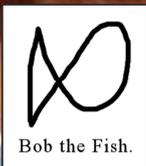


2SUNS

FOUL-MOUTHED NEWS COMMENTARY FOR SOCIOPATHS

Poor little rich girl

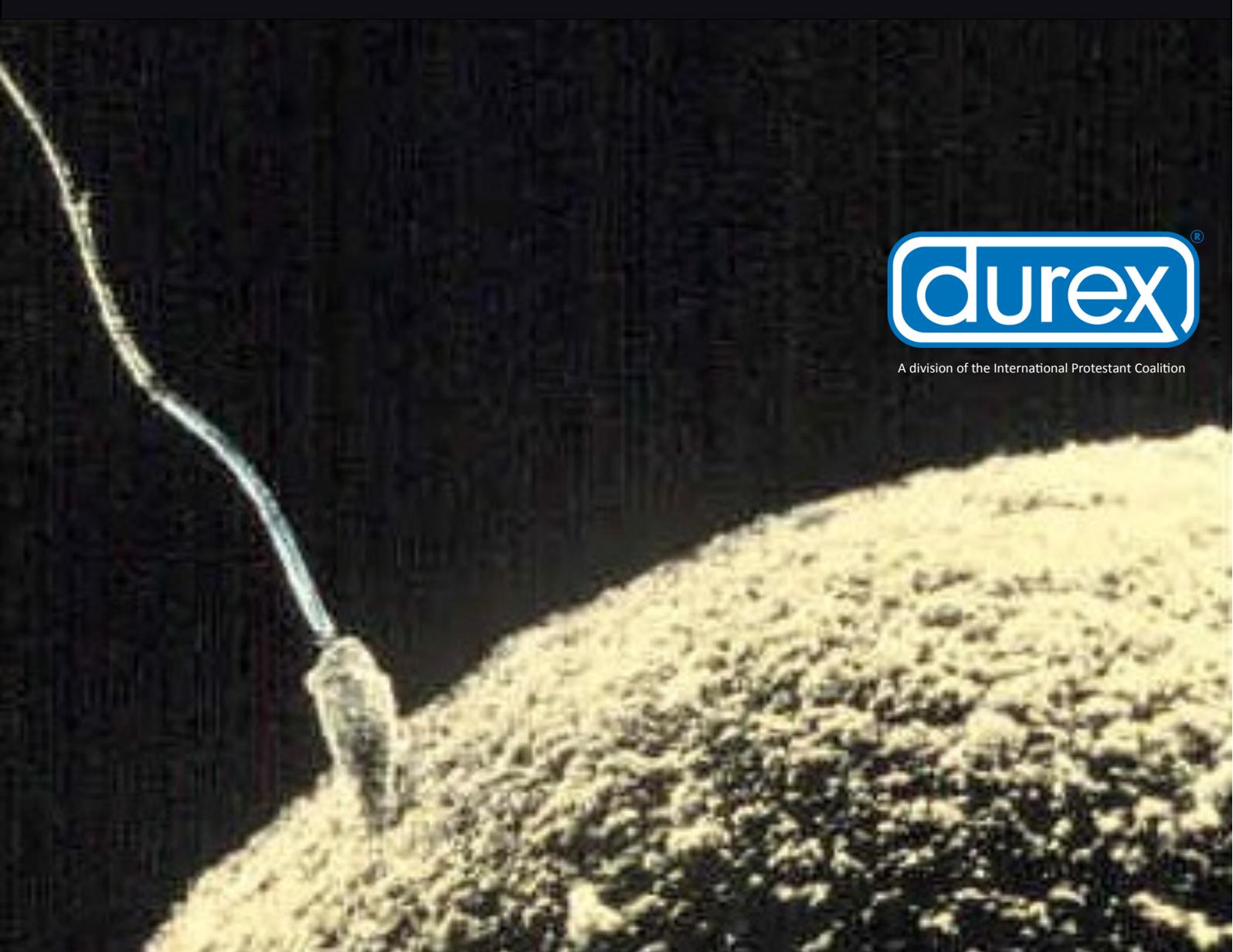
Mitt Romney: the struggle
against victory by default



Stop this
at all costs.



A division of the International Protestant Coalition



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2SUNS

"I JUST DON'T KNOW WHAT WENT WRONG!"

THE FIGHT FOR EVIL p4

Nobody likes him. Everybody hates him. But they'll nominate him anyway. Mitt Romney and the quest for acceptance. Guest-starring Newt Gingrich, Rick Santorum, and...Ron Paul?

RUINS p13

The Euro's on the point of collapse. Greece is about to sink into the ocean. Spain is on fire. Will 2012 see the end of the EU?

