

Like how I would say  
Only this time, you watch  
You not going find Raynette Dutro's panties in my glove compartment

So if you like my song  
Please come back to me  
I still waiting in my truck  
Because you took da key

## ENOLA VARGAS

### — TRYING TO HIT HER FIVE YEARS WITH THE COMPANY

**F**RIDAY NIGHT, WE GO GIRLS' NIGHT OUT. TALK, DRINK, LAUGH up like we best friends. Monday morning, I walk in the break room. Boop! Everybody get quiet.

Okay then. Fine. That's how you want to play it, well alright. I go back to my desk. I try to focus on my work but I'm thinking, what? Like I was the one dancing on the table showing panty to the waiter. Like I was the one riding the parking meter like a bucking bronco going "Naughty horsey! Naughty horsey!" Like I was the one so drunk I was barfing in my handbag.

Yeah, Denise. Yeah, Wanda. Yeah, Cookie. Go ahead and act because I remember everything.

Around 10:30 I like get coffee but they're still inside the break room so I go inside my purse to grab some quarters from the bottom for the soda machine and, whoa. What is that?

Oh man. Oh man. No tell me that was ME.

Shet. Was.

Wanda the one bought all those damn bloody Jell-O shots, lying, like, "It's not alcohol. It's only Jell-O! And sugar free!"

So I got a little wild. Not like I was the only one being happy while they were all in church.

I tell Wanda, so what? She says, "You kind of had a lot to drink." I go, so I got a little loose. So what? She goes, "You peed in a shot glass." Couldn't have been THAT drunk if I can aim in a shot glass, right. She goes, "You missed."

Now I gotta buy new shoes.

This goes on for a week. Whisper whisper in the break room. I walk in—silence.

One whole week.

I went through all my coffee withdrawals because I couldn't get near the damn coffee pot.

The next week Monday comes, I make sure I go work early. Early, early, so I'm the first one there. I go inside the break room and I made a big pot of coffee. I even bought expensive coffee for them, the one comes in a bag, not a can. Ten cups. Measure it all out so it's just right. Then I fill the water, not from the break room sink, not from the bathroom sink, from the toilet water. And I not talking the water from the tank. I'm talking bowl. But I shishi little bit inside first. Just a little. Just a psht! Like when you nervous. And I fill the water and set that baby to go.

When they come in, they tell me, Enola, you made the coffee? It's delicious! I tell them thank you. Aren't you having any?

I tell them no, I watching what I drink.

**JUNIOR**  
—  
**FROM MCKINLEY CAR WASH**

**E**H! DEA HER! DAS DA ONE!  
Look look look look look.

Oh wait, no look. No let her catch you looking, but look when she not looking.

No let her get in my line.  
Ah, she in your line!  
I sorry braddah.

I feel sorry for you.

Okay, just no make eye contact and when you go for vacuum the car, tell her she gotta get out first. Say it's regulations. Or else she just going sit there in the passenger seat, make you stick the hose in between her legs and I sorry, but she nasty. And she not wearing nothing underneath that skirt so if you make accident, you going get fired so just focus on the floor.

When you get to the back seat, keep one hand on the vacuum hose and one hand on the back of your pants. Or else she going look your crack and I sorry, but that's nasty. I no like no somebody's mother looking at me like that. That's not right.

When you wash the windows, no look inside because that's when she going try flash you. So no look and if you accidentally look, no make big eye otherwise she just going do 'em more.

Sick yeah? Why she don't go bar or something? Why she don't go gym. She get bucks. Look how nice her car. Sometimes she come three times in one week. Her car not even dirty and she come.

She old like my mother already. In fact, I think so she get kids because one time I found a Happy Meal box underneath the seat. Sick eh? She come here catch her jollies off all us. And you know her, she no even leave tip. That's the worse. She get bucks. Look her car. And you should see her house.

Eh, just watch out that lady.  
Never mind already.  
I do 'em.

**RANDY KAMA**  
—  
**LOYAL FRIEND**

**N**O NO NO NO. HON, I NOT GOING VEGAS JUST ME AND Chala. Noreen going to.

What? No get mad at me.

Chala taking Noreen. What?! They getting married. She neva tell you? They is. They are. Them two. And me. I mean, not me. I married to you. At least for now I am.

Just listen to me already.

No, cuz Chala like take Noreen up Vegas when they get married. They getting married here, but. Not up there. Noreen like get married in front the judge so she can save money for the reception. She neva say nothing to you? Because I think so she was going ask you help with the party favors.

What?! No get mad at me about that one.

Noreen YOUR friend. I neva tell her tell you for help make party favors. I don't know. She neva say nothing to you yet so maybe she not going ask you. She asked all Wanda-them from work, but.

What?! No get mad at me for that. That's Noreen asking Wanda-them. Not me.

Wait, you like Noreen ask you make party favors or you no like Noreen ask you make party favors?

No tell me, tell her. You wahines work 'em out.

OK, so about Vegas, we going. Them two and me. They going for they honeymoon. Chala like me go for show him da ropes.

Not that kind ropes, damn it. Not that kind ropes. Eh, no laugh. I know that kind ropes and I could show 'em if I like. But I no like. That's my own damn ropes and you better stop laughing.

Chala like me show them around Vegas. They never did go Mainland. Not even high school band time because Chala was academic suspension that time and he no could go with all us.

Chala like me show them how because he no like get lost. They get hard time understand how Mainland people talk. I told him, Mainland is hard because they no mo mauka. They no more 'Ewa. You know what I'm saying?

And they scared the hotel. They no believe get new towels every day and don't gotta fix the bed. They like bring hot plate to cook in the room. I told them no be so country jack. The water from the bathroom come hot enough to make Cup Noodles.

So going be them two on their honeymoon and me. You understand, right? They going to have fun. I going to help them. I figure you no like go because you get the kids. I would ask you if you like go but I know you still mad cuz we never made our honeymoon yet and I keep saying we going. And we going. We going. But this trip is Noreen and Chala-dem's honeymoon. I just going for help out.

## **BERNETTA DE COITO**

### **— STILL WEARS STIRRUP PANTS**

**W**HEN I FIRST MET HIM, I THOUGHT HE WAS SO ROMANTIC. I was working that time at the club and he used to come in, talk story with me.

At first was just hi, how are you, how you doing, but then he started putting on his moves.

