

I SURVIVED: SIX DAYS LOST AT SEA

PAGE 40

Reader's Digest

CANADA'S
MOST-READ
MAGAZINE

OCTOBER 2022

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Wanted!**
Tips to Spot
Good Advice
PAGE 62

MUST READ!

How to BEAT Diabetes

NEW STRATEGIES, NEW
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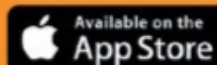
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EDITOR'S LETTER

Mothers and Sons

The Canadian writer Jowita Bydlowska has said that she wasn't prepared for the intensity of the reaction to her 2013 memoir, *Drunk Mom*. People who hadn't even read the book had opinions. Bydlowska tells how, three years sober, she begins drinking again at a party to celebrate her newborn son, Hugo. What makes the book so unforgettable aren't the nights filled with shame that follow but the unshowy, honest way she describes them.

The same is true of her story in this issue, "The Great Unknown" (page 52). Bydlowska, newly divorced, befriends a crotchety peer at her addiction-support group. Denis, who has a terminal illness, becomes an unlikely mentor to eight-year-old Hugo, helping him through the big changes in his life. But there's more. "Maybe I was harsh," Bydlowska writes, "but I had a vague notion of wanting to teach my son about death, of showing him that death, like friendship (or love that ends in a divorce), was part of life."

Bydlowska's story is about Hugo learning from Denis, but it's also, significantly, about a mother growing closer to her son. Their bond is a reminder, in a year with an overabundance of bleak headlines about war, crime and disease, that there's love and kindness in the world, even and especially from a parent who isn't perfect.



P.S. You can reach me at mark@rd.ca.

Reader's Digest

PUBLISHED BY THE READER'S DIGEST MAGAZINES CANADA LIMITED, MONTREAL, CANADA

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Print subscriptions, \$35.50 a year, plus \$8.99 postage, processing and handling. Please add applicable taxes. Outside Canada, \$54.96 yearly, including postage, processing and handling. (Prices and postage subject to change without notice.) ISSN 0034-0413. Indexed by the Canadian Periodical Index. Single issue: \$4.95.

 We acknowledge with gratitude the financial support of the Government of Canada. / Nous remercions le Gouvernement du Canada pour son appui financier.



Reader's Digest publishes 10 issues per year and may occasionally publish special issues (special issues count as two), subject to change without notice.



CANUCK CHALLENGE

“The Canada Quiz” (July/August 2022) was a blast! I didn’t do very well but I’m nicely stocked up on Canadian trivia for the rest of the year.

— ELAINE KENDAL, *Edmonton*

UNCOVERING WILDLIFE

“The Wolf Who Trusted Too Much” (May 2021), a story about a beloved wolf who was killed by a hunter in British Columbia, was so well written

that it brought tears to my eyes. We need more of these stories to appreciate the animals that share the earth with us.

— ROSEMARY SCHEFFER, *Scarborough, Ont.*

A DEVOTED READER

I have been a fan of *Reader's Digest* for many years. I’m now 75 years old and I still keep stacks of them. The magazine has brought suspense, laughter, knowledge and much more into our lives. Keep on publishing great stories.

— DONALD ZURAKOWSKI, *Prince Albert, Sask.*

ROYAL ERROR

In “The Crown & Us” (June 2022), there’s a sentence that rather jars: “Who could imagine Elizabeth’s second child getting caught in the sordid web of a sexual predator and his accomplice?” I’m assuming this refers to Prince Andrew but he’s not Queen Elizabeth’s second child. Her second child is Anne, the Princess Royal, who has been a very steadfast working member of the royal family for decades.

— MARG MAZER, *St. Albert, Alta.*

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Send us your funny jokes and anecdotes, and if we publish one in a print edition of *Reader's Digest*, we'll send you \$50. To submit, visit rd.ca/joke.