THIS BOY'S LIFE p18

Who is this Kim Jong-un anyway? Guess what, we don't know either.

ISLANDS IN THE RAIN p22

The Falklands are being argued over again. What is the deal with those islandful of sheep and penguins anyway?



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Welcome to the new and possibly even improved 2SUNS.

It's been nearly two years, so we thought it was time to refresh our interior look a bit. We look a bit more like a magazine now, don't you think? Well, you should.

That's right, two years. Gordon Brown was Prime Minister when issue #1 came out, albeit only for another few weeks. We've been foul-mouthedly shrieking through the entire Cameron era so far, and there's still no end in sight. We could cheer up, but then what kind of magazine would we have?

The world is still circling the drain in a very literal sense; we've covered both Greece exploding and the Republicans hating Mitt Romney before, but it's still happening. In other repeat news, Kim Jong-il has been replaced by a fat clone, and the Falklands war is starting up again thirty years on. Somewhere, George Santayana is weeping.

John Wirstham-Harte, editor



CASH



SPITE



LUBE



GOLD

LOOKING FOR MR. GOODBASTARD

The insanely rich east coast elitist, the explicitly evil pariah to millions, or the frothy mixture of lube and fecal matter that is sometimes the byproduct of anal sex? Or Ron Paul? Whoever wins, we win, as the GOP's desperate search for Mr Right (and White) lurches toward its sorry conclusion.

Words: Gareth Manford

Images: Fairey Nuff



It's not easy making this magazine, you know. Oh, you might think all we do is sit around on our fat arses eating pies, occasionally emerging every other month to put our heads above the parapet and swear about right-wingers. And you'd be pretty accurate, to be honest, but sometimes things happen that we have to write about because they're important, but which have a habit of changing tone halfway through and rendering entire articles redundant. Case in point: the race to - touch wood - lose to Barack Obama in November. He's the frontrunner! No, him! He's the presumptive nominee! Hang on, Santorum's just surged from the behind! Someone clean that shit up! Ron Paul's still here?

The GOP finally have their final four, heading into the home straight of a primary season that started in 2009 and has seen all of the biggest, richest and least ignorable candidates take turns to be canonised as front-runners at one time or another - and quite often practically crowned as President-Elect during their brief period in the spotlight. Michele "Can't spell Michelle" Bachmann was one of the first (of the actual candidates) to be absolutely-definitely-the-next-President-of-the-United-States, but she didn't last long, being too explicitly crazy, bigoted and cheerily fascist even for the GOP, or indeed anyone without a complete lack of judgement, or severe emotional damage, or Kelsey Grammer.

Then, W. Bush's protégé Rick Perry entered the race. The GOP love a cowboy, and Perry looks exactly like he'd be at home grinning from beneath a Stetson, atop a mustang, lasso and gun at his side. He even facially resembles a sort of Slim Pickens before being repeatedly beaten by an ugly stick. He had exactly the right image - just a good ol' boy, never meanin' no harm - and



for a good month was absolutely, definitely the next President of the United States. And then the debates arrived and it became obvious that he could barely speak a coherent sentence, let alone remember what his own policies were. Back to the drawing board.

Next at bat: Herman Cain. As a complete unknown, he may have expected to be relegated to the back row of candidates, alongside Jon "doesn't even hate the fags" Huntsman and Gary "who the fuck is Gary Johnson" Johnson, but at some stage the GOP realised he was black, and so this former pizza chain CEO, who had never so much as considered a run for elected office before in his life, was absolutely, definitely the next President of the United States toward the end of 2011. Some idiots loved him because he was black, taking away what they earnestly try to convince themselves was Obama's one and only advantage in 2008. Others loved him because he was black, and that proved that the liberals were the real racists. Still more loved him because he was black, and being the crackeriest of crackers they thought it made them cool by association. His other advantage was that he was a businessman, which to the GOP is like being Super Jesus, and meant that they could hold him up as some kind of economic genius by default, even - in fact, especially - when he unveiled his remarkably stupid 9-9-9 tax plan. Simply put, this would have abolished all tax ever and replaced it with a 9% income tax, a 9% business transaction tax and a 9% sales tax. Which would mean that the top 1% - those guys again - would have their already very small tax burden drop to

terrifying, satirical new lows, while everyone else's burden rises. GREAT PLAN EVERYBODY. Astonishingly, this wasn't what ended his campaign; it was the fact that he's a massive bell-end of a horn dog.