One time he brought me one red rose with one long ribbon. I thought he was so cool. A single red rose. Back then, I was too dumb to figure out, yeah, a single red rose because he was too cheap to buy the other eleven.

He never did tell me that he love me. He would always say it like, "Babes, I would give my left nut if I could hold your hand." Or "Babes, I would give my left nut for one kiss from your lips." When me and him got married, was, "Babes, I would give my left nut if you would be my wife."

Me, I was all in heaven with this guy. I mean, one guy telling you he would give one nut for you, you must be special. More special than one nut.

I don't know if left side better or worse or same, but one nut is one nut, and he was saying he would give 'em for me.

I felt bad I neva have nuts for give to him.

But after a while, I started for notice. I started for notice all the little things that you no really let yourself notice in the beginning part when they bringing you roses and giving out nuts.

I took notice how every morning, first thing, he scratch his 'ōkole then he rub his nose. I took notice always get about twenty dollars missing from my tip money. I took notice he jump for grab his pager when the thing go off, and then fast he gotta leave the house for go buy cigarettes, no come home until three-four o'clock in the morning.

And I took notice he was giving out his nuts left and right.

Left and right.

"I would give my left nut for dat Mercedes."

"I would give my left nut the Packers make it to the play-offs."

"I would give my left nut for go Vegas."

"I would give my left nut for one more beer."

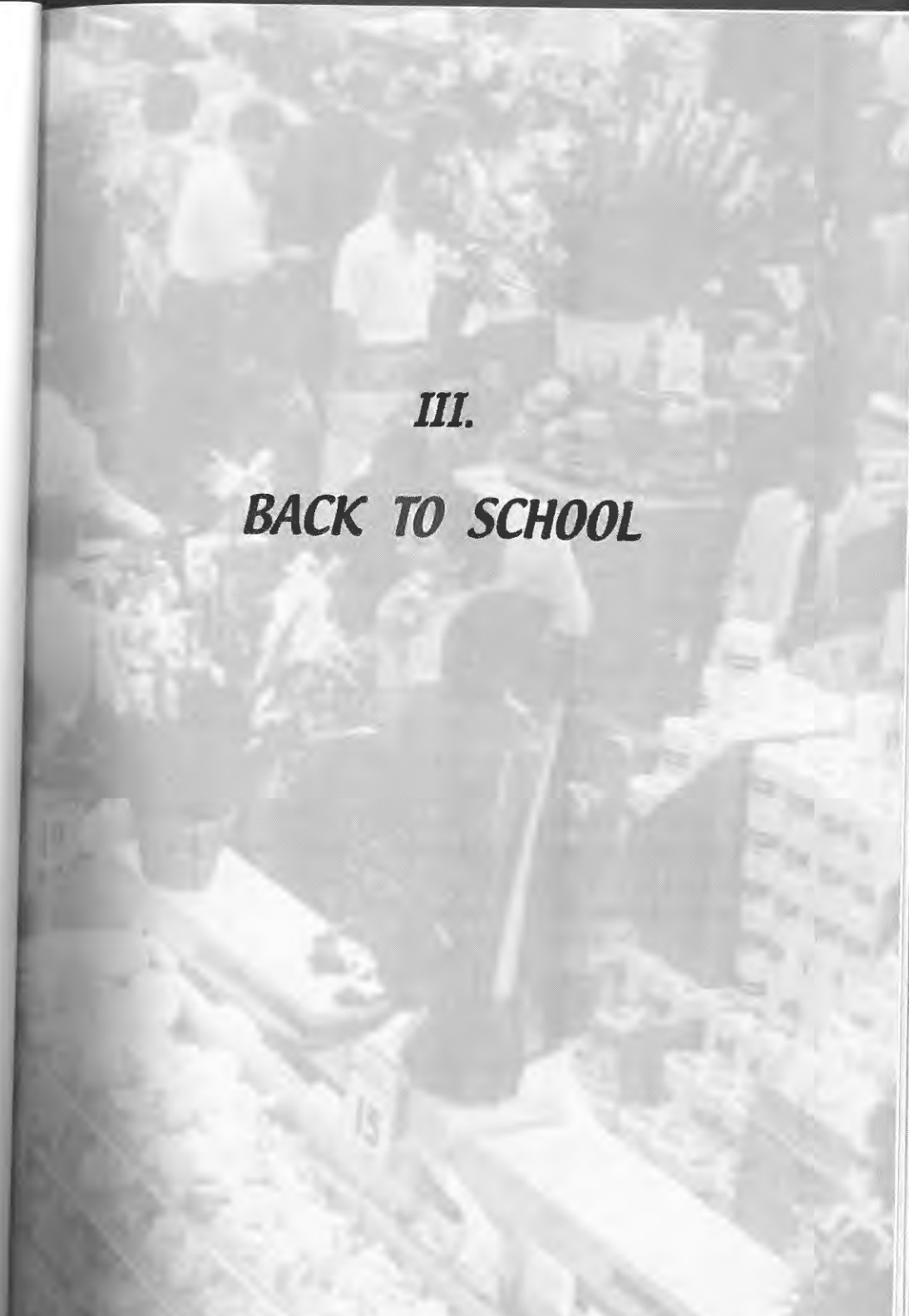
That last one, that's the one. I heard that, I had snap. I thought I was special. More special than one left nut. And here he was giving one left nut for another beer and he stay three steps away from the cooler and he know get planny more Bud inside.

You would, eh? You would, eh? You would? Give your left nut? For one beer?

Then hea. Hea. Hea you like your Bud, take 'em!

Take your beer! You like 'em, take 'em! Take em! Take em! TAKE 'EM!!!

... NOW PAY!



### III.

## BACK TO SCHOOL

**MARCUS S. MORIKAWA****—  
PRINCIPAL**

**Y**ES, WE ARE FULLY AWARE OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS YOU AND your husband have made to the annual fund-raiser. We couldn't have made the beef stew without your pigs. But the thing is your son's behavior has become, well, something of a problem.

Take for example the run-in he had with Ms. Kimata. Now, we understand your son is excitable, but it took a team of surgeons five hours to remove the pencil. Ms. Kimata hasn't been able to return to the classroom yet. She'll be in rehab for many months.

Then there was the occurrence on the school bus. Yes, we realize there is often rowdy behavior at this age, but the police have had that bus impounded for three months now gathering evidence and there's a lot of students who are having to walk a long way to get to school.

