



# The Gulch Mulch

all the pulp that's fit to gulp

## REAL DE CATZINGO

Real de Catzingo is waking up, its nascent slumber disturbed by the hordes of tourists, old ugly Americans, Europeans and others who ride the huge tour buses to the tunnel where they disembark to transfer onto "authentic" old Mexican buses for the trip through the Tunnel Ogarrio. This is a relatively recent development in the evolution of Real.

Historically the town was once rich and full, 35,000 people living on the silver riches buried deep below. Now the ore is almost all gone leaving in its wake hundreds of shafts and horizontal "drifts." The town, largely abandoned just ten years ago is coming back with a vengeance. Some foreigners; Swiss, Italians, French, Spanish and a few Americanas began buying up the ruins a few years ago for \$1,000 or so for a compound, many with the rock walls of old rooms still standing strong. After a Swiss couple paid \$25,000 for a large piece on the edge of town, everyone took notice and prices, if you can find them, rose. A Texan just bought an adjoining piece for the high price of \$6,500 to go along with the compound she acquired for \$1,200 just three years ago.

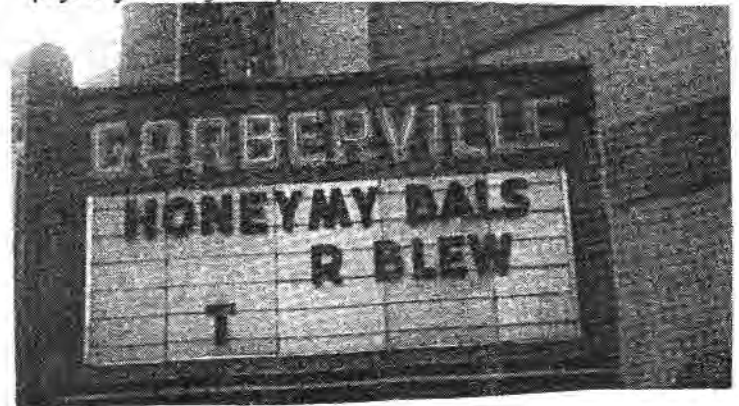
This is the town of Burros. Late at night when various tourists are staggering home they share the road and sidewalks with the wandering donkeys. Those ubiquitous beasts haul the world on their backs and often live for years in the rooms of the ruins; the Texan, a Ferrari dealer from Austin, was the proud recipient of a few feet of thick manure in one of her newly-purchased rooms.

There is a simmering movement among those who care to ban cars on weekends when the town is clogged with visitors from the nearby cities: Monterrey, Saltillo, San

Luis Potosi. Then when the motorcyclists from Monterrey started racing along the steep and narrow streets prompting Pancho #2 to protest, telling them they were disturbing the quietude, endangering the children, and generally making a nuisance. The police officials just laughed saying it was something new and interesting for the people.

This is the town of Peyote, the bitter psychedelic cactus gathered and used ritualistically for centuries by Hichole Indians and more recently by Mexicans, Europeans, and Americans intent upon a "wannabe indian" experience or just a cheap high. But how cheap is a high that requires you eat one of the most bitter things on earth? Your taste buds will pay.

On the gate to the Church are sculpted many peyote buttons. Along the railing of the town plaza you can also find the ubiquitous buttons carved along the wrought iron. The peyote itself actually comes from the valleys below on either side of high, dry and cold Real de Catzingo. Twenty years ago it could be found everywhere beneath the small bushes of the desert. Now you can be shot at it you wander too close to the territory of the country people in the desert. And you still have the crazy gringos scooping up 100's of buttons, transporting them north under hot manifolds, then distributing them during "wannabe" all night peyote gatherings in tipis.



weren't taken' no more shit. They're smart, party-wise fighters up there. Now that I realize how much I like being in that press tent I just want to milk my sacred cow.

## REGGAE ON THE RIVER (CONFESSIONS OF A LAZY BUM)

While riding over to Frenches Camp on the commuter bus I wondered aloud whether I should burn a fatty en route. Mr. Ron Sinoway, sitting in front of me, advised against it. Well shit, another lawyer gone redneck. We were on our way over to the music event of the year, joining the throngs of wasted and soon to be wasted post-sixties throwbacks, reggae-hungry teen-agers, and the get-a-life crowd including yours truly.

For a few days our lives actually meant something. Most volunteers really did something while those of my ilk were issued press passes allowing us to go anywhere except on the stage where ofcourse I tried to go anyway only to be thrown off by people I thought were my friends. (Thanx a lot Stew D.)

So there I was in the press tent sitting around with real journalists waiting for the next performer to come in to be interviewed. At one point there was a musician and only me to ask a question. I freaked. I had no idea what to ask. I went around asking people what I should say. No help. I was exposed: a fraud, a malingerer- I didn't know anything about reggae and couldn't ask an intelligent question. I was doomed, and soon to be banned from the glory of the backstage lawn, kicked out on my ass into the sweltering dust bowl morass.