After THAT It was Newt's turn. Unfortunately (for him and his party) everyone remembered by now why he was an international hate figure throughout the second half of the nineties: that he's a horrendous human being who's turned hypocrisy into a heartbreakingly fine art and taken venality and realpolitik to the kind of depths undreamt of by Machiavelli. He had the good fortune to be anointed as Frontrunner de Jour in time for the actual voting to begin. It started as usual in Iowa, which is basically a gigantic cornfield studded with tyre factories, and contains a significant number of the sort of Republican voters who would fuck the Bible silly, were it not a sin. This may help to explain the fact that it was won, seemingly out of the blue, by the improbably-named Rick Santorum, which sounded like some sort of biological term even before it was one. Santorum, in case you'd forgotten, is the other terrifying evangelical candidate, the kind of buttoned-up and outwardly devout 50s throwback that you'd hate to live next to because damn if he doesn't look exactly like a serial killer. He'd been nowhere in the race for months, completely overlooked, quietly wandering around in the background with Huntsman and Johnson, a write-off, out by February. But he was just biding his time. Failing to raise anything like as much money as everyone else was just a bluff all along. Maybe.



But hang on, what about the actual frontrunner? The literal elephant in the room? Where's Mitt Romney in all of this?

Well, the simple answer is quietly winning the race by default because there's literally no-one else. The Republicans know what they don't want. They're even fairly sure what they *do* want, ie Reagan (or rather their fantasy version of Reagan who wasn't essentially responsible for most of the mess we're in now). But he's not running, partly because he's dead and partly because he never existed in the first place. What they've got is a straight choice between the repressed Jesus-obsessed Ted Cleaver wannabe, all four horsemen of the apocalypse rolled into one, or biting the bullet and going for Mitt. Oh, alright, there's also Ron Paul, but for all his commendable energy, dedication, and refusal to speak in talking points, instead bringing up all sorts of actual issues that no-one else would touch with a bargepole, he's also as bigoted as anyone else in the race, with a side-order of David Icke conspiracy fries. Besides, one of his few non-shitheaded opinions is that he doesn't love war for its own sake, so they'll never vote for him even if he turns out to have been right all along about 9/11 being an inside job and the holocaust never happening and chemtrails and morgellons and God knows what else.

Mittens really is the only viable candidate, and his nomination is practically a given, and in all honesty has been ever since 2008. A party that nominates Sarah Palin, is clearly about to run out, if it hasn't already, of competent people to run for President. At the least, Mitt Romney is competent.



Probably at the most as well. But no-one likes him. Democratic voters don't like him on general principles. Republican voters don't like him because...well, how long have you got?

- He's an east-coast liberal. His record as Governor of Massachusetts is hardly the Attlee Government, but god damn if it doesn't irritate Republicans. Gay marriage happened under his purview (he tried to stop it, but that doesn't show up on statistics and therefore might as well not have happened). His job creation record pales in comparison to Rick Perry's (probably because Perry had to hire several dozen grim, hooded executioners). Worst of all, the most utterly unforgivable act he ever performed: he introduced limited guaranteed healthcare *as if life and the pursuit of happiness were rights or something*. What kind of Republican puts *people* even close to *corporate profits*? Christ. And that's another thing:
 - He's a Mormon. Wrong kind of Christian! Funny underwear! Battle star Galactica! Polygamy! Etc! It's bad enough that Santorum's a Catholic, at least he acts like a Protestant.
 - He's fey. He's not quite a John Kerry "prissy braniac" type, but he's hardly a cowboy, which is obviously what Presidents are supposed to be like to the GOP base. He has hairstylists! He speaks French, for God's sake! *French!* He probably eats Swiss cheese and vegetables that don't come out of cans and/or freezer centres.
- He's twice as rich as Croesus, and he's out of touch with the Real Americans™. No, really, the *Republicans* are starting to say this now.

So anyway, they really, really don't want him to be the nominee, which is hilarious because they're stuck with him. But even in Michigan, his home state, he couldn't beat Rick fucking Santorum by more than a hair. By now, certain anyone-but-Mitt diehards are praying for a brokered convention, or a fashionably late parachute candidate. Sexist blob Chris Christie and ludicrous diversion Sarah Palin have both quietly muttered that they're free around about convention season.

But that's a pipe-dream. It's Obama versus Romney. And Romney versus the Republican party.

We're not even going to pretend we didn't have this ready for like three years



We did it with Elvis too



You
cannot kill
what does
not live.