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PUBLISHED LETTERS ARE EDITED FOR LENGTH AND CLARITY

LIFE'S LIKE THAT

Lost in the Pug-kin Patch



AI Faux Pas

My friend sent me a picture of her kid, and I looked at it and said, “That’s not a good picture.” Siri sent that back as a message, so I’ll be moving to another planet where there is no technology.

—[@CCRUNS](#)

Not-So-Green Thumb

Did I “kill a plant,” or did the plant just not have what it takes to thrive in this fast-paced environment?

—[@SARAHCLAZARUS](#)

My wife told me, “If you hate everyone, you should eat something,

and if you think everyone hates you, you should take a nap,” and I don’t think I’ve heard a better life hack.

—[@METADOXY](#)

Slip of the Tongue

Someone thanked me, and caught between “okay” and “all right,” I whispered “karate” back at them.

—[@BEARDEDSAFFA](#)

Gourmet on a Budget

No sound cuts through the ambience of a fine dining restaurant quite like the unmistakable noise of my wallet being un-Velcroed.

—[@MISERYTRICKERY](#)

Business of the House

My husband calls our Bluetooth speaker “Mr. Speaker” and addresses it as though we are in Parliament.

—[@TOKS_W](#)

Send us your original jokes! You could earn \$50 and be featured in the magazine. See page 6 or rd.ca/joke for details.

EPIC EXPERIENCES ALONG ALBERTA'S

Icefields Parkway

The stunningly scenic Icefields Parkway in Alberta is one of the world's most iconic road trips. Tamara Elliott is the founder of *Globe Guide*, which offers savvy tips for exploring destinations around the world. Discover Tamara's amazing journey along the Parkway.

The 232 kilometre-long highway links Banff National Park with the town of Jasper. I suggest spending at least a few days to enjoy stays at places like Lake Louise and the Columbia Icefields en route to Jasper National Park.

My sister and I hit the highway in the 2022 Nissan Rogue, which is adventure-ready thanks to family-friendly features like convenient wireless charging, premium Bose speakers and the motion-activated liftgate, which made loading suitcases and my French Bulldog puppy Ollie into the back a cinch.



Here are some of our favourite stops along the Icefields Parkway.

1. Lake Louise

The Lake Louise Shoreline Trail winds along the northwest side of the lake or head to nearby Moraine Lake, which is such a quintessentially Canadian spot that it was once featured on the \$20 bill. Even on a rainy day like we experienced, the landscape is absolutely gorgeous—and made us appreciate the Tri-Zone Climate Control and seat warmers that got us nice and toasty once we hopped back into the Rogue.



3. Glacier Skywalk

Suspended above the Sunwapta Valley, you'll find the Glacier Skywalk. Its glass bottom walkway and dramatic views make for quite an adrenaline rush. The panoramic vistas reminded us of the Rogue's expansive moonroof, which allowed us to take in the beauty of the national parks even while driving.

4. Waterfalls

A trio of falls line the final stretch to Jasper: Athabasca Falls, Sunwapta Falls and Tangle Creek Falls. Multi-tiered Tangle Creek Falls is just a couple minutes' drive past the Skywalk on the right hand side.

5. Jasper

One of the best attractions in Jasper is the Jasper SkyTram, which whisked us up to the 2,263 metre-high summit of Whistlers Mountain during a seven-minute long cable car ride.

The incredible bird's-eye view of Jasper National Park spread out below was a fitting end to our Icefields Parkway adventure, the perfect finale to one of Canada's top road trips in the 2022 Nissan Rogue.

Check out Tamara's full story at readersdigest.ca/Nissan



2. Columbia Icefields

We pulled off for quick stops at Bow Lake to do the walk up the Bow Summit to the panoramic Peyto Lake Viewpoint. We didn't feel fatigued at all, thanks to the scenic pit stops and the Rogue's NASA-inspired Zero Gravity Seats, which are ultra-comfortable, especially during long trips.



