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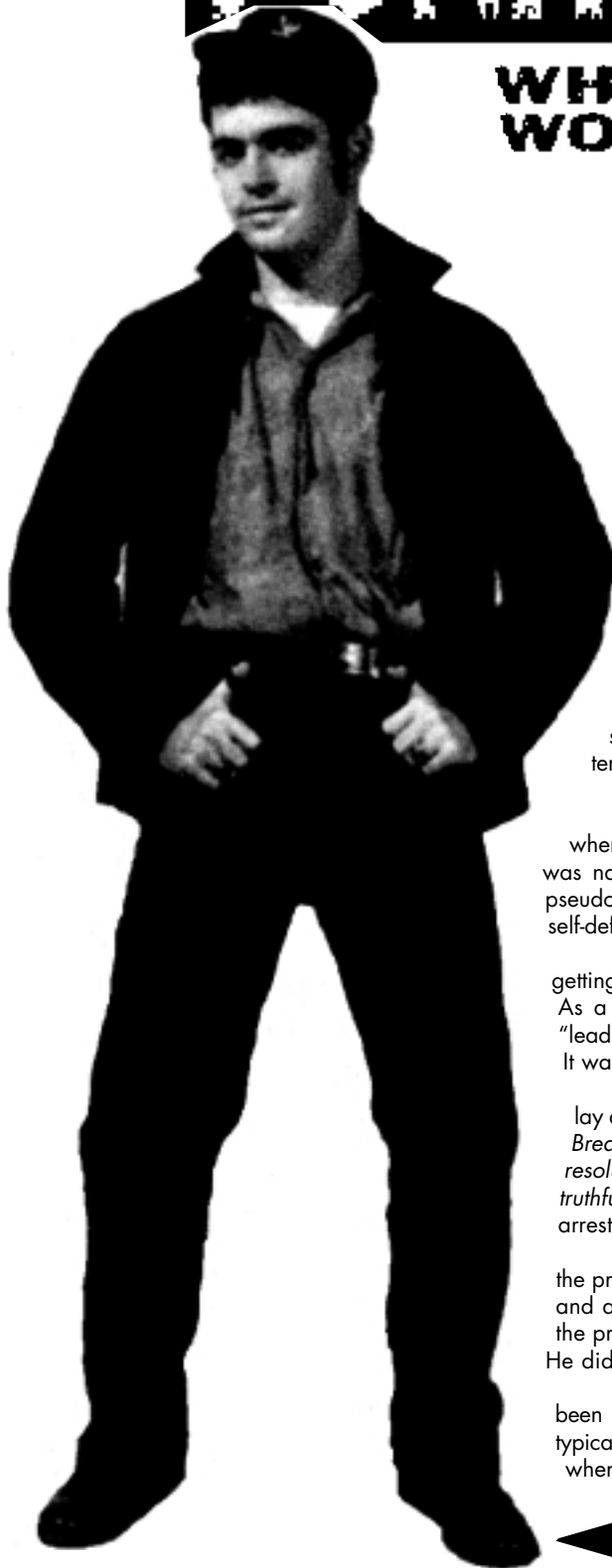
# DONNY THE PUNK

WASN'T THE FIRST GUY TO GET FUCKED IN JAIL.

HE WAS MERELY THE MOST ARTICULATE.

OR AT LEAST THE MOST ARTICULATE ONE WILLING TO TALK ABOUT IT.

WHO WOULDN'T



Some of our readers—and I pity them—will never be kicked in the jaw with a hard rubber boot heel. Or bashed in the skull with a bicycle pump. Or whipped by their parents until they can't walk anymore.

You really don't know what you're missing.

Great souls rarely sprout from happy environments. While suffering may destroy the weak, strong individuals are able to steer their misfortune toward their own advantage. Using a kind of psychic alchemy, they're able to take the shit that's been dumped on their heads and turn it into gold. Given the right temperament, suffering can create character.

Donny the Punk has a lot of character.

He seemed to have been born with it, although he wasn't called Donny the Punk when he was born. That "baptism" would come three decades later. At birth, he was named Robert Martin, Jr., son of a gung-ho Navy officer. Donny adopted the pseudonym of Stephen Donaldson after graduating from high school. It was a self-defining gesture. A way of reinventing himself. He does that a lot.