Cha had raised the axe-if I didn't produce it would fall swiftly and cleanly, decapitating my dreams and illusions. Before the festival I had written an experimental "Reggae-Who Cares" piece which the staffer I read it to over the phone didn't think was funny. "We work so hard on this and then you blah blah blah" she said. (Were there two blahs or three Asha?) After all the attacks over the last couple years the Mateel honchos

## DOWN IN LOCKHART, TEXAS

**Wild Horse**(75) and **Lizzie**(43) are kind of an item. Well he's still living with his little old wife **Gator** next door while Lizzie she run off from her husband **Pig** in Corpus Christi. Now Pig saw her a-drivin' away with the kids down in Corpus so he turned around and stopped her. He didn't know Lizzie's cousin **Bonnie** was drivin' behind and she said "Hey pal, you back off, now". Now Gator don't like Lizzie much so she was tellin' Bonnie what for. And Bonnie said "Mrs. Wafford" -- she don't call her Gator to her face -- "If you try anything that Lizzie will come at you with a **blow torch** if that's all she can get her hands on." So **Gator** backed pretty far off but they still livin' together while old **Wild Horse** carries on with Lizzie. Lizzie makes him feel 19 again with that mouthwork of hers.

x. **Wild Horse** spends a lot of time out at the junkyard with **Mr. Ed**. He kicks back at the ranch house. He says he's lived all over the country but never did encounter such cheats as the folks around **Lockhart**, like the Dentist. "I never seen such people."

\* \* \*

Lizzie's always telling people she just met that they have to **lend her all the money** they can in the next few months.

**Wild Horse** asked her if he could borrow some money to buy some cows. So Lizzie went all over town asking people if they'd lend **Wild Horse** money to buy some cows.

One guy said, "Wild Horse, you need some money? Cause I got a **lot of work** that needs to be done."

Then at the little white **Unity Church** on San Antonio Street in **San Marcos**, Lizzie went up to talk to the new minister. **Bonnie** worried about a loan but Lizzie just said, "Hey, what about them **cookies and drinks!**"

Late word in from Lockhart: **Wild Horse** made a bunch of copies of his dee-voce petition and he's passin' 'em around town telling people "I ain't foolin' around like **Gator** says; **this is the real thing.**" Poor Lizzie's feeling like her life's a **cartoon.**



## CHARACTERS OF CATZINGO

**Jose Ibarra** reduces the size of the breasts on the sculpture in front of him on the low table. With his tool he slices away some of the midriff. She started naked, now he is putting a skirt around her. Later he will make the man the will join the woman above the door of **Balthasar's** new house. In return Bals will then put a roof on Jose's shed. He has been working on her for months, maybe he'll be done in a year or so.

Jose is the ultimate cross-over guy, he came across the river to the States, became an American citizen, then bought his house in Real. A while back he was stopped by the police in a bus station near **Guadalajara**. The police said quickly who are you where are you going where you from? Jose said "I'm Mexican." The police looked at his papers and said "What do you mean, it says here you're American."

Jose protested, "Hey, I'm a **MEXICAN** man!!!"

Eight years ago, before Real's mini-land boom, Jose bought his pad for under \$3,000. It's one of those courtyard places where you walk into a courtyard garden, a little one surrounded by living quarters and other rooms. Over the years Jose put another \$5,000 into fixing up the place.

We kick back in Jose's \$8,000 pad in **Real de Catzingo**. He's my favorite American in town, a grey beard who holds it all together. He's actually the only other gringo in town (which is a stretch since he's MEXICANI!) His art, sculptures and paintings, hang on the wall around us- he continues to work as various people drop in. Bals comes to see how the sculpture's coming; Matteo drops by to see how the eagle is doing. Through it all **we smoke joints** from the chunks of mexican weed on the

table and drink swallows of mescal from the bottle as some **vegetable or animal** matter settles near the bottom.

The eagle is a regal beast; casting dignified eyes upon us it perches on its stick. Jose y **Matteo** capture it again as it tries to fly against it tether. With a rug thrown over it it is still; Jose puts some savila (aloe vera) on its wounds. When it is better it will be released to survive or not.

Next to his house Jose has rented out a couple rooms to some Italians who are running a little gallery that also serves coffee and sandwiches. It is an espresso shop called the **Coffee Gallery**. They are supposed to pay rent but they never do so Jose ambles over for free meals whenever its open. He says if they had to pay rent they wouldn't make it -- eventually they will be gone and he will turn it into a shop. People like **Franz** need a place to sell their paintings. Jose goes back to the states every year for a month or so, exhibiting his art and taking care of bizness. How much is that one Jose? "\$6,000" he says tho he is just making it financially and has never sold one for that much.



# THE ADVICE MAN

## DEAR ADVICE MAN:

Yesterday I was sitting in my cousin's kitchen in Berkeley browsing through the East Bay Express when, on a lark, I started calling up the telephone personals. (I swear I'd never done that before—sure, I'd circled prospective ads before.) I called a "Woman Seeking Man" ad, listened to her message, then left a message of my own. Then I called another and another and another—an hour and a half later I had run up a 900 number bill of over 100\$ on my cousin's telephone.