Last week, it was the incident with Mrs. Ishikawa, and while we know she is one of our, shall we say, less affectionate janitors, she did not deserve what your son did to her with the mop. And the thing with the Mr. Clean, well, we think you'd have to agree, that was over the top.

And today. We waited until the last possible moment to call you in. Believe me, we tried everything we could think of, but he's had those third graders locked in the cafeteria for five hours now and their parents are getting a little bit worried. We thought maybe you could try to talk to him. Let him know everything's okay. And tell him don't worry about the fire. We needed a new library anyway.

Thanks. Thank you. Very much. So sorry to have to call you in like this. We know it's a real hassle for you. It's just that your son is a . . . very spirited child, and quite strong for a first grader.



**RENNY RENALDO****FORMER ATHLETE AND  
MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKER**

**E**VERYBODY FEELING ALL RIGHT RIGHT NOW? ALL RIGHT!

First of all, I want to thank the students and teachers of this school for inviting me to speak here to the students and teachers of this school. All right? Say all right!

All right.

It's always a big honor for me to talk to the youths of today, because like I always say, you are our future and we won't have any tomorrow without your today.

All right?

All right.

I spend a lot of time talking to kids just like you, kids who are troubled, kids who have trouble, kids who are in trouble, and sometimes, I meet some really troubled kids, and that troubles me, but this is my way of giving back and in that way, it's no trouble at all.

Whenever I come to a school like this, I talk to the students and try to give them hope by talking to them, giving them hope, telling them about the power of their dreams, and let me tell you, it's a beautiful thing when you see a young person hoping and dreaming. Put your hands together for that. All right.

I know you folks might have problems. We all have problems. I myself have had problems in my life. Some people have a hard time believing that, but it's true. But when you have a problem or problems, because

sometimes problems come all at once and that's a real problem—you have to remember, problems are never as big as the dreams you have inside, so you always have to have a dream, no matter how small. As long as you believe and have hope, you will have a dream. It took me a long time to learn that, but I wanted to share that with you now. All right.

It was always my dream to tour the State of Hawai'i speaking in high school auditoriums and sharing my message of hope with students like yourself, so I'd like to thank you for making that dream come true for me. All right. I'd also like to thank my sponsors, Seki Electronics, Tamura's Body and Fender, and the State Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism for their generous support of my volunteer work. All right for that!

I leave you now with my motto. It's what I tell all my kids, because I don't have kids of my own so I think of all of you as my hundreds of adopted children, I tell them remember the three important things in life, the three things that will always get you ahead. Say it with me, now: Reading is good, drugs is bad, use a condom. Again, reading is good, drugs is bad, use a condom.

All right!

**KALANI DOMINGO****RULES**

**T**HESE ARE THE THINGS YOU CANNOT DO:

- Cut your fingernails at night.
- Whistle at night.
- Sing Christmas songs when it's not Christmas.
- Run with scissors, but that's different because it's not a bad luck thing, except if you got stabbed because you were running with scissors or if you stabbed somebody, which would be bad luck, sorta.
- Break a mirror or you get seven years bad luck plus you get three years of bad luck just by running and playing by a big mirror or throwing the ball anywhere near.
- Bring bananas to the beach.
- Tell somebody you're going fishing. Not because you're going to die but because the fish will hear and they'll go someplace else.
- Stick a scissors behind the door (I don't know about this one but that's what my mom said although I don't know why you would stick a scissors behind a door unless you were hiding it fast because you almost got caught running).
- Point in a graveyard and if you do, you have to bite your finger.
- Sweep at night, which my sister extends to late afternoon so she doesn't have to do her chores.
- Sweep the dirt out the door because you'll sweep out all your money.
- Write your name along with a girl's name and put "4-ever" because "4-ever" breaks you up. Unless that's what you want.
- Eat and then swim too soon, but that's not a bad luck thing either. That's a you-might-get-a-cramp-and-drown thing.

- Turn your back to the ocean because it's disrespectful. And a wave could knock you down.
- Eat the tip of a piece of pie, but that's not a bad luck thing, too. That's a good luck thing if you leave that part until last and then make a wish.
- Laugh at somebody when something bad happens to them because then that something bad will happen to you.

That's most of the things you have to do and not do. There are more but I can't remember. But if you do and don't do those things, you should be okay.



**JOHN TAFUA**  
—  
**MOVED BACK FROM MAINLAND**

**W**HEN HE FIRST CAME TO THE HOUSE, I THOUGHT HE WAS a monster. It wasn't just how he looked. It was in everything he did. He drank milk from the milk carton even when my mother was watching. He used dirty words even when he wasn't mad. He took things. Hid things. Broke things.

My mother told me I had to be kind to him because he didn't grow up in a house like ours. He wasn't used to the way we lived. I wasn't used to the way he lived. To be honest, he scared me; and if I was in any way kind, it was only out of fear.

I couldn't even look at him for the longest time. He was covered with bumps. Totally misshapen. It was like he was warped and bubbling with anger. I stole glances when he watched TV.

At night I could hear him making noises. I stuck my fingers in my ears so that I couldn't hear to find out if he was crying. I mean, I knew he was, but I just couldn't think about it because that was worse than him being so mean.

As time passed, things changed. He got better. I got worse. He got nicer. I got mad. The better he got, the more I hated him. He took everything that used to be mine, including my golden reputation.

I became the monster.

I was the monster who could hear someone cry and keep perfectly still. I was the monster who couldn't be happy for someone's newfound happiness.

His bumps went down. I thought he had a disease. They were bee stings. They got infected. My mother said he came from a rough home.

His bumps went down and he stopped drinking from the milk carton and he made my father laugh at dinner and one day he was gone. Just gone. I think of him every time I have to fill out the "next of kin" line on a medical form. I wonder what he puts on that line. Not my name. But when I think who I have left, he's always the first that comes to mind.

**MIKILEI BASA**  
—  
**WHAT IS CLASS**

**T**HIS IS HOW I WANT TO MAKE MY WEDDING:

First, all the guys come in with horses.

No, first, going have my cousin Sheldyn blow the conch shell.

Then, going have the horses, all with leis and satin blankets.

And going be nice horses.

All white.

Not the mud puddle cow shit bird shit all kind shit in their tails horses that my uncle Tommy get.

White horses.

Princess horses.

But only the guys going ride horse because Lachelle my best friend maid-of-honor got bucked off her ass that one time and now she scared. So my side of the court gotta walk.