In 1973, when exercising your free speech carried the strong likelihood of getting your head split open with a billy club, Donny stuck to his ideological guns. As a former sailor who was committed to nonviolence, he said he felt a spiritual "leading" to participate in a peaceful Quaker pray-in against the Vietnam War. It was scheduled to be held on the White House lawn.

A true child of the times, Donny had thrown the I Ching to get a sense of what lay ahead for the pray-in. The forecast looked like rain: *Joy with coming misfortune.... Breakthrough after a long accumulation of tension.... Resoluteness. One must resolutely make the matter known at the court of the king. It must be announced truthfully. Danger....* Attuning himself to the oracle, Donny felt strongly that he'd be arrested for his nonviolent action.

As the Ancient Venerable Oriental Hexagrams of Soothsaying had predicted, the pray-in began with a jolt of spiritual joy. Donny fairly quaked with communal love and a sense of his own destiny. But THE MAN stepped onto the scene and busted the pray-in. Unlike his colleagues, though, Donny refused to pay the ten-dollar bail. He didn't feel he had done anything wrong. A matter of principle.

It was also a factor, which he'll readily admit, of middle-class naïveté. Donny had been reporting on the Pentagon for the *Overseas Weekly*. With the unworlerness typical of most reporters, he didn't think twice about listing his occupation as "journalist" when he was booked into D.C. Jail. That was his first mistake.

← DONNY IN 1972: PRE-JAIL PUNK, PRE-PUNK ROCK, YET STILL SURPRISINGLY PUNKY

For a week he was assigned to one of the jail's cushier wings, which was stocked with a few white-collar crooks and sexagenarian blacks. He played chess and discussed ideology with Watergate burglar and psychotic ANSWER Me! hero G. Gordon Liddy. Although Liddy couldn't be more of a polar opposite to Donny politically, he grudgingly gave him his mustachioed respect. Liddy had Donny correctly pegged as a man of action, not a follower.

Jail, however, is no place for idealism. After seven days of relatively luxurious incarceration, Donny still refused to foot the ten-buck bail. But the jail cops, headed by a man with the quintessentially coplike name of Clinton Cobb, seemed to think that Donny was digging dirt for a newspaper exposé on corrupt jail conditions. Cobb called Donny to his office and firmly suggested that he pay his ten dollars and scoot. Donny refused. On principle. That was his second mistake.

Clinton "Corn on the" Cobb reassigned Donny to Cellblock 2, the jail's most fearsome sector. The violent wing. Where they kept the killers and rapists, some three hundred of them on five tiers. His ass was grass.

During what was known as "indoor recreation period" on Donny's first night in CB2, a youth calling himself "Baseball" befriended him. Said he'd heard that Donny was a pacifist. Said that he and a bunch of friends wanted to discuss pacifism with him. Agreeing that it was a subject worthy of serious discourse, Donny went back to a cell with Baseball and a group of his ideologically inclined buddies. That was his third strike, and he got called out.

Since Donny was the one who went through it, I'll let him pick it up at this point...

**"Three guys were already in the cell. About five followed after me, including Baseball. They told me to pull my pants down, and I said, 'Hell, no!' So they picked me up and started banging my head against the bunk's steel framework. They did this several times. Then they threw me down onto the toilet seat. So I'm sitting there, and Baseball swings his dick in front of my mouth and tells me to suck it. I refused. They told me there was no place in the prison where they couldn't get to me, and I knew this to be true. They said they'd kill me if I snitched on them, and Baseball's hitting me on the head, left and right.**

**"It hurt so much. There was no escape, so I finally took his dick in my mouth, figuring it would stop the pain. His partner was next. I think it was the third guy who wanted to fuck my ass, and I still wouldn't take my pants off, so they ripped 'em off and hauled me over to the bottom bunk and stretched me out on the bottom bunk on my stomach and put a pillow under and over my head so that I couldn't make any noise. And the guy tried to fuck me, and he couldn't get it in. And they had to call for some grease. They greased up my ass, and then he finally managed to get it in.**

