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*From the Epistles of St. Jules to the Forensicians:*

10/21/98

### Nostrum Slaps Handcuffs on Pinochet

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<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Forum/6298/index.html>.

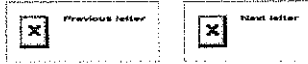
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We almost didn't make it this week. The Nostrumite is in a state of permanent depression over the state of [www.geocities.com](http://www.geocities.com). Uploading and downloading is working lately with the cool efficiency of Brownian motion, and the Mite claims that the imposition of scripts and advertisements and branding and other generally intrusive electronic frou-frou has gone too far to make the site usable by the average schlub, by which he inevitably means me. So we are going to embark on a process of transferring everything back to AOL again, whence we came lo these many years ago. Aaargh! This may take a while. Bear with us, please, during this difficult and perhaps pointless transition.

Anyhow, I said I would explain the Falutin sisters, so here goes. They are identical twins, both HDS students. One is an Episcopalian and the other is a Unitarian; I do not understand how one clan can process offspring (especially genetically equivalent offspring) in different denominations, but I can accept that, I guess. Anyhow, the young ladies in question are of French origin, and the name is pronounced fal-you-tan, and they say that it was, originally, de Falutin. This is, of course, a completely ineffectual attempt on their part to control our referring to the Episcopalian as High Falutin and the Unitarian as Low Falutin. As if -- we simply cannot help ourselves. Nor can we help ourselves from being totally beguiled by these two lovely ladies, who have taken over our collective life as only divinity students can. They even have Unix the Cocker Nostrumutt eating out of their hands (although we are training the three of them to use the dog-food bowl in the future). We met High and Low about a month ago, and our fancies have been engaged ever since. The attraction seems to be requited, except that neither of them can figure out this whole Nostrum business. Non-forensicians, obviously. When they want to go out and boogie, or at least do whatever is the divinical equivalent of boogying, they don't want to wait around while the Mite and I come up with new plot lines for H.P. Buglaroni. So there is a little tension in the old Nostrum homestead. If hell hath no fury

like a woman scorned, try hell with two women who look alike and study the Bible all day.  
Whew!

*Jules*



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***From the Epistles of St. Jules to the Forensicians:***

**10/28/98**

**Nostrum Brokers Bronx-Hunter Peace Pact**

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We almost didn't make it this week. The Nostrumite is in a state of permanent depression over the fact that, despite an epigrammatic tradition to the contrary, there are indeed second acts in American lives. And third acts, fourth acts, entr'actes, afterwords, footnotes, indexes, sequels, prequels and all manner of redefinitions. "Okay," he says, "I can understand that they thought the guy was a Space Columbus so they made a Senator out of him, that's act two, but now he's back doing Buzz Lightyear again, which is act three, except it's really a sequel to act one, or more like a remake, if you want to know the truth." He compares the whole thing to one of the later Star Trek movies where Kirk and McCoy and Scotty all looked like death eating a fig newton and they had to rouge them to within an inch of their geriatric lives before they could even prop them up in front of the cameras. Not that the lad has anything against sending old people into space, mind you. As a matter of fact, he thinks that all old people should be sent into space whether they want to go or not, and that the resulting empty nursing homes should be turned into nice subsidized housing for low-income families. The problem was the convergence with that other existential remake, the reinstatement of Iron Mike. "At least they'll only let him box in Vegas," the Mite says resignedly. "They should have just allowed him only to box in space."

Meanwhile, it has been no fun at all switching over to AOL, and we have made less progress than we had hoped. It is probably inevitable that most of our stuff will either not work or work incorrectly for the next few weeks. So it goes. It would go quicker if the damned -- I mean, darned -- Falutin sisters would help out, but they've been spending all their time studying for their midterms. In their line of business, you'd think they could skip the studying and just toss out a quick prayer before the tests, but they insist it doesn't work that way. Not even for High, the Episcopalian, who needless to say has a hell -- I mean, heck -- of a lot more homework than



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*From the Epistles of St. Jules to the Forensicians:*