That afternoon the phone began to ring. The singing telegram lady into industrial music asked if I was good-looking. "Well", I said, "Sometimes I look in a certain mirror like the one at the **Woodrose Cafe** (where would we be without the Woodrose?!) and I look great. With others I look ugly." "Well I'm pretty, I look good all the time," she said. "I have to for my livelihood."

She asked me how old I was so I told her I was thirty-three. I hadn't planned on lying to Linda but I couldn't remember if she was the one looking for a younger man who I'd already lied to. Then I realized that just an hour ago I'd left her a message saying I was thirty-eight! Oops.

When my cousin and I returned from the A's game (the one where Bordick won it in the bottom of the ninth with a come-from-behind two-run double) there were many messages on the machine. Cousin Tom was pissed. I headed out of town, Tom grudgingly forwarded some of the call backs to me up here.

One day I called up a Sandy from Fremont and talked for about an hour. She was one of the "built for comfort" ones I called after I'd called all the slender ones. (And when I had run out of the fat ones I called some "Men Seeking Women" just to hear their raps. I even called some "Women Seeking Women" and some "Men Seeking Men" just for laughs; I didn't leave any messages there!) After a while I started talking dirty to Sandy, kind of like a legal obscene phone call. Just then the neighbor boy burst into the house to watch **The Simpsons**; I motioned him away but he sat down as I continued to talk to Sandy about her **breasts**. Then the boy cracked up and Sandy said, "Is somebody

there"? "Well yeah the neighbor boy just walked in..."

Now he's telling everyone that I had **Phone Sex**, but it was really just **Phone Feeling Up!**

What should I do?.....Signed, Embarrassed

**DEAR EMBARRASSED:** Perhaps you should **Dial-a-ride**; it sounds like you've been in the woods to long!!!

## DEAR ADVICE MAN:

We threw a "community" party and everyone didn't come, especially those ocean-view snobs. Well I have a newspaper so I announced on the front page that the party was a failure, hoping to guilt-trip the masses. Why don't they come to our party?

Signed, Confused

**Dear Con:** There is an old saying that goes "I didn't know whether to keep quiet and have people think I was a fool, or open my mouth and remove all doubt." Face it, many people aren't into smokin' drinkin' partyin' with a lot of people—we're all not hippies anymore. Many are content with their micro-neighborhood group, posse, clique, whatever you wanna call it. If someone wants to be a hermit that's their business. Try not to be so negative and **ASSUME NOTHING**.

## LIFE IN HELL

BY MATT GROENING

ARE YOU TOTALLY FED UP WITH THE STUPID, HATEFUL, ABUSIVE, INSENSITIVE, PSYCHOTIC, LYING, DISGUSTING JERK YOU LIVE WITH, AND WOULD YOU LIKE TO WORK THINGS OUT?  
THEN GET YOUR WOUNDED INNER CHILD DOWN TO

# Akbar & Jeff's COUPLES THERAPY CENTER

"WHERE THE ELITE MEET TO BERATE"

TRY OUR SPECIAL 4-PART HEALING PROCESS!

<p>WOULD YOU PLEASE SHUT YOUR BIG FAT MOUTH WHEN I'M MAKING A DIAGNOSIS?</p>  <p>THERAPIST AKBAR</p>	<p>CAN'T WE PLEASE BE PROFESSIONAL "TINY" AND I DO MEAN "TINY."</p>  <p>REFEREE JEFF</p>
<p><b>WARM-UP EXERCISES</b></p> <p>COMPLETE THIS SENTENCE: "IF MY PARTNER WERE A FARM ANIMAL, HE WOULD NO DOUBT BE _____ A SMELLY, PASSIVE-AGGRESSIVE MULE, FOR INSTANCE."</p> 	<p><b>UNCOVERING YOUR HIDDEN HURTS</b></p> <p>YOU MUST PREFACE YOUR REACTIONS WITH THE PHRASE "I HONESTLY FEEL." TRY IT THIS WAY: "I HONESTLY FEEL IF YOU DON'T GET OFF MY CASE I WILL BATH YOUR HEAD IN WHILE YOU SLEEP."</p> 
<p><b>RECEIVING BRUTAL INSIGHTS</b></p> <p>THE REASON WE CHARGE SO MUCH IS BECAUSE YOU'RE A COUPLE OF INCREDIBLY BORING WHINEES.</p>  <p>FUN!</p>	<p><b>CLDSURE</b></p> <p>I'M SORRY TO CUT YOU OFF IN MID-SENTENCE, BUT OUR TIME IS UP FOR TODAY. PLEASE TRY TO SLEEP QUIETLY ON YOUR WAY OUT.</p>  <p>EDUCATIONAL!</p>

"WE PUT THE FUN BACK IN DYSFUNCTIONAL!"

## LIFE IN HELL

BY MATT GROENING