After the conch shell and the horses, going get the kāhili bearers. My family got ali'i blood, that's why. I not too sure which line but I know that we are royal because that's what my grandmother said.

After the kāhili bearers, going get my nephew's 'ukulele band. He good, you know. They took first place in the whole school last year.

Then comes the groom. If it's Kaipō, he don't ride horse but if I end up marrying Clayton, he do. Clayton ride horse good.

Okay, then get all my maid-of-honor and my bridesmaids and my attendants and all my nieces will be flower girls so I hope my sister Jody don't pop out more daughters because I only like five or six flower girls.

And all my whole court going be wearing black—not the kind spooky funeral kind black but elegant black. Fancy black. Look nice that's why and not too much girls make their bridesmaids dresses black. Look nice but. And then the girls can use 'em when they go out and they not going bitch about “spend money, only wear the thing once.” Plus, I get one cousin wear size zero, one other cousin in the how many X's size and one noddā cousin one side no more leg. What else color I going put them in but black?

And my dress going be all with satin top to bottom with rhinestones and lace and pearls. I drew one picture of how I like 'em inside my sophomore year math book but then I had to turn 'em in. So nice look. The back part is open so can see my butterfly tattoo and get little pants underneath in case I marry Clayton, then I can get on his horse after the vow part and me and him can ride away and cannot see my party.

The best part is when they letta go the pigeons and they all fly over the monkeypod tree in the pasture.

So elegant, you know.

That is class.

**RHONDALEI ALVARADO****—  
TEEN BRUISER**

**I** GOING CATCH THAT CHICK BY THE BATHROOM LUNCH recess time. You watch. She going get it. You no just walk around like how she walk around. You seen how she walk around? She lucky going be from me and not from Jenai Kaupe. That chick give some serious buss-ass, hair-on-the-ground, no-mo-teeth lickens. Me, when I pau, they still can walk. Not too good, but they can walk.

First time, Jenai Kaupe wen catch me by the bathrooms. I was walking around all tantaran just like that girl, and you no can walk around like that, but I neva know. Jenai had catch me by the bathrooms, but wasn't recess time when had people fo pull her off me or anything. Was first period, when had only me and her in the bathroom.

I was black and blue fo one whole month, you can believe?

I had to go hospital.

I had internal bleedings.

I lost couple teeth.

They wanted me to make police report but I neva tell nothing. Jenai thought was because I was scared fo give her name. She thought I neva like her catch me again. But me, I wasn't scared of her. I wanted her fo catch me in the bathrooms again.

That's how you learn.

That's how you come strong.

Jenai Kaupe took me out three times more. Took me that long fo learn. You see this scar over here and over here and this over here? That's all

from her. But that's how. The last time, I ripped her earring right off her ear, right through the puka. I had 'em in my hand, one gold hoop with one small piece ear on top. She just had look at me and that's how I knew was pau already.

That chick, walking around all da kine, she going learn today. Maybe take three, four, five times with her, but she going learn from me.

That kind, they gotta know how you supposed to walk around.

**TRAYSEN SHIN****—  
VARSITY**

**M**Y SCHOOL HAS THIS CARNIVAL, RIGHT? NOT A BIG ONE, but they do it every year for like a fund-raiser to buy, I don't know, stuff. And they make us go down and show face because we're on the team and first string and all that. Whatever. So stupid.

I get there and I'm expecting it to be lame, and then I see they have this dunking booth in the corner by the science building and who should be sitting up there on the plank but Mrs. Rodrigues, that fat cow who almost kept me off the team last year because she said I copied Jacob's test. Lucky I got more wrongs than him, or else the principal would have probably believed her and I would have spent my whole junior year riding the pine. That would have been it for my career. Mrs. Rodrigues hated me from the very start of school and after that happened, it was totally like hell in her class the whole rest of the year. I kept my mouth shut because I wanted to play, but I swore that I would get her back someday for being such a damn bitch to me when I didn't even do nothing.

I was thinking I was going to key her car or flat her tires, but this was even better. This was public. The whole school watching. Wanna go swimming Mrs. Rodrigues? Let me show you why I'm the captain of the team.

I had to borrow ten bucks from Alicia Silva, who will give me a rash of shit for the rest of my life but it will be so worth it. I paid my money and stood in line. A lot of guys wanted to dunk old Mrs. Rodrigues.

I did my warm-ups. Alicia watched and giggled with her friends. Crap, now she thinks there's something between us.

My friend Kainoa was the next in line. He's almost a better athlete than me but I have the speed, he has the strength. I didn't know he had trouble in Mrs. Rodrigues class but come to think of it, he was two hairs away from academic probation last year, too. I remember seeing him in study hall.

This is going to be great. Kainoa's rich, so he can buy lots of chances to dunk the old bitch. And he's got an arm on him.

The first ball flew out of Kainoa's hand and hit the tarp behind the target with a solid "whup!" Mrs. Rodrigues flinched, like maybe she was about to get beamed or shot and not just dunked in some water that had some leaves floating in it because of the wind.

I don't know why that bothered me but it did. That fat cow was sitting up there in shorts and a T-shirt over what must be the biggest old lady bathing suit Sears ever sold. Mrs. Rodrigues never wears shorts, not even to Athletic Day. Not even the long old lady shorts. Her legs were puffy and white with purple veins around her ankles. My grandma had that. It was gross and sick and nasty.

I told myself to remember her yelling at me in front of the whole class, like I was so dumb I had to copy off a dumb guy. She insulted me and threatened me. I got myself mad again.

The next ball Kainoa threw hit the target square, but Mrs. Rodrigues didn't go down. She flinched and her fat wiggly arms went up in the air in a panic, but she didn't fall. The lever on the booth must have gotten stuck.

Kainoa got mad, but he had a big smile on his face. "Not fair! Juice! Juice!" he yelled. He threw four more balls at the target really fast. Whap! Whap! Whap! Whap! They all hit but Mrs. Rodrigues didn't go down. "Too fat! The thing stuck!" Kainoa yelled.

He dropped the rest of the baseballs he was holding and charged the target. "No, no, no!" Mrs. Rodrigues said. Her voice made my stomach weird. She didn't sound like that when she was giving me hell.

Kainoa hit the target full-on with the weight of his body. The plank Mrs. Rodrigues was perched on dropped underneath her. There was this sick moment when she almost levitated above the water with nothing holding her up underneath her ass. Her hands were grabbing at nothing and her mouth was opening and closing like she was trying to give orders. And then, the biggest splash you ever saw. I heard her knees hit the bottom of the tank. Everyone cheered.