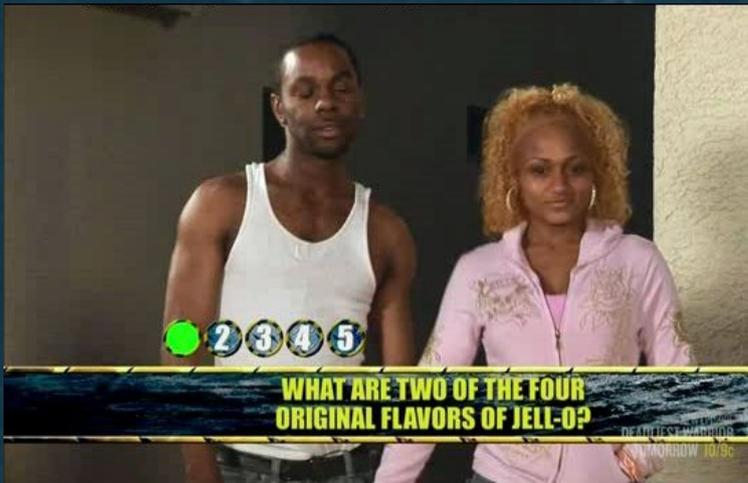
(we're not talking about the paper)



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FROM THE PRODUCERS OF JERSEY SHORE

Five trivia questions stand between these desperate people and the clearance of their debts...or the repossession of their car. It's apocalyptic fun for the whole family! From the minds behind your hatred of Italian-Americans specifically and the young in general comes yet more utterly unforgivable shit intended to subtly reinforce the notion that the poor and desperate are scum and you should feel contempt for them. (It's a bonus that most of them tend to be black. Chalk it up to coincidence, go on.) The revolution will not be televised, because civilisation's downward spiral already is being!



Greece is on fire again. In fact, Europe just bailed them out again. The Euro continues to implode. Is the great experiment over? And if so, which one? The currency or the Union?

Words: Humphrey Jaylynn

SOUND AS A POUND

Avid readers of this magazine - and there ARE some, thank you very much - may remember that a few months ago we ran a feature on Greece. We said that at the time, it was fortunate for Europe that default was not an attractive option for the Greeks. They needed to borrow too much money to pay for government services - their deficit was too big, so they needed to keep borrowing money, and to keep borrowing money they needed to find some way of servicing the existing debt. When Greece managed to reduce the deficit enough that it could pay for all essential services without needing to go cap in hand to the markets, default would look far more attractive. And that would be an interesting day.

Well, guess what, kids? Shit just got interesting.





Protesters in Athens state their grievances in no uncertain terms.

Photo credit: Getty Images.

They're not quite there yet. But Lucas Papademos and his crew of technocrats are coming remarkably close. At some point soon they're going to be saying "So, if we just don't pay the debt we won't be able to get money we don't really need. Tell me again why that's bad?"

The IMF (International Monetary Fund), ECB (European Central Bank) and EU (Germany) - known as the Troika, as if they're some kind of fucking operetta troupe - have been demanding ever harsher austerity and repeatedly changing the requirements that Greece needs to meet to get the next round of bail-out money. Thus far, Greece has been trying to keep up, despite the fact that the Greek people themselves expressed their opinions on the subject by attempting to burn down Athens. But this won't last forever. Eventually the government will look at the massed crowds and burning streets and just... stop. If you keep beating a donkey with a stick to keep it in line, it's only a matter of time before it finally flips out and

kicks you in the head. And Germany's been using that stick a LOT.

It doesn't help, of course, that all the proposed bail-outs seem to have the objective of getting the Greek people into more debt to pay back a load of rich investors who didn't do enough due diligence with their money. Now, while we'd love to call time on rich capitalists extorting money from those who can't really afford it... we can't. Because this time, it's not even capitalism. It's just fucking incompetence.

Capitalism is about risk. When you lend money, you get interest paid on it. This interest is the implicit compensation for the fact you might not get your money back at all. That's why it's called a risk. These terms are being forced on Greece, putatively, to keep the free market moving. But that's not even how it's meant to work. Now, don't choke too much... Your Dashing Correspondent hasn't had some 180 political reversal in the last couple of months. The red-in-tooth-and-claw

capitalism that the bankers are espousing would certainly leave the Greeks in a very hard position, but it would also fully expect them to provide a note reading 'sucks to be you' to their creditors in lieu of payment. This recovery plan appears to be put together with an ideology mixing the worst bits of capitalism and socialism with the sole intention of making sure the only people who lose out are the Greeks at the bottom of the pile.

So Greek default appears to be less a case of 'if' than 'when', potentially as early as March.

What happens then?