11/4/98

Nostrum Salutes Oldsternaut Glenn

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We almost didn't make it this week. The Nostrumite is in a state of permanent depression over the fact that, after reading all six volumes of the Dumas Malone, not to mention those trips to Monticello where they still refer to the man as Mr. Jefferson as if he's taking a nap in the back room and they give you nice, crisp, two-dollar bills in change even though anywhere you go outside of a ten-mile radius of UVA they arrest you if you try to cash in one of those things, there is now DNA proof that TJ -- the man whose crowning achievement once was writing the Declaration of Independence but lately it turns out he only sort of wrote it, you know, he maybe put in a few commas and stuff -- did beyond doubt have intimate relations with Sally Hemings. Not that the Mite gives a judgmental hoot about what his favorite Founding Father did when the lights went out, or whether Sally was a slave or free or black or white, but simply that having spent his whole life believing one thing, based on the astute documentary evidence of seemingly impeccable historians, the lad now has to throw in the towel and believe the exact opposite. Jefferson is complex enough, he says, without having to reshuffle him every week. "Jefferson still survives," the Mite announces with quotes within quotes (he is nothing if not endlessly referential), "but you can kick all these damned historians down the stairs."

*Jules*



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11/4/98

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***From the Epistles of St. Jules to the Forensicians:***

**11/11/98**

**Nostrum Publishes First High-Definition Episode**

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We almost didn't make it this week. The Nostrumite is in a state of permanent depression over the fact that Mr. Ross managed to file the divorce papers on the Wednesday immediately following the election. Is it not bad enough that Betsy barely managed to beat out Grandpa Munster? Will the injustice never end? Of course, on the brighter side, the Mite was rather cheered up that Robert Livingston, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, would now become Speaker of the House, until one of the Falutin sisters had the temerity to point out that it wasn't Robert Livingston that signed the DOI, it was Philip Livingston, who was Robert's uncle, although Robbie *was* a delegate to the Continental Congress in 1775, so, she said, it was a natural mistake. The Mite, who does not consider himself capable of making natural mistakes, was struck dumb, until he clipped an article from the Tuesday New York *Times* that cited research proving that religious people are fatter than non-religious people. Baptists tend to be the fattest, while Buddhists weigh in as the skinniest (which makes sense if you compare fried chicken at the Sunday social with tofu and a full day of Zen sitting). The article went on to say that Hawaii, Massachusetts (ahem!) and Colorado have the fewest people affiliated with religion and the smallest number of overweight people (find the common thread among those three states -- there's a poser for you). The Mite placed the article on the breakfast table under the nose of the offending Falutin -- High, as it turned out -- and simply muttered something about a warning from the newspaper of record, and wasn't it true that High did look a little more zaftig than the Unitarian, Low, and please pass the cream cheese. High briefly regarded her grapefruit with a look in her eye that strongly recalled Jimmy Cagney in *Public Enemy*, but ultimately her religious training won the day, and she said nary a word. Smart woman.

***Jules***



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*From the Epistles of St. Jules to the Forensicians:*

11/18/98

**Nostrum Reaches Settlement With P.C. Jones**

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We almost didn't make it this week. The Nostrumite is in a state of permanent depression over the impending emasculation of Unix, the Cocker Nostrumutt. Of course, it's not as if we weren't expecting it; we did call him Unix, after all. But as the Mite explained to the Falutin sisters, "When you geld any one of us, you geld us all." The ministers manque were not particularly sympathetic (and don't send a barrage of notes explaining that isn't precisely the meaning of manque; we are well aware of the best usage of the word, per John Updike, "Manque see, manque do"). If you don't do it, High explained, you'll be creating a potential blight of half cockers throughout Cambridge, to which the Mite merely lifted an eyebrow in response, which I interpreted as saying, who would notice another half-cocked Cambridgian? Low, who has been ruminating over turning vegan as a surprise for her parents this Thanksgiving, did have some reservations about not leaving God's creatures as God made them, but High reminded her of our obligations to caninity as a whole, and explained that if God had not wanted Unix to lose his doggedness, He would not have made it so accessible to the scalpel. At which point I personally turned blue in the face and had to leave the room. In any case, Unix's appointment is this Friday. Remember him in your prayers.

We're going on a one-week hiatus, due to the Thanksgiving holiday. We'll be back again in all our glory (except for Unix, whose glory will be left on the cutting room floor) on December 2.