The Columbia Icefields

Lake Louise





Creating true diversity in Canadian TV and film

Camera Ready

BY Stacy Lee Kong

PHOTOGRAPH BY BRENT GOODEN

FROM THE OUTSIDE, it looked like Amanda Lo was living her dream. She had worked in Canada's film and TV industry for almost a decade, sometimes even leading her own independent projects. But she wasn't where she really wanted to be: the writers' room of a popular show, where she could tell big stories about queer Chinese women like herself. "I felt like there was no space for me," she says. "I was very close to giving up on a career in writing."

Then, in fall 2021, she made a breakthrough with the help of BIPOC TV & Film, a national organization on a

mission to increase diversity in the Canadian TV and film industry. The group provides training, support and access to networks, and also advocates for fair hiring practices and equitable work policies. In Lo's case, its four-month screenwriting program helped her to develop new skills and finally put pen to paper in a writers' room. Today, she has worked on both CTV's *Transplant* and an upcoming show called *The Spencer Sisters*.

It's exactly this type of success story that director, producer and Daytime Emmy award-nominated writer Nathalie Younglai was imagining in 2012

**Nathalie Younglai
helps writers
and directors get
their big break.**



when she founded BIPOC TV & Film. At the time, Younglai wanted to be a TV writer but it felt impossible—especially when many insiders were not only denying the industry's stark lack of diversity, but also that the lopsided storytelling was a problem at all. "It was very isolating," Younglai says. "It felt like every writing room in Canada was white."

"I WANT TO SEE MORE TV SERIES THAT ARE BY US, ABOUT US, GREEN-LIT AND RUN BY US."



The year she founded the organization, only 4.1 per cent of Canadian screenwriters identified as visible minorities, and only a handful of that small fraction were women. Now, thanks to the work of people like Younglai, the dismal representation is beginning to shift.

In 2019, the number of screenwriters who identified as visible minorities had risen to nine per cent, according to a report from the Writers Guild of Canada. More racialized people are telling their own stories—from Domee Shi's hit Pixar movie *Turning Red* to the CBC shows *Diggstown*, *The Porter*, *Sort Of* and *Run the Burbs*—and audiences are cheering.

Younglai would like to see a future in which equality and inclusion are the norm. As she puts it, "More series by us, about us, green-lit and run by us." In 2020, in partnership with Bell Media, CBC, Corus and Rogers, the organization started HireBIPOC, a coast-to-coast Rolodex of Black, Indigenous and racialized creatives and crew members. It now has more than 8,000 members, and employers—HGTV and Disney among them—are increasingly using it to hire diverse cast and crew. And recently, the organization partnered with CBC and the Canadian Film Centre to kick off the CBC-BIPOC TV & Film Showrunner Catalyst, which will provide up to five senior-level writers per year with the tools they need to achieve showrunner status.

All of this is in addition to the organization's advocacy work, spearheaded by executive director Kadon Douglas, who has worked extensively in the documentary industry. One of the group's most recent victories was to help transform the Canadian Independent Film and Video Fund into the Canadian Independent Screen Fund for BPOC Creators. In its new form, the fund will help racialized creators produce screen-based works and has already made the difference in several films and shows. "The ultimate goal is radical industry transformation," Douglas says. "We are revolutionizing what Canadian content is and who gets to tell Canadian stories." **R**



Patients can use exoskeletons to move more freely.

GOOD NEWS

FIVE REASONS TO SMILE

BY Lisa Bendall

HELPING WHEELCHAIR USERS WALK

FRANCE One per cent of the Western world's population uses a wheelchair, amounting to over 11 million people in Europe and North America alone. Jean-Louis Constanza, a robotics engineer in Paris, is the father of one of them. When 17-year-old Oscar was a child, he asked his dad to make him a robot that could help him walk. Constanza knew that other companies were making bionic exoskeletons that people with disabilities could wear for just that reason, but there were limitations. Users needed crutches to keep their balance, and they risked falling. "Humanoid

walking is one of the most complex things in robotics," says Constanza.

Ten years ago, he partnered with two other engineers; one had family members with the same disability as Oscar and had been working on a concept for a self-balancing exoskeleton that could be controlled hands-free. The trio formed Wandercraft and released a prototype in late 2016. Three years later, Wandercraft was selling exoskeletons to rehabilitation centres, where patients could reap the health benefits of being upright, such as improved posture and fewer pressure sores.