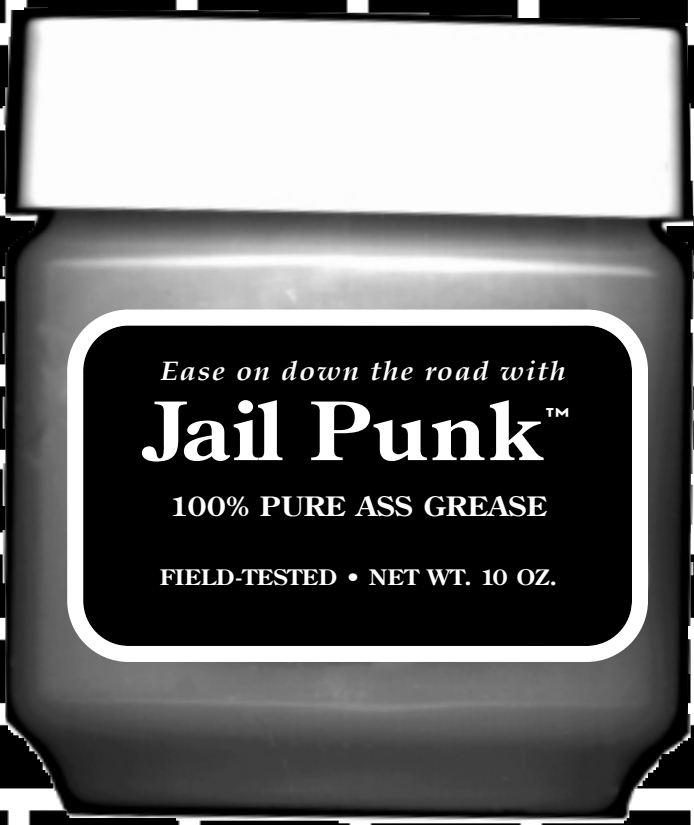
**I'd say overall, maybe a third of the guys went up my ass, and the rest of them got head....There was a lot of variation in the reaction. Some guys were really, uh, were really rough, and they'd make racial comments, for example, 'Your ass belongs to the black man. Don't you ever forget it.' Stuff like that, you know. Other guys would be just the opposite, they'd be callin' me by their girlfriend's name, especially if they were fucking me, and they'd, like, lick the back of my neck and they'd lick my ear lobes, which is, I guess, what they do with girls. You know, just perceive me as a girl substitute. And some of 'em would stay inside me after they came off for a while, which I discovered was a very welcome relief, 'cause since they weren't moving, it wasn't hurting, and it kept everybody else from gettin' on me."**

Donny's voice, a touch tremulous to begin with, cracks as he recounts what happened to him twenty-one years ago. During his first night in CB2, Donny's virgin buns were dragged from cell to cell along the block, with an estimated forty-five criminal cocks getting a poke at either his asshole or mouth.

Submit...or die. Which would you choose? Precisely how many dicks need to be jammed up your ass before you bend down, pucker up, and let it in? There is a point within most individuals where immediate bodily pain overrides any indignities to the ego. Dick after dick was stabbing holes through Donny's identity. At some point during nearly four hours of jail house gang rape, he stopped fighting.

**"I went through all kinds of changes during those hours....I had some out-of-body experiences. There were times when I was imagining what it felt like for the guys that were on me, you know—what was motivating them, or what did it feel like for them? There were times when I felt like I was paying for all the sins of the white race. There were times when I had very religious feelings, it was like this was God Almighty, to which I could only surrender. God was represented by this eternal big black dick. You know, because after a while, I couldn't differentiate, really, between one person and the next. It was just this endless big black dick that was in me. Every last one of them. There was only one other white boy in the block, and he was getting fucked, too....**

**"There were moments, for example, where I felt I was just dead, you know, all of my ego defenses had been totally demolished, and I had nothing left to live for, I had nothing left to fight about, there was just nothing left. And the amazing thing**



was that, even through all the pain and the terror, you go into a state of total relaxation. You know, because there's just nothing left to defend. You just give yourself up to the will of God, basically, you know, 'Into thy hands I commend my spirit' and all that. And that was a very religious experience."

Baseball and his friends, however, had other things on their minds besides religion. Cigarettes, to be precise. They were charging other prisoners two packs of smokes for a crack at Donny's mouth or asshole. Around ten-thirty p.m., Baseball's crew carted Donny off to the showers for a final round of bloody penetration. A weaker individual may have watched his soul swirl down the drain amid a hailstorm of blood, cum, shit, and piss. Yet Donny was able to find...rebirth?

"In the shower room, they had me on all fours, front and back, and I was gettin' it front and back at the same time for about maybe half an hour. And then Baseball started pissin' on me, and a bunch of guys followed his example. They pissed on me, or pissed into my mouth—had me open up my mouth and then just pissed down my throat. And for me, this was a welcome relief, too, because it didn't hurt. I was in terrible agony. My ass and my throat were both just, just incredibly painful.