*Jules*



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*From the Epistles of St. Jules to the Forensicians:*

12/2/98

## **Nostrum Merges with AOL, Netscape, Mobil, Exxon & Bankers' Trust**

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We almost didn't make it this week. The Nostrumite is in a state of permanent depression over poor Unix the Cocker Nostrumutt, who did indeed go under the knife the Friday before Thanksgiving. The look of unalloyed trust in his big, brown eyes (Unix's, not the Mite's) as we handed him over to the vet, Dr. Benway, is one I will never forget. The look of I'll-never-trust-these-schmucks-again when we picked him up after the op is one that I will also never forget. The poor pup has since spent most of his time licking at his private parts, or what is left of them, but truth to tell, he spent most of his time before the op doing that very same thing. He is a dog, after all. The Falutins continue to maintain that all this fuss is unnecessary, especially compared to the procedure involved in neutering a female dog (known in the trade, by the way, as a bitch, but this is a family site, so we won't go there). "The anatomy of the male makes these things eminently convenient," High says, narrowing her eyes at the Nostrumite. Truer words having never been spoken, the Mite simply skulks off into the night with himself at one end of the leash and Unix at the other, spending hours walking the foggy streets of Cambridge, seeking solace in the brotherhood of the impotent. At least I think that's what he's doing. He might just be going to pub on the corner for the odd brewski and tying Unix to the stool and feeding the pup beer nuts. With the Nostrumite, you never know.

Jules



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***From the Epistles of St. Jules to the Forensicians:***

**12/9/98**

**Nostrum Withdraws from Microsoft Suit**

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We almost didn't make it this week. The Nostrumite is in a state of permanent depression over Low's attempt to decorate the old dump for the season with, well, everything that isn't nailed. Pine branches and cones, Teletubbies Advent calendars, mistletoe, flashing lights-- She even tried to get the Nostrumutt to wear an elf hat, but at that point the Mite drew the line and told her that she and her sister have their own place, and if she must turn something into Nightmare on Mall Street, she should do it on her own turf. Looking hurt as only a Falutin twin can, Low allowed a tiny tear to collect in the corner of one eye, not knowing the Mite well enough to realize that he too can bawl at will, and for a couple of minutes the two of them cried at each other like 12-year-olds at their 400th *Titanic* screening. When they realized that wasn't getting them anywhere, they dried up and removed themselves to their respective corners. High and I took no part in this display of bogus emotion; we get enough bogus emotion dealing with Low and the Mite in the normal course of events, without having it spill over into holiday-specific business. And meanwhile the Nostrumutt, hatless, continues to look misbegotten; he still hasn't fully recovered his appetite, and he doesn't even like watching original Star Trek episodes anymore.

None of this bodes well for holiday season.

Jules





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***From the Epistles of St. Jules to the Forensicians:***

**12/23/98**

**Nostrum Confuses Dawson's Creek with Washington, D.C.**

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We almost didn't make it this week. The Nostrumite is in a state of permanent depression over the fact that recent events in Washington are starting to sound like a Novice Policy team on crack:

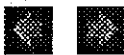
1. **Bimbo in beret makes President's knees knock**
2. **Special Prosector futilely investigating Whitewater hears said knees knocking through a wired harridan and extends investigation**
3. **Whitewater investigator makes deal with Bimbo in beret and catches President with pants down, thus confirming the knocking of the knees**
4. **Voters resounding ignore lack of Presidential bitches in November election as sales of Gap dresses soar**
5. **Republicans in such disarray at not trouncing Democrats that Speaker Newt resigns**
6. **Robert Livingston, of *the* Livingstons, becomes Speaker-elect, replacing the disappearing Newt**
7. **Public continues to ignore lack of Presidential bitches, to which is now added lack of Newt**
8. **Clinton bombs Iraq**
9. **Congress passes 2 articles of impeachment**
10. **Clinton bombs Iraq some more. So there!**
11. **Speaker-elect Livingston resigns over, oh golly, whoda thunkit, a sex scandal uncovered by, whoda thunkit, Larry Flynt**
12. **Clinton blames impeachment process -- and not lack of brains and/or lack of common morality and/or lack of an ounce of common sense -- for demise of Speaker-elect Livingston as public continues to ignore lack of presidential bitches, lack of Newt, and now, lack of Livingston, as well as lacks of brains, morality and common sense**
13. **Dennis Hastert becomes Speaker-elect**
14. **Clinton removed from office. Whoda thunkit?**