The team, backed by investors, is now working toward their next goal: a personal exoskeleton that can be used around the house or outside, giving people more freedom. The effort is worth it, says Constanza. “We see people’s smiles when they stand up for the first time in the exo. Their perspective on life changes in a split second!”

Encouraging Kids to Reduce Plastic Waste

SOUTH AFRICA When creative director Ruben Hazelzet moved to South Africa from the Netherlands in 2016, he was awed by the country’s beautiful natural landscapes but dismayed by the considerable amount of plastic clogging the oceans and rivers. Every year, about 79,000 tonnes of plastic waste ends up in South Africa’s waters. Hazelzet realized that few discussions about pollution focused on what individuals could do

to address the problem, and they were not geared to kids.

So, in 2019, Hazelzet created the hero Captain Fanplastic, along with a school program that includes stories, craft making and outdoor litter collection—branded as a “treasure hunt”—to show primary-school children how easily they can make a difference. The program has been used in South African and Dutch schools, and in 2020 it became available online. Hazelzet aims to reach 173,000 students by the end of next year.

Learning Opportunities for Women Behind Bars

UNITED STATES Women are incarcerated in the United States at a higher rate than in any other founding NATO country, yet they have fewer job training programs compared to men who are in prison. A new group at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s Educational Justice Institute is addressing this imbalance. In a pilot project last year, Brave Behind Bars taught in-person and online classes in computer and career skills to 30 women in various New England correctional facilities.

The education they receive will help them succeed once they’re back in the community: according to a report by the non-profit policy think tank RAND Corporation, inmates enrolled in educational programs were 43 per cent less likely to reoffend later.



In a testimonial, one graduate wrote: “It helped me believe in myself and my abilities.”

A New Program to Fix Citizens’ Broken Stuff

AUSTRIA Have you ever thrown away a broken lamp or coffee maker because it was too expensive to repair it? In 2020, the city of Vienna launched its Reparaturbon (“Repair Voucher”) program to avoid this very thing. Citizens paid half the cost of repairs, up to a 100-euro maximum, on electronics, bikes, furniture

and clothes, while the municipal government covered the rest. It wasn’t the first time an Austrian city subsidized repairs to reduce the amount of waste headed to landfill, but it was simpler—consumers didn’t have to save receipts, submit forms or wait to be reimbursed.

In April of this year, Austria’s federal government offered a similar subsidy for broken electronics, covering half the repair cost up to a maximum of 200 euros. By the time the program concludes in 2026, it’s estimated that 400,000 items will have been fixed instead of scrapped.

ACTS OF KINDNESS

A Former Refugee Shares Love of Soccer

When Hussein Mohamud Hussein came to southwest London in 1999 as a nine-year-old Somalian refugee, he struggled with the new language and environment. As a teen, he survived living on the streets and sleeping on night buses until a teacher at his school gave him the support he needed. “The only happiness in my life was when I saw people playing football and I asked to join them,” he remembers.

In 2016, Hussein formed a community football (soccer) club, the Streatham FC, and invited low-income children to play.

Within two years, enrolment soared from less than 15 to over 150. Recognizing that the kids’ families might also need support, Hussein founded a charity, East African Association, to offer activities such as drop-in ESL, fitness classes and resume writing.

The group is in constant need of funding, but the rewards roll in. Some of the earliest FC members are teenagers now and are training to be coaches themselves. Says Hussein: “We’ve empowered them, and it gives me immense pride.”



ASK AN EXPERT

Should I Quit Travelling?

We quiz Rachel Dodds, sustainable-travel consultant

BY Courtney Shea

ILLUSTRATION BY LAUREN TAMAKI



Given the negative impacts of travel—on the environment and on communities visited—should we give it up?