Here's the thing... it wouldn't have to be that bad. On a global scale - even compared just to the EU - the amounts of money we're talking about here are pocket change. The Greek debt could be paid off by Apple, for fuck's sake. The frightening part about a default is the potential of contagion - the debt markets suddenly becoming scared that if Greece has defaulted, surely Italy will too? And Portugal? And Spain? Since the credit rating downgrade (a statistic calculated through reading chicken entrails), even France has attracted nervous stares.

If that logic made any more sense than James Joyce on crack, then maybe there would be genuine call for worry. But Greece isn't Italy. It's not Spain, Portugal or France, either. Schoolchildren learn this at about the age of 7, so the fact that the most highly paid people in the continent can't grasp this fact is a little fucking disturbing.

All four of those countries - Portugal aside, far larger economies than Greece - are built on relatively solid economic foundations.

All of them were hit by a hugely powerful financial earthquake, and are now understandably looking shaky, but are repairable. In contrast, Greece had built its economic house out of blancmange.

So Greece could default, and it could be contained. It would need to leave the Euro as trying to force it to keep up with Germany

is half the problem, but with this achieved, a managed default and then devaluation of the new drachma would be pretty fucking hideous medicine at the time, but could have a recovery underway in a

few years, as opposed to the decades of poverty that is currently being shoved down the country's throat.

Following this, there would be ABSOLUTELY NO REASON for any other country in the EU to follow suit. The symptoms may be similar, the problem is far different. Unfortunately, this assumes the markets - which everything does revolve around, because none of the elected leaders (even the putatively socialist ones, depressingly enough) have the balls to tell them to shut up and pay up - are rational.

They are not.

They're really not. And when the Greek default hits, they're going to shit a fucking brick. They're going to be looking at every country that's even remotely shaky and start demanding far higher interest payments, which is going to make them more shaky, so the demands will get higher... you can

“ Greece isn't Italy. It's not Spain, Portugal or France, either. Schoolchildren learn this at about the age of 7, so the fact that the most highly paid people in the continent can't grasp this fact is a little fucking disturbing. ”

probably see where this goes.

When the interest rates are high enough, the larger economies won't be able to service their debt. The strength of the underlying economy won't matter - Italy already came perilously close to this point toward the end of 2011. The only thing that will bring the larger countries in to default is the markets themselves. Unfortunately, said markets are full of morons who appear desperate to make this happen.

The UK is not at risk of default - sterling gives us a huge advantage because we can just print more of it in the worst case - but we're not likely to be any less fucked. The eurozone is by far our largest export market - if Europe burns, we're far too close not to be worried about the fire.

The one consolation will be watching the faces of the Tories who are currently rubbing their hands with glee at the thought of the euro collapsing as the UK is promptly dragged down with it, and they realise that 20 miles of water doesn't mean we just get to watch from the sidelines. Strangely, as one of the most globalised countries on the planet (thanks Maggie) we're not just going to be able to go it alone.

Cameron, it should be noted, is not one of these. He's a cunt, but even he's not the biggest cunt in a party full of them and the prospect of a market-fuelled collapse visibly scares him. Not that this was enough to make him play ball with the EU in setting up a new finance initiative aimed at fixing this, because appeasing the frothing likes of William Hague or Iain & Duncan Smith or Liam Fox or...insert your own dead-eyed upper-crust hate figure here, okay? - was clearly far more important than doing anything constructive with those froggy wop



Lucas Papademos. Prime Minister for four months so far. Probably wishes he hadn't bothered.

Photo credit: Reuters.

dago hun bastards.

Your Dashing Correspondent would like to say there was hope this would all resolve itself in an orderly fashion, but while he's usually pretty adept at being a lying git that one's too big to swallow. If it was just possible to suspend the politics and the panic it really could be sorted out with a minimum of pain. Some pain, for sure - there's no way Greece gets out of this without a bit of suffering. But it could be contained, if only Germany can stop insisting all other countries must act like Germany (which, by the way, got rich due to selling shit to all the countries flooded with cheap credit. This plan doesn't extend, fraulein); the eurozone can accept that not every decision they've made has been a good one; and the markets

can stop going 'WAAAGGH we might lose this highly risky investment!!!'.

Unfortunately, the markets are made of people too. And that means they're fucking morons. The value of investments can go down as well as up, dipshits.

NB: On Monday 20th February, shortly after the preceding material was written, the Greeks did receive another bailout, thereby kicking the can down the road for a few more months. This only delays the clusterfuck, it doesn't fix it, though frankly we'd be all in favour of it if there was any hope of the time being used constructively. Unfortunately, we've played this game before.

For the good of the Greeks, they've got to leave the Euro and devalue. Tell the creditors to go hang - it's what they signed up for. It's not nice, it's not pretty, but it's the only way out.