15. Al Gore becomes President, and is forced to resign over illegal campaign funds solicited from pay telephone in White House Men's Room from Buddhist nuns before he has a chance to appoint new Veep
16. Dennis Hastert, former high school teacher and debate coach, appointed President
17. Nuclear holocaust destroys universe

All right, the Mite knows that #14 is damned unlikely, because no matter what happens, the public simply has no interest in Clinton's britches, but #1 through #13 are fact, and #15 would be fairly likely, which leads to #16, and we get a debate coach as President. "Now that's scary," the Mite says, reflecting over debate coaches he has known. "I doubt if any self-respecting Policy team would have the nerve to run this stuff," he adds. "What would they call it? 'The Sex Scandal/Bomb Iraq/Impeach Clinton and Gore/Debate Coach Becomes President Disad?'" Of course, when I pointed out that Coach Hastert was actually involved in wrestling and not forensics, the lad turned a deaf ear to me. If any Novice Policy teams do decide to run this scenario, I hope at least that they will acknowledge us in the tag line. Call it the Nostrum Scenario; ten to one the judge picks you up on it.

Anyhow, the Falutins have already retired back to Dixie for the break, and the Mite and I are about to put Unix the Cocker Nostrumutt into his traveling cage and board up the factory for a couple of weeks. We'll be back on January 13. Happy Holidays everyone, and don't say we didn't warn you!

Jules



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***From the Epistles of St. Jules to the Forensicians:***

**12/16/98**

**Nostrum Strips for Nicole Kidman: Pure Theatrical Saltpeter**

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**We almost didn't make it this week. The Nostrumite is in a state of permanent depression over the state of the justice system in America. He was not unnaturally upset when they decided to trust-bust Bill Gates, and he's not even losing much sleep over the impeachment of Bill Clinton, but, as he says, "When they start sending former Mousketeers up the river for ninety-nine years, then we've got a problem." Sometimes I think he reads the papers a little too closely for his own good, but it's probably just that the word Disney always catches his eye from a mile away (the Mite is especially prone to lecture on all things Disney, and since he is especially prone to lecture to begin with, you can imagine what it's like when we touch on one of his hobby horses). High managed to wane his wrath (does that make any sense, or has the Thesaurus gone on the blink again?) by pointing out that Karen is one of the original Mousketeers, not one of the New Mousketeers. The lad was slightly soothed by this knowledge, sighing that he had fallen between the two stools of Mouseketeerdom, too young for the Originals and too old for the Next Generation. Pretty much the same thing applied to Star Trek, for that matter, although we won't even begin to discuss his fascination with Seven of Nine. In any case, he is not happy to see anyone trade in their mouse ears for prison stripes, and now he's going around claiming that his Christmas is going to be irreparably ruined.**

**He may be right.**

**Jules**



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***From the Epistles of St. Jules to the Forensicians:***

**1/13/99**

**Nostrum and NBA Return. Oh joy. Oh rapture.**

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**We almost didn't make it this week. The Nostrumite is in a state of permanent depression over the impending arrest of the Three Tenors on tax evasion charges. Not that he minds the fact that Giovanni Q. Law has finally stuck his nose into the affairs of these marketing minstrels, mind you. "PBS pledge weeks were bad enough when it was Revenge of the Swing Bands," he says, "but now they rely on the Three Tenors the way Universal used to rely on Abbott and Costello: next thing you know it will be The Three Tenors Meet the Wolfman. And we won't even mention 'Singin' in the Rain'." His point is that if the Four Falsettos can be hors de combat for the IRS, who anywhere is safe? "They'll be dragging Lucy Lawless away in chains if this keeps up," the lad says angrily. Although a smile does appear on his face when he imagines the scenario of Pavarotti meets Puff Bubba on Cell Block 11. "He'll be hitting his first high Cs in years," the Mite says maliciously.**

**Jules**



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**1/13/99**



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***From the Epistles of St. Jules to the Forensicians:***