I don't think that's the answer. Travel is a wonderful way to become less ignorant about the world around us. It can give us empathy toward people from different cultures, and it can be an opportunity to put money into the economies we visit. The focus needs to be on how we can travel better. If you're flying to Amsterdam from Canada for a weekend and then back to Paris two weeks later, that might be worth reconsidering in terms of environmental impact, which is one of the key problems we talk about with modern travel.

Just how bad is air travel?

It's bad. Aviation is responsible for as much as 12 per cent of global carbon emissions and a little more than three per cent of emissions in Canada. Avoiding a single flight is the equivalent of going car free for a year. If you have to fly, try to fly direct, since most emissions happen at takeoff and landing.

What else should we consider before booking a ticket?

Some people abandon basic decency when they are away. There is even a term for it: holiday hedonism. They will consume more, drink more, urinate in public, treat staff poorly. Recently, a

tourist threw his e-scooter down the Spanish steps in Rome, causing thousands of dollars in damage. This kind of behaviour creates tension between local populations and visitors. In Barcelona, there have been laws enacted to curtail the effects of overtourism. At one point, there was graffiti visible from the city's famous Park Guell that read: "Why call it tourist season if we can't shoot them?"

It all sounds so depressing. How did we get here?

Travel has been going on forever. The first explorers were travellers, and overall, humans have an interest in seeing other places. But the invention of jet aircraft in the 1950s was a game changer. At that time, we had 25 million international tourists per year, and today that number is closer to 1.4 billion. Travel has gotten cheaper and more accessible and, at the same time, people in previously developing countries like China, India and Russia have become more middle class—which means more of them are travelling. Also, it's not even about the destination anymore.

Meaning what?

We're no longer looking for authenticity or uniqueness. We want to eat and drink and party and get the photo of the popular landmark for Instagram. Look at the ads for a lot of these tropical destinations—you have no idea where that beach is.

What happened to the romantic idea of getting off the beaten path?

Adventure travel still exists and that's where we see those positive aspects of travel. Iceland launched a campaign where the whole idea was to experience the country through the eyes of a local—avoiding the tourist traps and getting a real sense of the society and how they live. But that is a small segment of travellers. Most people have two weeks off a year and just want to plant their butts on a beach with a pina colada. But if they knew that sometimes the staff are making less than a dollar a day and have to take a three-hour bus ride to get to work because tourism has laid waste to local housing, would they still want to do that?

What are some tips to travel more ethically?

There are lots of services and websites now that provide information on which resorts pay fair wages, or list the best locally owned shops and restaurants. Remember that we vote with our wallets. If nobody goes to swim with dolphins in captivity, those businesses won't exist anymore. If 100 people ask a cruise director for locally run tours, where they can put money in the local economy, that cruise would change its destructive practices. **R**

Rachel Dodds is a professor at the Ted Rogers School of Hospitality and Tourism Management.

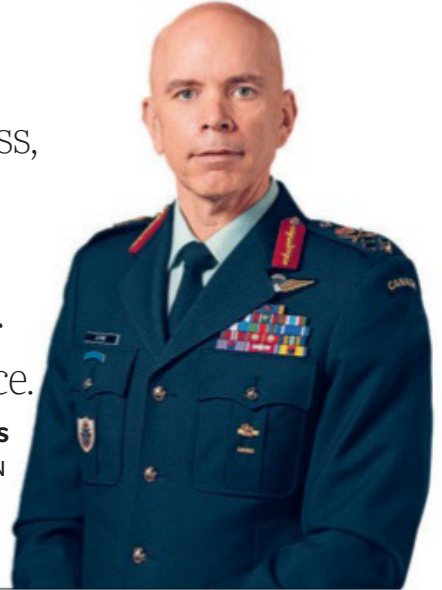
POINTS TO PONDER

IN THE NEXT CENTURY, WATER WILL BECOME MORE IMPORTANT THAN OIL.

–Bob Rae

Uniformity does not equal discipline, or operational effectiveness, any more than the colour or length of your hair defines your commitment or professional competence.