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BOY'S GAMES

Remember that crazy shortarse with the funny hair who died over Christmas? Here's the new model. Who on Earth is Kim-Jong-un?

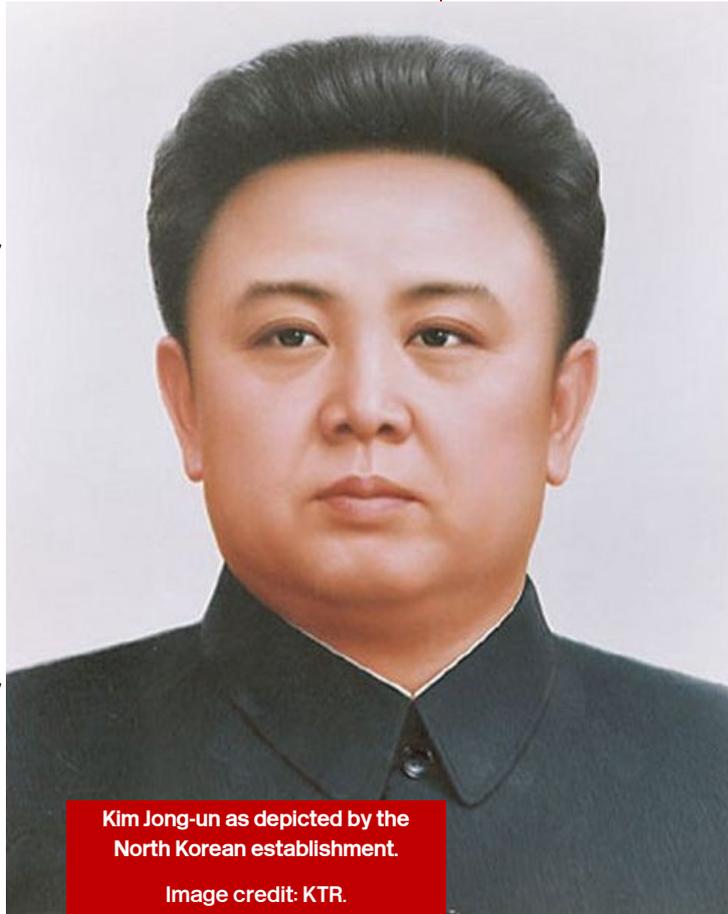
Words: Thierry Henry Thoreau

Title image: KRT/Bedden Debord

At the risk of being obvious: Meet the new boss, same as the old boss. Kim Jong-un is, by and large, his dad again. That was the idea. A communist monarchy, a dynasty of Kims from il-Sung to God knows where. With all the usual drawbacks of medieval-style monarchy, naturally: most notably, having to exist inside a gigantic bubble, each successive generation that little bit more detached from reality than the last, until eventually you end up with, at best, the blank incomprehension of the likes of Marie Antoinette. Add in a Stalinistic cult of personality, and the fact that they were none too clever as far as sanity is concerned in the first place, and you're piling problem on top of problem. Which is how we end up with a blank-faced 28-year old in charge of at least a good handful of nuclear weapons — with which he's already threatened his neighbours to the South. Never mind that they both occupy the same tiny peninsula, so dropping the Bomb on one is dropping it on both. Kim Jong-il seemed to genuinely consider himself superhuman. Kim Jong-un—from appearances alone—doesn't seem have sufficient thought processes even to get that far.

In almost every picture of him, Kim Jr has the same bored, slightly petulant look on his

face. It's the face of someone who has lived with literally everyone in the entire world—*his* entire world, anyway—being deferential to him and his family to the point of worship. It's the expression of someone who's been treated as a God since the nanosecond he was born, and therefore just assumes he deserves it. It's the expression of the youngest world leader on the planet.



Kim Jong-un as depicted by the North Korean establishment.

Image credit: KTR.

One of the very few things we know about Kim Jong-un is that he isn't yet thirty. The CIA managed to figure out that he was born on the 8th of January, but reports still vary on which year: 1983 or 1984? The former is usually accepted, making him just a few weeks over 29. (Were it the latter, he'd be younger than anyone at 2SUNS, which is faintly terrifying in itself). At his accession — assuming the whole “le roi est mort, vive le roi” principle applies here, and

frankly it might as well — he was 28. Admittedly this doesn't quite trouble the record set by the highly similar Baby Doc Duvalier, who replaced his despot nutrag at the age of 19, but then again Haiti didn't have the Bomb.