**1/20/99**

**Nostrum Bids M. ("Butterfingers") Jordan Fond Farewell**

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**We almost didn't make it this week. The Nostrumite is in a state of permanent depression over the reception given to what he claims is one of his favorite films, if not his numero uno favorite film, 2001: A Space Odyssey. Good grief! Everyone is back now, including the Falutin sisters, and the Mite's way of welcome was to pop the 2001 disk into his brand new DVD player that he got for Christmas. One thing you can do with DVDs is watch movies in the letterbox format, which means that you get this tiny strip of action where the film ought to be, and you can also watch in foreign languages. Quelle thrill, as the Frenchies say. Anyhow, not one of us except for the Mite had actually sat through the thing before, so he had a truly virgin audience. The plot was, well, a little obtuse. For the first couple of hours a bunch of guys in gorilla suits go around grunting at each other until the monolith appears for no good reason, and the next thing you know this bone turns into a space ship. That's the dawn of man. Then a lot more hours pass with absolutely nothing happening except they play Johann Strauss, which the Mite insisted be turned up to top volume, possibly to cover the snoring in the room. That's the dawn of special effects. Finally these moon guys uncover the monolith again (when High facetiously suggested it had been buried by the guys in the gorilla suits, the Mite was not amused), and it makes this horrible noise that woke up Low from the best nap she claims she's ever had, and then for the next couple of hours there was this whole thing that must have seemed really prescient when they wrote it in the 1960s about computers in the future, but their idea was that in the late 90s we'd have Hal 9000. Instead, we got Bill Gates. Reality proved scarier, but then again, at least my version of Windows 98 has never tried to kill me. So at this point there's a glimmer of plot, because the monolith on the moon was sending a message to a monolith on Jupiter, although when you think about it, just uncovering the monolith on the moon ought to prove to the space guys at Monoliths 'R Us that we have rockets, so why bother with the other one? I guess they needed something to make the movie even longer. More hours pass, and finally our hero gets into the space pod and then, well, your guess is as good as mine as to what is going on, but if**

the climax of this movie doesn't give you a headache, nothing will. At the very end, this space baby comes out of the monolith to go to Roswell or wherever it is that space babies come in for a landing, and any possibility that any of this would make sense to anyone other than a bunch of 60s hippies -- who apparently all saw it a hundred times sitting in the front row in all sorts of stages of chemically induced dazed-and-confused -- was lost. When the movie was over the Mite began to wax rhapsodic about Cinerama and Stanley Kubrick and then High said she hadn't been this bored since the time she and her father drove to seven different department stores on a Saturday night searching for just the right hard-boiled-egg slicer. "I've got more where this came from," the Mite responded angrily, leaving the rest of us with a feeling we're in for some really amazing films over the next few months. Letterboxed. In French. With the original trailer, and an interview with anyone who made the film who is still alive.

Open the pod doors, Hal; I gotta get out of here.

Jules



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***From the Epistles of St. Jules to the Forensicians:***

**1/20/99**

**Nostrum Passed Over For Golden Globe Awards. Again.**

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**We almost didn't make it this week. The Nostrumite is in a state of permanent depression over a suggestion that has arrived in our mail e-bag that we somehow allow our episodes to be privately doctored by this one particular school so that instead of writing about Nostrum characters, we would be writing about their team. These mad-lib episodes, for want of a better designation, would be then passed around in their own private Idaho for their somewhat bizarre personal amusement. As we replied to them, it is a well-known fact that Herman Melville wrote at great length about his adventures hunting raccoons in the American northwest. However, some whaling friends of his in Bedford preferred that he write about their adventures, so whenever he mentioned raccoons or forests, in their edition, much to his chagrin -- they had an in at the publisher -- they substituted whales and oceans. The great white raccoon Melville's characters were seeking was named by the author, Oscar the Raccoon (not very imaginative, we grant you, but Hermie was rather fond of it). The Bedford contingent changed it to Moby Dick, after a cook at the local hash house who had a real way with grilled cheese sandwiches. The amazing thing is that Mr. Melville's original has been lost to history, and all that remains is the unauthorized version. Needless to say, we do not wish the same thing to happen to Nostrum, and we turned down the suggestion. The Mite was rather vocal on the issue. "What next?" he asked. "Product placements? Drop-in visits from the cast of Friends? Marion Davies movies?" He did suggest, however, that if people offered cold, hard cash, he'd do it in a minute.**

**Jules**



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***From the Epistles of St. Jules to the Forensicians:***