–Gen. Wayne Eyre, Canada's chief of the defence staff, ON LOOSENED DRESS RULES IN THE CANADIAN ARMED FORCES



The more I teach, the more I realize that everybody has a story and that all those stories form a community.

–Novelist Lisa Moore, WHO IS ALSO AN ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR AT MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY



We must break the culture of silence in sport.

–Pascale St-Onge, Minister of Sport, SPEAKING AGAINST THE NON-DISPARAGEMENT AGREEMENTS THAT SOME ATHLETES MUST SIGN TO RECEIVE SPORT CANADA FUNDING

I TRAVEL WITH MY OWN MAPLE SYRUP.

–Mezzo-soprano **Rihab Chaieb**, WHO HAS PERFORMED WITH THE CANADIAN OPERA COMPANY AND HAS ALSO TOURED EUROPE AND THE U.S.

(ST-ONGE) ALEXANDRE TÉTREAU; (GEN. EYRE) CORPORAL JONATHAN KING © 2021 DND-MDN CANADA

Life is weird.

–Markham, Ont., actor Iman Vellani, WHO PLAYS MS. MARVEL,
SPEAKING ABOUT HER NEW REALITY AS A SUPERHERO STAR



**WE SPENT THREE MONTHS BEING
HEROES. AND NOW WE GET CURSED AT
BECAUSE OF THE WAIT TIMES.**

–Monica Dey, a charge nurse at Milton District Hospital,
SPEAKING ABOUT BURNOUT IN HER PROFESSION

**IT MEANS
EVERYTHING TO BE
AN INSPIRATION
TO YOUNG GIRLS,
TO SHOW THEM
THAT THEY CAN DO
ANYTHING IF THEY
WORK HARD.**

–Chloe Primerano, WHO AT 15 BECAME
THE FIRST FEMALE SKATER DRAFTED
INTO THE CANADIAN HOCKEY LEAGUE

*Chess is a game
where people
with disabilities
can beat
people without
disabilities.*

–Gilbert Perez, THE ONLY CANADIAN TO
COMPETE IN LAST YEAR'S WORLD CHESS
CHAMPIONSHIP FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

I can't wait for people to
understand where I come
from anymore, so I'm
telling the story myself.

–Alia Rasul, a Filipina Muslim comedian,
ON HER NEW SOLO COMEDY SHOW





Rewire Your Brain

Cognitive behavioural therapy can be as effective as meds for treating depression

BY Allison Baker

ILLUSTRATION BY DELPHINE MEIER

How did cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) become one of the most prominent forms of therapy?

In the early 1960s, American psychologist Aaron T. Beck began studying the effectiveness of psychoanalysis—the type of “talking cure” that most people associate with therapy—on patients with depression in an effort to validate the treatment in a more scientific way. His research showed that the psychoanalytic view of depression—that it is repressed aggression turned inward—was inaccurate. Instead, Beck found that negative thoughts in the present influence our responses.

According to Beck, these “automatic thoughts” are affected by our core beliefs, or the central ideas that we have of ourselves. For instance, if someone who believes that they’re a failure does poorly on a test, their response might be, “Of course I failed, because I’m a failure—so what’s the point of trying?” They may feel depressed and unmotivated and consequently don’t adapt in ways that could produce better outcomes. When they fail again, their negative core belief is “proven.”

Beck developed CBT to help patients recognize negative thought patterns, to question and evaluate them, and then to adjust their behaviour in response. CBT has since become the most researched form of psychotherapy and is now considered the gold standard in evidence-based treatment for anxious and depressive disorders.

What does CBT entail, and how do I know if it's right for me?

CBT is a structured and focused process, typically lasting between 12 and 20 sessions, with the ultimate goal of providing patients with the tools they need to become their own therapists. CBT therapists often assign homework to help patients analyze their thoughts in between sessions. Journaling, for example, can help a patient keep track of triggering events and recognize negative thought patterns.