I gave Alicia back her stupid ten dollars and told her I'd drive her home from school one day. That made her way too happy.

## JANESSA PERALTA

### CORINNA'S FRIEND, SOMETIMES

**D**EAR JESUS PLEASE HELP ME NOT EAT SO GODDAMN MUCH because I can hardly fit in any of my new pants.

And Jesus please help me lose weight so that I don't look like such a goddamn cow in the prom pictures.

Jesus, please help me not fall asleep in math class because I'm flunking bad and if I have to go summer school I will be so shame.

Jesus, please make my mom come home late so she don't catch me with my face in a big bucket of chicken and call me a fat-a-boola and make me shame.

Please let her come home late and tired so that she doesn't even look in the fridge and doesn't even check in the garbage.

Please let me be pretty and slim and beautiful and never hungry or tired.

Please kick my ass so I exercise and not sit on the couch when I come home.

Jesus, please help me get through the day without thinking about lumpia or won ton or anything fried.

Please just let me think about other things.

Just fix my mind from thinking about what to eat.

Please help me lose weight even if I do eat.

Please bless my grandmother and make her stop fighting with my mother.

Please bless my brothers and my cousins.

Please bless my dad if he's still alive.

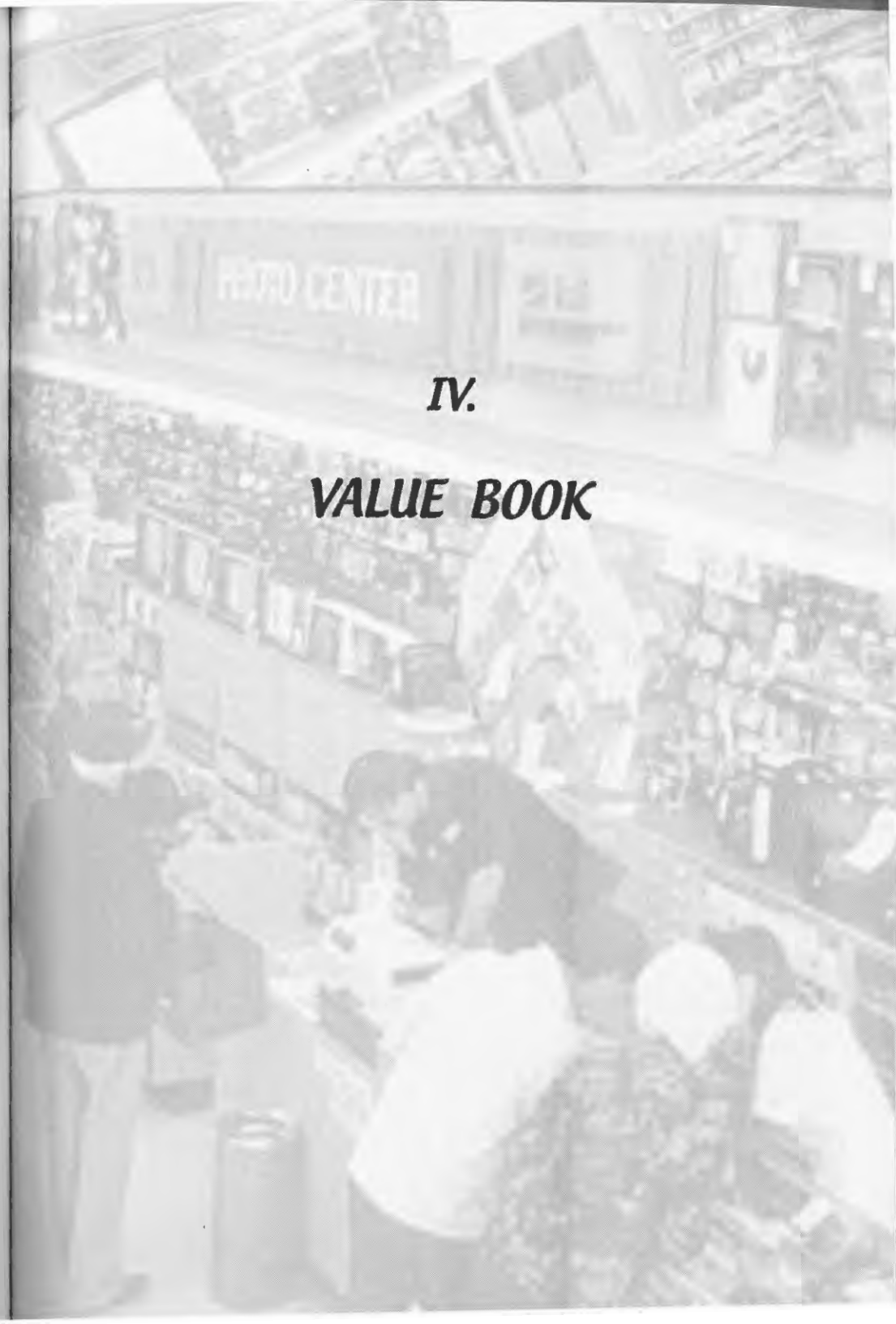
Bless that guy I hooked up with at the carnival the other night, Brayden or Branson or something.

Please bless my mom and make her tired so she doesn't notice anything.

And please bless me, Jesus. Please help me to not eat so goddamn much and to not swear because I'm sorry when I do.

Please.

Amen.



## **IV.**

# **VALUE BOOK**



**NADINE TAM SING**  
—  
**NEVA GO BREAK YET**

**S**O I GET FIFTEEN PEOPLE IN MY LINE AND I LOOKING around and Janet get maybe three and Sonya get maybe five so I trying to give the bag boy the eye like, eh, traffic management, but hard cuz none of us had our break yet so we all kinda tunnel vision and I get the guy.

Get one every shift.

This one, he like know what time the Wednesday sale items go on sale at the 24-hour Longs, of which this is not.

So I tell him, well, over here, our Wednesday sale items go on sale Wednesday, and I say 'em nice so I hoping that going be that.

But no.

Oh no.

He like me call the 24-hour Longs for find out for him.

I don't know what he like buy, but whatever he like get, it's so damn important to him he going plan his whole Tuesday night. Like if the answer is one minute after midnight, braddah going be there 11:30 pm just fo get ready.

So I call.