**2/3/99**

**Nostrum Gains Clemency Through Papal Intercession**

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**We almost didn't make it this week. The Nostrumite is in a state of permanent depression over the fact that this year had to be the Falutin sisters' first Superbowl. How they have hitherto managed to avoid the annual Tournament of Advertisers is hard to imagine, but they claim that "the only sport that Daddy ever liked was shootin'," presumably to catch dinner (you know how those Southerners are with their varmints). Anyhow, the festivities got off suitably well with Cher abandoning Bob Mackie once and for all and going with the faded-dungarees/guess-my-hair-color look. And the first couple of ads were pretty satisfying; even High and Low had to admit that the Macintosh bit on HAL 9000 was pretty good, although the Mite pointed out that if they hadn't seen it thanks to him three weeks ago they wouldn't have gotten the joke; there was a moment when we thought the DVD of 2001 was going back into the player, but cooler minds prevailed. Then there was that series on kids wanting to be business losers when they grow up; those of us on the brink of joining the work force found these quite enough to throw us into a state of permanent depression to match the master. But it was all downhill from there. High was appalled at the rampant sexism, the Mite was appalled that the Victoria's Secret ad was so short, Low kept saying that those frogs just aren't funny and what's the point, and as for me, I was the only one who had even the slightest interest in the football game, which ended two minutes into the game after Atlanta's failed field goal attempt. Even the half-time show failed to rise to the entertainment depths achieved in the past; it's hard not to like Formerly Little Stevie Wonder who nowadays looks like a halfback himself, or Big Bad Voodoo Daddy (who did, unfortunately, prove by their selection to appear in this mainstream venue that, yes, retro-swing is now officially passe), and Gloria was innocuous, but would it kill Savion to lose the Huckleberry Finn outfit just once? Is this the only outfit he owns, or is he like Woody Allen, where he owns a lot of clothes, but they're all the same? After that, the second half of the game was the textbook definition of dreadful, with most of the time spent defending the annual ritual to the Falutins and the two of them shaking their heads over the sheer idiocy**

of it all. One would have to say that the ultimate high point was when the Mite served his world famous clam dip, the first food other than toasting a Pop-Tart that the Falutins have ever seen him prepare from scratch. All he does is throw a can of clams into a container of sour cream, liberally seasoned with garlic salt, but for him, that is haute cuisine with a vengeance. In any case, it is highly unlikely that we'll be watching the Pro Bowl next week.

Jules



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***From the Epistles of St. Jules to the Forensicians:***

**2/10/99**

**Nostrum Accepts Iron-Bars Mike's Nolo Contendere**

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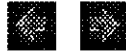
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**We almost didn't make it this week. The Nostrumite is in a state of permanent depression over the pending release of postmodern Barbie. According to the press, the Mattel Madonna is coming out soon in a version with a flower tattoo, and some members of the fourth estate are suggesting that she may also have nose and lip studs as optional accessories. Presumably she'll also smoke, club hop, and enjoy music by groups that only know two chords and still have trouble finding them on their guitars. Over the years the lad has been more than amused by the manifestations of the goddess of the Baby Boom, which have included both Elvis and George Washington, and he was heartily amused at the suggestion that she was going in for a nip and a tuck and a lipo to make her more human and less... whatever she is. "Have you ever tried to put shoes on one of those things?" he asks. Well, to tell you the truth, no. Anyhow, he could abide all of these, but po-mo Barbie takes the whole thing a few steps too far. "What's next?" he asks. "Shooting Gallery Barbie? Crackhead Barbie?" High Falutin, whose experience of Barbie apparently extends beyond reading the ads in the Toys 'R Us catalog, suggested to the lad that he stick to subjects about which he has some knowledge, rather than trying to interfere in milieu of seven-year-old girls, to whom this tattoo is probably as innocent as Barbie's assemble-it-yourself bordello that High remembers fondly from her own childhood, but since when is the Nostrumite one to acknowledge borders to his knowledge? "Speaking of Borders," he adds, "the clerk at our Borders has a tongue stud. 'Will [click] ckltere be anyckltng [click] elcklt, cktir [click]?' It's painful just watching him. I'll bet you he's already got his order in for a truckload of these po-mo Barbie babies."**

**Maybe. [click]**

**Jules**



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