While CBT is considered a first-line treatment for anxiety and depression, it has also been shown to be effective for substance use disorders, anger issues and eating disorders. Research also suggests that CBT can be beneficial for conditions that might be considered more physical than psychological, like irritable bowel syndrome and fibromyalgia, by helping patients manage their response to pain. “Any human ailment that can be improved by better thinking and better habits can be helped by CBT,” says Greg Dubord, director of CBT Canada.

However, due to the short-term nature of the treatment, CBT may not be appropriate for those who want to focus exclusively on past issues or want ongoing supportive counselling. In those cases, conventional talk therapy or group therapies may be preferred. Patients should talk to their health care provider to determine the type of therapy best suited to them.

How does CBT compare to medication?

Depression is often treated with medications, including selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs). But according to a recent article published in the *Cognitive Therapy and Research* journal reviewing the past 50 years in CBT research, CBT is at least as good as medication in most cases. In fact, the researchers reported that depressive patients successfully treated with CBT were less than half as likely to relapse than those treated with medication. One possible explanation, they said, is that depression is an “evolved adaptation that served to keep our ancestors ruminating about complex social problems until they arrived at a solution.” Therefore, the researchers noted, interventions that facilitate a similar type of reflection are more likely to be successful than ones, like medication, that simply suppress symptoms.

However, Dubord notes that some conditions—schizophrenia, bipolar disorder and persistent forms of depression (in which symptoms last for a year or more)—almost always require medication combined with therapy.

When considering CBT as a possible alternative to medication, Dubord suggests people keep in mind the amount of homework involved and whether they have the time to put in that effort. And if you're already on medication, any changes should be done in consultation with your physician. **R**



REAL BENEFITS FROM A GRADUAL DIGITAL DETOX

Over 3.5 billion people worldwide spend an average of three hours a day glued to their smartphones—on social media, texting, checking emails—and according to a German study, there's good reason to cut down. Researchers found that people who lowered their usage by one hour every day were happier, spent more time being physically active, were less depressed and reduced anxiety symptoms by over 30 per cent. Cutting back was also more effective than total digital detox: people who had spent one hour less per day on smartphones during the one-week intervention were more likely to successfully change their habits over the long term than abstainers, who had put their smartphones aside for a week.

Sleep Deprivation Skews How We See Others

According to a Swedish study, tired people are terrible at reading other people's facial expressions. Researchers found that after one night of no sleep, the exhausted participants were more likely to interpret an angry face as less trustworthy than well-rested folks were, in part because a sleep-deprived brain reacts more strongly to negative stimuli. Participants also rated neutral and fearful faces as less attractive following one night of no sleep. This is because people spent less time analyzing facial expressions after a sleepless night, which could lead them to misinterpret the faces or overreact to them. Unfortunately, when we do this, it can lead us to withdraw socially. So next time you're feeling sensitive in this way, it's probably time for a nap.

ISTOCKPHOTO.COM/GUVENDEMIR

Mental Illness Affects Blood Pressure

According to a study from Australian and Malaysian researchers published in *BioMedical Engineering*, paying attention to your mental health is important for your heart health, too. The researchers found that people with anxiety, depression and panic disorders show greater blood pressure variations during the day, and their blood pressure doesn't drop the usual 10 to 20 per cent at night to allow their heart to rest. These abnormal blood pressure fluctuations can lead to heart disease and organ damage.

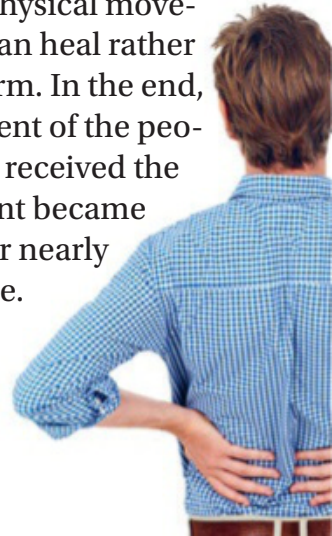


Leave Luxury Logos Behind

A University of Michigan business school study found that people who forgo displaying luxury brands and other conspicuous signs of wealth are more likely to be perceived as cooperative team players. In the study, those who appeared on social media proudly wearing such brands as Prada and Gucci—or who posted about their lavish cars, food and travel—were regarded as more self-interested and less collaborative than people whose profiles didn't showcase their status. Therefore, if your goal is to be invited onto a team or into a social circle, embrace modesty.