"And so when they pissed on me, it was just like warm water, it was just like warm water from the shower runnin' over me, and my whole mind, mentality, was at a very animal level. Just very basic."

One lucky jailbird bartered enough cancersticks to get Donny's butt for the night. And that's where it became even more confusing. That's where the pain and blood and piss became enmeshed with seemingly incompatible things such as warmth. And emotional release. And, most improbably of all, affection.

"And so I ended up in somebody else's cell after the doors were locked. And he wanted to fuck me, and I begged him not to do it. And he said, 'Well, you know, I really gotta do it. But I'll be real quick about it.' He was true to his word. I mean, he came off lickety-split. Then he stayed inside me for, I don't know, about an hour, I guess. He just, like, covered me up. And it was a very strange experience. He was soothing me. You know, I was crying. I really let go emotionally. And yet his body warmth was, like, enveloping me. Giving me all these very mixed feelings. And he was saying, 'Oh, you know, this is just how we treat the guys on the first night, and it won't happen again.' And he was trying to cheer me up. It was very strange."

The next day, Baseball's team came around and resumed batting practice. Donny estimates that he was throat-fucked and ass-slammed a combination of fifteen times

during that second day, bringing the total number of times he'd been violated to a mind-cracking sixty. At one point when Donny had started gagging on all the cum he had swallowed, his tormentors allowed him a short break. Wearing nothing but a T-shirt, he dove onto the catwalk and desperately scampered down to the guard's post, where a pair of cops yanked him safely out of the block. According to Donny, the guards then told him he'd been set up for a righteous gang-raping by Cap'n Cobb.

Donny later spent a week in a veteran's hospital recovering from rectal surgery. As he puts it, "The government sewed up the tears in my rectum which the government occasioned." While his ass was still torn and his emotions still numbed, he did what no male in American history had ever done: He summoned a press conference and reported that he'd been brutally raped while in jail. He also demanded to know why no one seemed accountable for what had happened to him. His unprecedented proclamation attracted quite a few bushels of media attention, although prison officials didn't seem to care a whit.

Donny was acquitted of charges relating to the pray-in. Over the next three years, he struggled to proceed with the scraps that remained of his life. And he remained idealistic. In late 1976, he was a graduate student of religion at Columbia University. While driving south toward Florida, where his mother lay in a fresh grave after committing

suicide, he stopped in a hard-nosed Marine town called Jacksonville, North Carolina. After an evening stroll through the enchanting urban hub, Donny paused to take a leak in his motel parking lot. And the cops watched every drop. Busted again. They searched his motel room and found a half-ounce of weed.

As fate's spidery strands would have it, Donny found himself a lone ex-sailor in a cell-block comprised of twelve Marines. Eleven of them—the first seven black, the last four white—raped him that night. It was *déjà vu* of the worst possible sort. It was also the beginning of a strange socialization process.

"I was quite paralyzed. Psychologically, the trauma of D.C. Jail flooded back into my consciousness, and I was just shaking. No way to resist it. So the first night was pretty grim. Then the next morning, the four white Marines came up to me in a group and said, 'You're movin' in with us.' Like that. So I figured, 'What the hell? I might as well.' So they moved me into their cell. There were five of us in a four-man cell. And they took turns sleepin' on the floor, keeping everybody else out....

"And essentially, they taught me the role of jail punk. You know, they protected me from everybody else. If I went to the shower, I had a four-man Marine escort taking me to the shower. They brought my food in trays to me. If I needed stamps, they gave them to me. Anything I needed, they got it for me. And they never said anything to put me down. Never once. Which amazed me....

"We just stayed in that cell twenty-four hours a day, and these guys, being nineteen, twenty, two of them twenty-one—the horniest time of their life—they, you know, were bored all of the time. And the way they would deal with their boredom was to have sex with me. So I must have spent half of my time in those three weeks with some Marine dick in me. One end or the other. There was one of them who liked to fuck me, but the other three were oral. And they would do some things to me that, in my head, were pretty strange. Again, contrasting it with the D.C. experience. Like Dan, who was kind of put in charge of me—he would sit up in his bunk reading cowboy stories, right? And he'd have me lie down with my head in his lap and he'd stroke my head. Just not doing anything sexually. And I asked him, 'Why do you do this?' And he said, 'Well, this is what I do with my girlfriend back home. So I reckon if you're gonna be our girlfriend here, I'll do the same thing with you.'"