I get one friend work Pali so I call her over there, but I had forget her working schedule so I had to talk to the manager and take little while cuz they busy over there and I look my line and ho, maybe up to twenty people now and they all giving me the tapping the foot, crossing their arms, looking the watch.

So I finally get the answer for what time the Wednesday sale start at the 24-hour Longs and you know what the answer?

Five AM.

Shet.

**PUKA-HEAD PACHECO**  
—  
**CONSPIRACY THEORIST**

**S**HHHH. THEY WATCHING.

They always watching.

Look.

The cameras.

Over there.  
Over there.  
Over there, too.

They hide small little spy stuffs in the can green beans, braddah.

You take 'em home, they watch whatever you doing in your house.

They hide 'em in the can green beans 'cause they think that's the last place you would look.

But I wen look.  
And I seen.  
I seen them.  
They seen me seen them.  
They know I know.  
That's why I no buy the green beans no more.

I had switch to canned asparagus.  
No more taste and kinda tough, but at least no more the spy camera.  
Plus, go on sale more often than the can green beans.

Oh, you no believe?  
You think I mento?  
Head case?  
Paranoia da destroya?  
Yeah, check this out.  
I show you how they try jam up your brain.

Look the express check-out lane.

Go look.

Go look right now.

Look the sign.

Says "Nine Items or Less" right? Nine items or less.

Now look the jar candy.

The jar, the big plastic jar right there on the nine items or less check-out counter.

Look the jar!

Look the sign on top.

What does the sign say?

Ten for dollar.

Now who crazy? Tell me that.

**BOOGA SMYTH**  
—  
**LIVES UNDER BLUE TARP**

**P**EOPLE SAY TO ME, THEY GO BOOGA, THEY SAY, WHY AND  
how come you talk the way you talk?

And I, Booga, tell them Booga talks like this because Booga thinks like this.  
Booga is the full-package.  
Talking, sounding, thinking, believing.  
It's the full Booga, man.  
Feeling, knowing, sensing, believing.  
That's Booga, I tell them.  
That is Booga and Booga is me.

What I don't tell them is that the clip is from the military.  
They guess that the crush of words is from my time in, when there was no  
one to talk to and nothing to say.  
But the clip, they don't pick that up right the way.  
Military.  
Not me, but my father.  
Lifer, he was.  
All the way through. Military man.  
And he said it with the hard 't.' MiliTary.  
That's the clip, so your talk is shiny as your shoes.

There's a thing that happens when you're raised that way.  
You get to know your differences.  
I, Booga, I got to know all my differences, all right.  
I got to know my up from my down,

my left from my right,  
my good from my bad,  
my pass from my do-not-pass.  
Un-ac-ceptable.  
That word got a hard 't' in it, too.

Booga in his heart is not about no hard 't.'  
Booga found that out early.  
Booga is smooth.  
Booga's loose.  
Booga is . . . flow.

I been everywhere and I seen all kinds of differences and I chose my flow.

My father did not appreciate flow.  
No he did not.  
He did not like Boogaloo Boy at all.  
NoT aT T'all.

He said Booga, thaT is whaT you call yourself, like the shiT you blow ouT  
your nose.  
Formless.  
Useless.  
DisgusTing.

My father was a man of few words.  
Few, but with that hard clip that would nick and graze and cut.  
CuT.

I, Booga, am a man of many words.  
Booga is all about words.  
Booga is all about flow.  
I am the flow pushing and rounding smoothing out that hard, hard clip.

**EDDIE GARCIA**

—  
**MOODY M.F.**

**Y**OU EVER WALK AROUND YOUR HOUSE ALL PISS OFF, GOING and going and you so piss off with everything you cannot remember what you piss off about?

I tell you dis, I can get piss off like one chick.

I had plenty female influence my house growing up.

My sisters,  
cousins,  
my sisters' friends,  
my mada,  
my gramada,  
all my step-madas and step-gramadas,  
my mahu cousin Raymond.

I think so all that chickness just had rub off. I don't know how come I had to get the piss-off-ness instead of the cooking or the cleaning or the way for dress nice. But I think so that is what had happen.

I go work, somebody park little bit over the line by the parking space, I go off. Ruin my whole day. I no care they not parking where I like park. I get all mad. I get mad and then I gotta go around to all my co-workers and tell them about it. One at a time.

Get one new guy hired onto the job, I size the bugga up. Ay, he younger. Ay, he in shape. Ay, he make the boss laugh. Right there, I hate his guts. I

catch myself talking shit about him and I don't even know the guy. Tell me that's not chick-style?

The worse, but, is when I catch somebody looking at me in a way or saying something to me in a way like they take notice I put on weight . . . like I order a beer and they go, "Light?" Ho, I go off. Like, what you saying? You calling me fat? I know you didn't just call me fat because nobody with an ass like that get any room for talk.

No get me wrong. I don't talk story four hours on the phone. I no like go shopping. I don't watch no ice skating. I one man, okay? And it ain't anger management issues because not like I throwing punches. It's only words and stink eye and sometimes the one-eyebrow action.

Here's the thing:  
This is me.  
Eddie Garcia.  
And I'm a bitch.

**JACKSON "BUTCHIE" FUNABIKI****STONE MASON AND ULUA FISHERMAN**

**I** NO SLEEP GOOD.

My brain don't stop, that's why.  
Cannot turn 'em off.

I think about all kind stuff.

I think about the jelly inside one can ham.

You know how when you go for open the can, get the jelly inside?  
What is that?

And is ham jelly an accident or on purpose or some kind freak of nature?  
And is Spam jelly same thing as ham jelly, cuz you know the Spam cans get  
that too.

I cannot handle that jelly.

Gross.

All jelly, dat.

Sick.

Me, I wash my ham,

I wash my Spam.

Gotta.

If you look good, vienna sausage get that kind too, but not that much.

Maybe has to do with the weather or how long you keep 'em on the shelf.  
I going try keep one can ham couple-three years,  
and then get one new one from the store,  
open 'em up both same time

and make experiment.

This is what is in my head when I lying on my air mattress in my mother-  
guys living room.

I moved back home when my girlfriend kicked me out.

She tell me we no communicate and then she tell me I talk too much.

I tell her make up your mind.

She tell me, she did.

I think so what I looking for is peace of mind.

But then, I not sure what that means.

Do they mean peace of mind like you brains is all peaceful?

Or does it mean piece of mind like one small part or one piece or  
something,

like I going give you a piece of my mind.

The thing is, my mind all jelly right now.