Another verifiable fact: Kim Jr has two degrees, one in physics and the other from military school. Given that these are both from establishments named “Kim Il-sung”, though, they don't necessarily prove that he can tell an electron from a proton, or hold a gun the right way around. Still, it works for

the creationists, most of whom seem to have gone to the same university, housed in an Elliot Hut in the middle of the Nevada desert.

Before University — assuming he went — Kim Jr attended at least one, possibly two, English-language schools in eternally-neutral Switzerland. He's said to have kept to himself, probably culture-shocked at suddenly finding himself among people who

don't fall down and worship him, even with a gun to their head. He was also said to have been a great fan of the NBA, and Michael Jordan in particular. While all sorts of vile speculations regarding his interest in tall, athletic

black men could leap to the mind of a less charitable magazine than this one, the one thing we're wondering is: did he mention it to his dad? Because I'm pretty sure Kim Sr would have taken a pretty dim view of his son professing an enjoyment for an American league of an American sport. In fact, it's because of just such an issue that Kim Il-Bunter is in charge now.



Kim Jong-un as depicted by reality.

Image credit: KTR.

The job was originally supposed to go to Kim Jong-nam, Kim Sr's eldest, and his only one by Song Hye-Rim, an actress he dabbled with for a while in the late sixties and early seventies. He was groomed for several years to continue the great work of oppressing the rabble, ignoring famines and bragging about penis size, until in 2001 he was caught trying to bugger off into Japan. Turned out he wanted to see Disneyland. Yes, there's one

in Tokyo. Anyway, after that he was effectively disowned in favour of one of the other two, both by his preferred consort, Ko Young-Hee. The older one, Kim Jong-Chul, was eventually decided to be too much "like a little girl", and so was passed over in favour of the very youngest of the lot (there is also a daughter, born second, but for obvious reasons she's even more girlish than Jong-

Chul).

So, thanks in part to Mickey Mouse, we now have a nuclear power in the hands of a fat boy, a depressed sumo wrestler, an alien from the planet Kim. Fortunately, even the addled masses recognise a figurehead when they see one, and his minders are carefully trying to put the nuclear weapons on a high shelf where he can't reach them. Make your own cake shelf joke.

ANOTHER FINE MESS, STANLEY

The Falklands are being eyed up again. Why does anyone want them anyway? Why did anyone colonise them in the first place? Willard Van Ormonom Quine has the history lesson.

The Falklands were discovered at some point in history - precisely when, and by whom, is the first of the many, many arguments over the islands. Just for a change, the islands were inhabited upon their discovery (by white people, that is; the Patagonian aborigines probably knew they were there, but fuck those guys). The first person to discover it, as far as anyone can tell, was actually a Dutchman named Sebald de Weert, who immediately called them the Sebald Islands because fuck all a'yalls. That didn't stick outside of the Netherlands, though. The first actual claim to them came from an English sailor, John Strong, in 1690. He was actually aiming for, of all places, Buenos Aires, but got blown off course and ended up floating about in a channel between two islands which just showed up out of nowhere. He named the channel after his sponsor, Anthony Cary, fifth viscount of Falkland, and the islands acquired the same name.

The first settlement on the Falklands was actually established by a Frenchman, no less than Louis de Bougainville, who landed on the larger eastern island and established what was then (and is now) known as Port Louis. The settlement came to essentially represent the entire islands in microcosm, changing hands, names, purposes and names again seemingly every five minutes. There's been strife over those Islands ever since we first got there. White people ruin everything.

The first Falklands Crisis was in 1770 and was

basically a comedy misunderstanding that almost led to massive bloodshed. At around the same time de Bougainville was establishing Port Louis over on the East Falkland, English Vice Admiral John Byron founded Port Egmont on the west one, at the same time claiming the entire thing for England. Neither of them was aware of the other - it was a bedroom farce with colonial politics - for several years, until 1769, when a Spanish captain - because by now the French had sold Port Louis to the Spanish - casually looked out to starboard and was astonished to see an English ship bobbing around like it owned the place.

In a fit of pique, the Spanish sent 1600 troops from Buenos Aires - because they owned it at the time - to Port Egmont, which was then defended by eight Englishmen and a sheep in a beret, who immediately surrendered. War with Spain seemed to be inevitable, and therefore war with France as well, because as their royal lines were cousins, they had this whole "I've got your back" treaty. Except that Louis XV of France didn't fancy a war over a couple of islands he'd sold years before and knew nothing about, and told Charles III of Spain to get to steppin'. Without France in their corner, Spain got a case of cold feet and decided to leave Port Egmont and let bygones be bygones. The question of precisely who owned the damn things was carefully sidestepped in case it started another bloody argument.