Whether you consider it a defloration or a blossoming, Donny's psychic transformation was complete. He was turned out. Punked out. He accepted the role of punk as his preordained position in the jail hierarchy. Yes, it required his debasement, but it also insured his survival. And he soon began to approach his role with the same fervor he had applied to life outside the joint. The same concentration. The same quiet devotion.



**DONNY IN PRISON, 1982:  
HEY, WHAT'S THAT JAIL PUNK  
LISTENING TO ON HIS WALKMAN?  
COULD IT BE...PUNK ROCK?**

“One of the things that you have to realize is that when you spend hour after hour in intimate contact with people, things happen. First of all, you have to relax eventually. You just have to. Time and fatigue will do that. When you relax, you develop an awareness of other things going on, and this is when I really started becoming aware of intimacy and body warmth and closeness and stuff like that.

“Um, having a guy’s dick in your mouth for an hour or two, you know, you connect with that guy, I mean, I don’t care how you feel about it when you start out. It’s so close, and there’s this incredibly intense nonverbal communication. I discovered after learning to relax that I became very good at giving head, at giving deep throat. And all you had to do was just go into a certain total relaxation, which my Buddhist meditation had prepared me for. I’d just meditate. I discovered that they could throat me for hours on end—I mean, they were in heaven. It was the most wonderful thing that had happened since they were locked up. And they got very grateful and cherished the experience.”

And Donny learned to cherish the experience as well. He was totally protected against strangers by four strong, well-trained fighters. He had perfected his role. He was needed. He knew what was expected of him, and he was able to deliver total satisfaction. As incomprehensible as it may seem to an outsider, the jail’s clearly delineated social structure met Donny’s needs better than the murky human cesspool which lay outside the hoosegow walls.

Released from jail and acquitted in North Carolina, Donny went back to school. After intentionally cutting his wrist, he returned to his hometown of Norfolk, Virginia, and tried to get arrested. Donny was finally nailed in May of ‘77 for selling acid to an undercover Norfolk piggy. He was sent back to jail. And he kissed the blues goodbye.

“I wasn’t very good at resisting pressure by now. I didn’t want to go through another gang rape. So I basically agreed with guys who were putting pressure on me to give them what they wanted. And there, the pattern was buddies—pairs of buddies—would take me, and they’d get in a dormitory bunk and hang sheets on both sides of the bunk so nobody could see in, and one would fuck me in the ass and one in the mouth at the same time. And they’d watch each other, right, and I could feel the energy going through me [laughs], back and forth between the two of them. It was quite somethin’. It was, like, here are these really close buddies, close friends, and here they get a chance to sort of be sexual with each other without either one being in the subordinate role.”

But someone eventually snitched on Donny’s “buddy system,” which got Donny classified as a “protective custody” case and sent to an area where prison officials kept the lambs,

those most vulnerable to attack. In another vicious paradox, it was also where they kept the wolves, the prisoners most likely to commit violence against others. During his first night in the segregation area, Donny was assigned to a cell with three black inmates, who raped him. He was later told that the trio had paid the guards five dollars to switch him into their cell. This was not a matter of consent. No role-playing here. It was D.C. Jail all over again. Donny couldn’t bear his boiling indignation. After being physically subdued, submerged in their sweat and cum, Donny started swinging with his fists the moment his attackers relented.

Police dragged him away and chucked him into solitary confinement. After five days in the hole, he was returned to the segregation area. A prisoner named Terry recognized him as the cops brought Donny into his cell. “Look,” Terry said to his cellmates, “it’s Donny, the punk.” Robert Martin, Jr., a k a Stephen Donaldson, finally had a name for his new identity.

“And so I was in there now with a bunch of white guys, and Terry put a claim on me, and he became my man for, I guess, another two-and-a-half months. He was a burglar from Texas who had grown up in the circus—really fascinating kid. Twenty-one-year-old sailor. And he was very nice to me. Like, whenever he got some pot, he’d always share it with me. He had one really peculiar custom. Any time he had to take a piss, he would make me open my mouth, and he’d piss in my mouth.



**DONNY IN 1994:  
OUT OF JAIL, BUT  
PERMANENTLY PUNKED-OUT**

I thought, ‘Well, this is really hard to understand. Why does he want me to do this?’ And in the absence of privacy, he wouldn’t talk about it.