Jelly on top of ham.

And I cannot tell if that's how supposed to be  
or if it's one freak of nature.

**HARLAN CAMPOS****ON SUPERVISED RELEASE**

**H** E GET HEART, THAT BOY. YOU SAW WHEN HE WALKED OFF the field? Could hardly walk, you saw? Was so swollen, they had to cut the shoe off. That's how they won the game. Thirty-two yards on a broken ankle. That's him. He neva let them carry him off the field. He would crawl first. That's how he is. From small-boy time. He no give up.

Before time, he used to do anything to come strong. He was lifting weights from fifth grade, you can imagine that? Every day after school, go down the gym, work out with boys twice his age. He not scared. He just go. His grandfather told him he gotta be strong, but he gotta be fast, too. So you know what that boy did? He take the heaviest plate off the barbell and he go run with em. Run around the gym, run down the street, run home, come back. Everything. Everything for come strong and come fast. He watch the old "Rocky" movie on video, he like drink egg and punch meat.

One time, he was playing with his friends up the park by the gym and one bee came sting him right on the eye, right on the eyelid part. Ho, his eye came super fat and swollen. Just had swell up in like couple seconds just like. All his friends was just laughing up and teasing him like that, and was hard cuz sore, eh, one bee sting you right on top your eye. And just like he was crying because his eye was all watery from the sting, yeah? But he wasn't crying, that boy. But all the other kids was teasing him like he was. So you know what that boy did? He found the yellow jacket nest. Was right on top the side of the gym right by one light. He took his hand and grabbed that yellow jacket nest and shoved it right in his face. And he was squeezing that thing and shaking 'em for make all the bees come out and

the other boys was all yelling and screaming for make him stop and he neva. And all the bees came out and they was mad and they went all on top his face, on his neck, on his arms, in his clothes, everywhere he had bee stings. But he neva cry once. And all the other boys had go run away, all scared. He not scared, but. That boy not scared nothing.

After the mother and me had break up, was hard. She neva like me see him. I was kinda heavy into my using at the time. She took him up Mainland and I went inside and that was it. She said she like 'em be safe, but I told her nothing can hurt that boy. I remember how his face looked and I look at him now on top the TV and I cannot believe fifteen years already. Sometimes I write to him but I think so he real busy. And I kind of moving around a lot ever since I got out, so . . . But him, broken ankle and all, still going. That's him. That's how.



## CURT LUM (TRUE STORY)

### I BLAMING THE LEMON CHICKEN.

Birthday party my friends' house in Kailua. I went once before I left, but that was the false one. I thought I was in the clear.

I could feel my stomach starting to huli about two minutes after I left the house. But shame go back. So I think, nah, jam 'em on the Like. Maybe I cannot make it to Kunia in time, but I can stop my father's house in Kalihi. Late already and he probably sleeping, but I get the key to the downstairs so I can get in without waking him up. I hope.

I think it was that big dip in Kahekili Highway by the H-3 on ramp. That set it off good.

First I'm pretty sure I can make it. Then I not so sure. Then, nah, make 'em. Then I thinking, ho, I gotta sacrifice my car upholstery. It's life or death. Pretty soon, the "nah, I can make it" phase is pretty much gone and it's all "I going die. I going die. I going die."

I take off the seat belt. No help.  
I try sit forward on the seat. No help.  
I try sit back on the seat. No help.  
I try sit sideways on the seat. No help.  
I catching chills so I turn on the car heater. No help.

I thinking if I should chance 'em and stop on the side of the freeway and if I get McDonald's napkins in the glove compartment or what but nah, dangerous. And if I gun it, I think so I can reach my father's house.

I felt like that story, "The Five Chinese Brothers," the one where the one Chinese brother swallowed the whole ocean and he had hard time keeping 'em in. He was sputtering. I was sputtering. I was flapping.

I reach my father's house and I don't even put my car in park before I jumping out, crawling across the grass. I get to the downstairs door and I looking for the keys in the dark and ho, where is the key! This one! No fit. This one! No fit. And then Ai-YA! Drop the keys! All out of time already. Right on the grass:

PRRRRRRAAAAAAH!

Next time I go my father's house, his neighbor tell me, "Eh, was you ah watering the yard at one o'clock in the morning?" I tell him had one spot look dry. He tell me, not now. Look nice and green.

**VERNA**  
—  
**WAIPAHI'S ANSWER TO  
MARTHA STEWART**

**W**HAT YOU GOTTA DO IS TAKE OUT THE WALL BY THE SIDE, knock out the post pillar thing you get in the corner, put the garbage cans by the side of the house and tell Rodney he gotta park his truck down the street by the hibiscus bush. Then you would have one nice place for make party.

I get 'em all in my head. You get the fridgerator already in the corner but no good because when you open the door, the thing all the time bang your Camry and hoo, get planny dings. I need one beer, ding. I like one soda, ding. I think we get little bit poke left, doosh.

You move the fridgerator in the middle, by where Rodney get the old car batteries all stack up, and then you go City Mill and get the Country Willow counter top. Make sure is the Country Willow and not the Country Oak cuz the Country Oak look shetty.

So you put up the Country Willow counter top and you get the ice cooler, the one Rodney tell he use fo go fish but he neva fish how long already, and you run the water hose from the papaya tree in the back all the way through the side of the house and you get wet bar. Either that or you hook up one tube to the kitchen, but then you going have to hemo that thing when you like wash dishes, and you twist the thing, your hand come sore.

If you go with the Country Willow counter top, then later on, you can go back and get the bar stools with the orange vinyl. Match nice. Just no

ask for the orange. They no call that color orange. That's "Sunset." Get difference.

And no buy no damn wall paper for finish. You get this kind, No Bugs M'Lady. Stick on the back. Work good and more cheap.

I can help you do 'em you like, only thing I no can do electricals and I think so if you take out da wall, you gotta put the fuse box someplace else. I mean, I could figure 'em out, but nah, more better you spend couple dollars and hire one professional.

Whatever you do, no let Rodney do 'em. And no let him tell you he get one friend know how for do 'em cheap. I had one friend do 'em cheap for me when I wen remodel the bachroom at the restraurant. Now I get the only bachroom in Waipahu with the hand driers so low you can blow dry your choch.

But I help you. You can do 'em for cheap. Just no get the Country Oak. Look shetty.