In 1774, it became somewhat moot as the British abandoned the Falklands altogether - along with several other minor colonies - in order to conserve resources for the ongoing American War of Independence. They took the precaution of leaving behind a plaque saying "This island is ours, motherfuckers", just in case. The Spanish did the same in 1803, and the remaining settlers eventually buggered off to the newly minted United Provinces of the River Plate - the prototype for Argentina. At this point, the islands became effectively a lay-by for damaged ships and a service station for whalers caught in the frequent storms that whipped up in the South Atlantic.

It was in 1820 that the seeds of the current dispute were sown, as the United Provinces made their first genuine claim on the islands. Oddly enough, it was via an American, David Jewett, born a few years before the United States, who'd served the US army until demob and was now privateering for the ur-Argentina. He landed on East Falkland due to storm damage, as many ships did, and while the ship was being fixed and he and his crew were enjoying a little R&R, he discovered - and this is a theory, but it's the theory of James Weddell, who was also there and helped fix his ship - that the French vessel *Uranie*, which had foundered a few years before, was still sat on the bottom of the harbour, its cargo (whatever it was) still within grabbing distance. The opportunistic Jewett immediately raised the flag of the United Provinces and bellowed their claim "by Natural Law" - thereby, he hoped, giving him possession of the wreck of the *Uranie*. Whether he got it or not is unrecorded. Jewett, by now basically a pirate, eventually left the Islands and went around stealing other people's boats and joining whatever tiny South American navy would take him. But the damage was done. Jewett's opportunism and avarice had made an indelible stamp on history. The Argentinians now had a claim on the Falklands.

News travelled slowly in those days - it took a year before the United Provinces even knew that they owned the Islands - but after several abortive attempts, they managed to install a governor there, one Luis Vernet, a German who pretended to be French for business purposes. Originally, this had the backing of Britain, mostly because he was initially just being given land on the Islands. It wasn't until he'd finally got there that the United Provinces suddenly proclaimed him governor. The British inevitably weren't too impressed, and spent some time jumping up and down and pointing at that plaque in what was now called Puerto Luis. They were slightly mollified by the Governor's assurances that he was a businessman, not a politician, the title was entirely the work of the United Provinces, and his interest was purely in clubbing seals to death for their fur.

Conditions remained tense, however, especially as Vernet used the power he apparently didn't want to enforce sealing restrictions that eventually led to an almighty fracas with the USA that left Puerto Luis decimated and Vernet and his makeshift cabinet arrested for piracy. They were eventually released without charge, which turned out to be that last straw that got Britain so irritated they actively invaded the damn things. We say "invaded"; since as far as they were concerned they owned them already, the technical term was "asserted their sovereignty".

The United Provinces also tried to stake their claim. First, they entertained the notion of turning the Islands into a penal colony, which was abandoned when the new Governor was murdered after four days, sending the entire settlement into anarchy until a force led by Lt Col José María Penido showed up to declare martial law. Order had just been restored when the British arrived and told them to take that silly blue flag down and fuck off out of it. Penido considered resisting, but given that the British had sent two massive boatfuls of soldiers, and all he had was a handful of mercenaries, most of whom were also British, he decided not to bother, gathered up his flag and returned to Buenos Aires.

The British initially continued Vernet's old seal-clubbing colony, even calling up his deputy Matthew Brisbane to help out. Everything went relatively smoothly until 1833, when a bunch of Creole thugs showed up and murdered almost the entire administration. The sealing colony was abandoned and the Islands were run as a simple naval outpost for a bit, renaming Port Luis one more time as "Anson's Harbour" before the British finally decided to use it or lose it and establish a permanent colony. In 1845, the Falklands' first and only city was completed—Port Stanley, the new capital of the Islands. (If you're wondering about Port Louis, it eventually devolved into a sheep farm) Actual people started to move in—initially mostly Chelsea Pensioners—and for the first time, it was all a bit quiet for a bit over there. There was a bit of a sea battle just off the coast during World War I, and one of Oswald Moseley's mates was found there during World War II, but apart from that, it was a pretty ordinary, if muddy, part of Britain. And then the UN was set up, and Argentina found itself with a possible avenue to pursue the old argument. With the British Empire crumbling, they started needling and needling, but apart from a few new trade routes, nothing actually changed until Argentina's military junta were overthrown by another military junta at Christmas 1981. Leopoldo Galtieri was already unpopular. He needed to prove himself somehow. Do something very big and very popular. Hey, why not invade the Falklands? That's bound to go down well...And the rest, of course, is history. Somewhat more recent, but only slightly less dumb, than the rest of the Islands' history.

CARTOON BY KENSWICK

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