“So eventually, you know, I put two and two together. Terry and I were very stable in that cell, but with the other two bunks, it was a constant flow of people in and out. And whenever somebody was moved in there, one of the first things that they would experience, that they’d see, was this really, really tough guy—Terry—making me drink his piss. And they’d get freaked out and totally intimidated, and they never challenged him. He never had to fight in that cell. Everybody regarded him as the king. It was a totally effective tactic. As soon as I caught on to it, and I realized that my security was also being secured the same way because it depended on his, then I was able to appreciate it. It still wasn’t easy, but it developed over time into something more like a bond between us....

“It became almost like a gift, and usually when I would do it with my man, our eyes would be locked and I would be looking up at him. It was a symbolic reaffirmation of the whole role of him being on top and me being the submissive punk, you know, but relating to each other. Not being an object....”

Donny’s saga is, I suppose, a classic demonstration of what the lefties call “not being identified by your oppressor.” He has taken the word “punk,” which in its nonmusical context has always been a term of derision, and turned it into an emblem of honor. He has performed the same etymological magic trick that others have done with the term “nigger.” Or “queer.” Or “white trash.” Donny even wears a “PUNK” belt buckle. He owns a T-shirt which says “#1 JAIL PUNK” on the front and lists all the joints he’s “toured” on the back.

And ever since he got out of Norfolk jail, his criminal charges dropped when the arresting officer committed suicide, Donny has strongly identified with punk rock. But where everyone else’s elocution places the emphasis on the “rock”—punk ROCK—Donny’s the only person I’ve ever heard who stresses the first word. PUNK rock. The song which turned him on to punk rock was a song about a punk—Patti Smith’s “Horses,” which deals with a boy who gets raped in front of a school locker.

“When I’m having sex with a guy, I don’t get aroused. I don’t get a hard-on....But there are other aspects of it that I definitely will relate to and that I find fulfilling—the warmth, the intimacy, the intensity. The real intensity of it is something that appeals to me a great deal. My whole life is like that. That’s one reason I’m a punk rocker. And, you know, I like to live intensely. And it involves a lot of suffering. It also involves a lot of joy. I’d much rather have that than this kind of even, suburban lifestyle, you know, where the worst thing you have to worry about is whether you’re going to miss your favorite TV show or not. That appeals to me.”

Ah, intensity. The finest character trait of them all. It's better to be intense than even-tempered, no matter how wacky you appear to the Great Ugly Flock. Intensity spawns greatness. *Viva intensidad!*

Yet intensity, like the suffering which often produces it, can be fatal if improperly channeled. In March, 1980, Donny was feeling plenty intense. In behavior customary of male rape survivors, he had become hyper-macho: Donny had guns, leather, and connections with an armed underground anarchist cell. Although he still had never been convicted of any crime, Donny had endured three traumatic stints behind bars.

And he was now jobless. And his living quarters were burglarized twice prior to that decisive day when he wandered into the Bronx's Veteran's Administration Hospital and demanded medical treatment. They turned him away, so Donny came back with a .25-caliber pistol and repeated his request. "Oh, put away that toy," Donny quotes the female doctor as saying. "That isn't a real gun." Although the doctor didn't know it, she was effectively stating that Donny was dickless. To prove that he wasn't, Donny shot a bullet through a hospital window.

For that manly demonstration, Donny spent four years in the federal pen, during which he estimates he was raped another five times. For most of his stay, though, he was hooked up with daddies who kept him safe in exchange for sexual compliance. And he speaks of those daddies with the fondness usually reserved for dearly departed friends.

Permit a meat-eater from Philadelphia (by reputation, the U.S.A.'s jail-rape capital) to offer a capsule synopsis of Eastern philosophy: Reality is quite the multilayered onion, and seeming contradictions can therefore coexist peacefully. I believe that's why Donny, whose answering-machine message includes a line about how he may be too busy reciting his mantra to pick up the receiver, is able to reconcile his life's apparent conundrums. On one hand, he speaks of his time in prison almost like a former high-school football star talks about his glory days. "I was a star alright," he says, "a star cocksucker."

On the other hand, Donny is America's most persistently eloquent opponent of institutionalized prison rape. In 1988, Donny became president of a grass-roots group which he later re-christened as Stop Prison Rape. Instead of shooting at windows or selling acid to the fuzz, Donny now uses that well-developed cauliflower between his ears to push for social change.