**DOREEN TAEZA****FORMER DISCO QUEEN**

**T**HIS ONE, THIS ONE HERE. THE THING WITH YOUR AUNTY Dottie, started with this. This and the dress. I came home one time fo go out, I had bafe and whatnot, and I had go fo pull my dress out of the closet and I look, and I knew right there. Was one nice dress. All with lace from Foxmoor Casuals. And I had buy 'em special. Big money. Just by looking, I could tell already. Your Aunty Dottie had sneak inside my room. She had sneak inside my room, take my Foxmoor Casuals dress, wear 'em fo go out and then sneak 'em back on top the hanger like nothing happen. Like I wouldn't notice. But could tell already. Had her body shape all pressed into the polyester lining and the whole thing smelled like this damn Jean Naté crap she was always spraying by her dakine. As if that make difference.

So I go to her, "Why the hell you wearing my Foxmoor Casuals dress? Brand new. 'As mines, you know." And she go, "Like I would wear your clothes. I like NICE KINE clothes, not like the kind you get." And I told her, "Please, you still wearing your maroon Danskin skirt from the fifth grade." And she tell me, "It's burgundy, not maroon. See, you don't know nothing about clothes. You don't even know your colors."

So I go to her, "I not the one wear white shirt, black bra and think I match." And she tell me, "What, I had that look about six years before Selena, so no tell me I don't know fashion."

After that, was full war.

Had blue ink inside my shampoo bottle, had peroxide inside her conditioner. Had all the straps cut off my halter tops, had one black T-shirt get inside her white panty laundry, make everything grey. I was thinking I was going put Morning Breeze inside her Jean Naté. As if that make difference.

One time, she was out somewhere and she needed a ride so she called the house. I knew was her, so I had answer. I told her, "And to what is the purpose of this phone call?" and she go, "Ho, Doreen, you talking big now ever since you got dat job answering phones at Budget Rent A Car." And I go, "Shut up, at least I have a job." And she go, "I get one job." And I told her, "Stealing quarters from the newspaper machine with one chopstick and bubble gum no count as one job." And she told me, "What, like Budget Rent A Car is all that." And I told her, "What, you stuck? You need ride? Maybe you should call Budget Rent A Car come pick you up."

So that's how come things is the way it is with me and your Aunty Dottie. And look, she work Alamo now. And that's why every year, Christmas time, I wrap up that damn Foxmoor Casuals dress and give it back to her. Birthday time, she wrap 'em up and try give 'em back to me. But I tell her, I no like 'em now. It's ruined. The whole damn thing smell like that crap Jean Naté.

Eh, that's Uncle Richard over there. Go tell him hi. But no go inside the car with him, OK? Just tell him hi.

**TSUKEBE UNCLE RICHARD**

**C**OME, BEBE,  
 come over here.  
 Come talk to uncle.  
 Uncle never see you long time.  
 Here, come more close.  
 Uncle's eyes no can see too good already.  
 I like see how big you came.  
 Come, bebe.  
 No just stand over there.

Come give uncle one kiss.  
 That's the way. That's how.  
 You big girl already, eh? Some big you coming.  
 What is that?  
 Mosquito bites?  
 How one mosquito got over there and over there, ha?  
 Ah, uncle just teasing you.  
 You know uncle, always joking around yeah?  
 Good fun, eh? That's why I your favorite.

Come over here, sweetheart.  
 Uncle miss you.  
 So long already neva see.

You rememba before time when uncle had his dirt bike?  
 You rememba?

Ho, uncle used to take you kids riding all the time yeah?  
 Was good fun,  
 you rememba?  
 Uncle used to take you and your braddah riding up cane fields all the way  
 by the water tank, yeah?  
 How much times uncle took you guys.  
 And then aftah, go eat Dairy Queen, yeah?  
 Ho, the good fun we used to have, yeah?  
 Uncle miss that already.  
 Uncle miss you.  
 Maybe uncle should go get dirt bike again, yeah?  
 Me and you go riding in the fields, go to the water tank again.  
 You would like that, ha, girl?  
 Good fun go with uncle by the water tank.  
 Ho, uncle would like that, I tell you.  
 Uncle would enjoy.

Why you standing so far over there, bebe?  
 Uncle not going bite you.  
 Just like you going more far.  
 Why, uncle smell good.

I get my aftahshave, 'as why.  
 'As musk.  
 Come smell over here where uncle when put.  
 Come.  
 Come smell.  
 Smell good.  
 You going like 'em. I promise.

Come sit over here.  
 Sit on uncle's lap.  
 Come, just like when you was small kid time, yeah?  
 Ho, uncle miss you so much I tell you.  
 Come sit on uncle's lap.  
 That's it. That's the way.  
 Wait, move little bit this side.

There you go.  
There you go.

You so pretty. You coming so pretty, I tell you girl.

Where your mada?

She stay?

She came down?

Oh, over there.

She looking?

Here, ne'mind uncle's lap. Uncle get sore leg anyway.

Get off already. Get off.

Go over there, go help your mada.

That's it.

Ho, you coming so big already.

You one big girl.

## BILL THOMPSON

### NEVER USES A SHOPPING CART

**I** DON'T EVEN KNOW THE BOY'S NAME, BUT I KNOW HE LIKES the chocolate ones the best.

I saw him. He didn't know I was home. I did that on purpose. I wanted to see his reaction.

Coupla months back, I think I'm going crazy. I could have sworn I had leftover spaghetti in the fridge, but I get home after work and it's not there. Stuff was going missing all the time. Little stuff, like the last few cookies in a bag or I coulda sworn the orange juice carton was full and now it's almost gone. Stuff like that.

Just so happened I stayed home from work one day. Just so happened my car was in the shop. I'm lying on the couch and I hear this noise in my kitchen. The scrape of the louvers sliding on the metal clips. I think, whoa! So that's it! Some crack addict has been breaking into my house and ripping off my stuff! I grab a 9-iron out of the bag and head toward the kitchen. I'm thinkin' I'll call the cops after I nail this guy myself, and that way I'm sure justice will be served. So I turn the corner to the kitchen and I've got the golf club raised over my head like I'm going to kill a bear and I see this kid. He's maybe nine or ten years old, skinny as can be, and he's sitting square in the middle of my kitchen eating the chocolate cookies out of a chocolate-vanilla two-pack. He left the vanilla alone, and he left four of the chocolate untouched. He put the package back on the counter just where I had it. He wiped his hands on his shirt and he was gone the way he came, louvers put back, cookies in their place.