car, Donald."

Donnie kept walking. "I can't help myself, Tom. It's the magic of spring, it has me."

Tom sighed and put drops in his eyes. He sneezed. "Every damn spring."



WHAT CASE WILL THE CLEANUP MAN WIPE OUT NEXT?

FIND OUT IN ISSUE #6!

being in a band can get pretty sticky.



Jam Band

a play in one act



Step into the reality dream



Visit *the Rad Mag* on the web



www.CandiPresents.com/the-rad-mag



Spring

in MarisasCraftCorner

I instantly think of bright colors, fresh air, and fresh starts. Especially in terms of home décor. Once March hits, I switch out my wreaths, change out my flowers, vases, and tchotchkes. So many color options to play with and choose from. Bring on the spring!

~ Marisa Bush, shop owner and creator

www.etsy.com/shop/MarisasCraftCorner

Handmade wreaths for all seasons!
Custom orders available!

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with Candi and Noodle

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featuring

Whatchya Readin', Noodle?
Political Minute
Pandemic Problems
Resocializing
Surprise Optimism
No Pants

listen wherever you catch your pods!




Wild Grass



My favorite grass is the kind of grass all bundled up with weeds. Some grown high and skinny, some covering the ground. Knotty lawns with snaking leaves; puffy feather-like bright green bits peeking out from sidewalks and brick. It's this wild grass that makes fields where not-quite sunflowers with deep, dark leaves stand over petite purple balls. Bushes covered in flowers inside of flowers and white tufts of soft seeds surrounded by jagged stems. This wild grass, the tangled beautiful mess spring leaves behind as it races over the landscape, is for all of us.

Earth is pretty cool.





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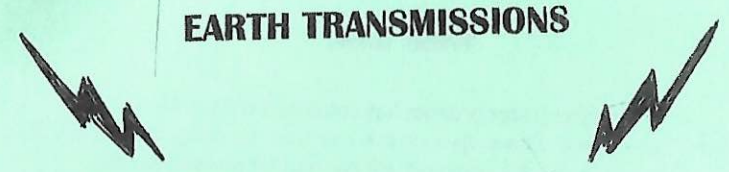
Salons

Upsetting your parents when

they use your bathroom!

Teaching your kids swear words

so you don't have to!



EARTH TRANSMISSIONS

Omg, one more fucking computer delay and I am going to scream at the top of my lungs, pull my pants down, and run around in the street.



THAT WOULD BE AMAZING.



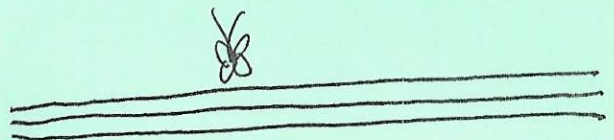
COME BACK EACH ISSUE FOR



THE STRANGE AND UNUSUAL!

THE PROVOCATIVE AND PERVERSE!

Comic Call



Your illustrations to these words could be featured in *the Rad Mag*! Visit www.CandiPresents.com/the-Rad-Mag for details and watch the art spread.

What now?

Another paper product has come into the world.
Before this super sweet zine ends up in the trash, or recycling, or compost heap
(not recommended: soil that will be used for growing foods)

the Rad Mag suggests:

- Sharing it with a friend
- Using the pages as fun crumpled packing material
- Making paper flowers for a spring wreath
- Cutting the pages into hearts - string them across your window for a fluttering garland
- Crafting tiny hats for all of your lawn decorations

Issue #5 printed on 30% recycled paper



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Details on Issue #6!**

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Earthing Storytelling