And it's difficult to argue with his gentle, Yoda-like wisdom. The facts are hard to dispute. Based on inferences drawn from official reports, some three hundred thousand men and boys are raped yearly in American penological institutions. But no judge has ever officially declared rape to be a suitable punishment for any crime.

Donny's "resoluteness," as foreshadowed in the I Ching, is finally beginning to show results. Influenced by a friend-of-the-court brief filed by Donny, the U.S. Supreme Court recently recognized inmates' right to sue the government if they can prove they were "incarcerated under conditions posing a substantial risk of serious harm." The nine old black-robed bastards also unanimously agreed that prison rape "is simply not part of the penalty" for having committed a crime. Donny successfully ass-fucked the legal code. *Mr. Punk Goes to Washington.*

But the laws are easier to change than social prejudice. For the longest time, Americans have preferred to pretend that prison rape doesn't exist. When the topic is broached at all, it's treated either comically or vindictively. It's either "watch that bar of soap" or "serves you right."

During a recent appearance on L.A.'s annoying "John and Ken" radio show, Donny was buffeted with the hostility of howling bitches who wanted to claim rape as their exclusive domain. As I listened to him being verbally gang-raped by a willfully dumb opposition, Donny's quest never seemed more quixotic. Yet through it all, he countered their mob-mentality ignorance with unassailable logic.

**"There's always a reason for everything. Most of the feminist activists in the rape movement are themselves rape survivors, and they have a very strong emotional reaction to men as a result. Which I can understand. That's because they're middle-class intellectuals. Most middle-class intellectuals cannot deal with their emotions. They pervert them into their logic...."**

**"In my case, I mean, I'm unusual. I mean, I have an IQ of over 175, and I can take things that a lot of guys can't handle, and I can see them from different angles and work with them and deal with them, transform them, transmute them. And I've done that. That's the only way I can continue to operate in public on this subject, because it still causes me problems."**

I'm not about to pretend that I've experienced the level of pain which Donny has. Yet I keep thinking back to a nightmare I had when I was about five years old. It's the most vivid dream of my life.

It came in two quick segments, each lasting about fifteen seconds. In the first, my sister and I were crossing a Vermont wheat field on our way to a little red schoolhouse when we were stopped by a life-sized cartoon-character wolf. Grinning, the wolf applied a sheet of sticky flypaper to my face and peeled it away. My face was now smooth and featureless, like a fencer's mask. When I looked down at the flypaper in the wolf's hand, it contained my face's image. The wolf had stolen my face.

Fade-out.

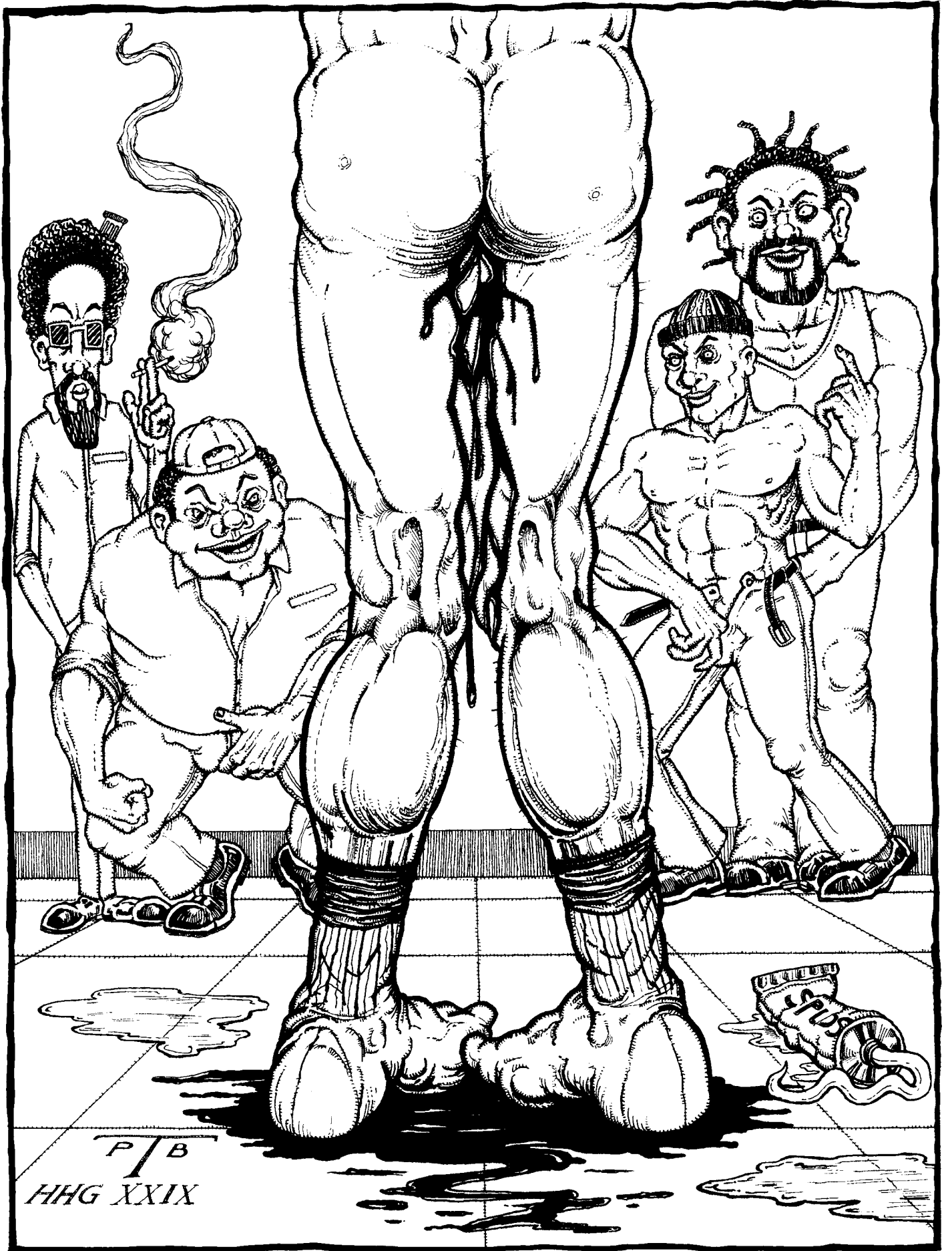
As the dream resumed, I saw myself sleeping in the living room of my grandmother's Pappy Yokum-style Vermont shack. It was very dark. The sparse moonlight which filtered in through the unlocked screen door cast some milky rays on other relatives in the room, all of them wearing earplugs and snoring loudly. Suddenly, the cartoon wolf, his eyes big and white, appeared at the door. I screamed at the top of my kindergartener's lungs. But since all my relatives had chosen to wear earplugs, they couldn't hear me. My family's indifference was more terrifying to me than the prospect of being attacked.

In a sense, Donny's still screaming, although very few people want to hear about it.

**"I have dreams about jails probably about once every two weeks. They usually involve me coming into a cellblock and being surrounded by horny guys. And people approaching me, talking with me, very often welcoming me. Sort of, you know, 'Welcome home.' And I wake up before, usually before, anything actually sexual occurs. But it's very strange. It's not a typical jail nightmare the way most rape survivors have reported it. And part of that is, what I've done is taken the more comfortable memories and superimposed them over the traumatic memories, which is a very human response...."**

**"And it has its drawbacks—in my case, it's almost made me nostalgic for jail, because I had such good relationships when I was hooked up. Then I forget about all of the horrible things that happened to me when I was independent, and I just think about the relationships. Especially when I get lonely, late at night, if I'm here alone with my cat, if I get very depressed, and my mind wanders and I think of, gee, you know, these guys that really, really appreciated me. You know, they cared for me. And I contrast that with, you know, this cold life here in New York City, where even the punks that say hello to you, you know, as soon as the show's over, everybody scatters in a hundred directions. So jail is a temptation that I have to fight, a temptation which exists only because none of the guys who owned me ever mistreated me. And that makes me very different from most punks...."**

**"I know how atypical, in a sense, my jail experience has been. I'm more sophisticated and more adaptable, you know, more mentally flexible. And by spiritualizing the whole thing. For example, I've gotten into Shiva Hinduism from Buddhism, in part because there's a very strong phallic-worship tradition there. And I can relate to that. I can relate to the phallus as the symbol of total power, of creativity, and see how it emanates a sense of awe, which is the basic feeling of religion. You know, the uncanny. The awesome. The hallowed. All the feelings that have nothing to do with good and evil....Just this sense of incredible power, this overwhelming energy that is so other, so totally other, and yet it touches you so closely inside. That's religion." ■**



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