Change the Way You Think About Pain

How patients talk to themselves about their chronic pain can either increase or diminish their suffering, according to new research from the University of Colorado. For the study, some participants with back pain underwent eight one-hour sessions of pain reprocessing therapy (PRT), a method that helps patients to parse the difference between pain hurting and causing harm. They then learn to replace the negative message that pain is dangerous, which immobilizes them and worsens symptoms, with the positive message that pain can be okay—and gentle physical movements can heal rather than harm. In the end, 66 per cent of the people who received the treatment became totally or nearly pain-free.



Women Benefit Most From Personalized Dementia Prevention

After age, gender is the most important risk factor for developing Alzheimer's disease: two out of three patients are women. Although scientists have long thought this was the case because women tend to live longer than men, a *Neurology* study suggests sharp declines in estrogen levels during and after menopause are another key risk factor.

Thankfully, according to a study published in the *Journal of Prevention of Alzheimer's Disease*, personalized prevention programs focused on lifestyle changes—such as healthy eating, exercise and lowering stress—are especially effective for women.

While women and men in the study improved in thinking, memory and judgment equally over 18 months, participation in the personalized programs led to greater reductions for women in overall heart disease risk and blood biomarkers. (Preventing heart disease and diabetes are key ways to decrease dementia risk.)

This builds on previous research showing that regular exercise is even more beneficial for women, with moderate physical activity—such as brisk walking—improving cognition by 14 per cent in women and five per cent in men.

It's not yet known why women respond better to personalized prevention programs, but the evidence is clear: for women, initiating and maintaining a healthy lifestyle before and during mid-life has a big impact on brain health.



Tailor Vitamin C Intake to Your Weight

For your vitamin C regimen, it's best to take your weight into account. New Zealand researchers recommend a 60-kilogram person consume 110 milligrams of vitamin C per day through a balanced diet, while someone weighing 90 kilograms needs an extra 30 milligrams to achieve their optimal dose of 140 milligrams a day.

Brisk Walking Slows Biological Aging

A British study of over 400,000 adults found that fast walkers—with a walking pace of more than 6.4 kilometres per hour—could be expected to live about 16 years longer than slow walkers.



MEDICAL MYSTERY

Cycle of Agony

*Doctors dismissed
her monthly suffering
as period pain*

BY Sydney Loney

ILLUSTRATION BY VICTOR WONG

NIRVANIE DYAL HAD always had painful periods. The now 41-year-old accountant recalls how, in university, her friends would bring her heating pads to help her feel better. Some days she could barely make it to class. Dyal went to a doctor who told her it was “just period pain” and put her on the birth control pill to stop her menstrual cycle. But because Dyal has a family history of breast cancer and studies show a potential link



between the disease and oral contraceptives, it wasn't a permanent fix.

In 2017, after Dyal had been on the pill for 10 years, her family doctor in Toronto told her it was time to stop. She did—and the pain returned. Every 21 days, Dyal would spend hours curled up in the fetal position, hugging her abdomen. “It felt like someone was cutting my insides with a knife,” she says. Over-the-counter medication did nothing to relieve the pain. Nor did herbal teas and other naturopathic remedies. The only thing that seemed to help was a warm bath.

Over the next two years, the pain worsened. It became so intense that

Dyal had to schedule her life around her period, knowing that for four days every month, she couldn't make any plans and had to take time off work. And with the pain came bloating. In 2019, Dyal was determined to attend a friend's wedding but felt too uncomfortable to enjoy herself. "I looked like I was four months pregnant." A physical exam with a gynecologist didn't yield any answers. Once again, the pain was attributed to her menstrual cycle.

WITH THE PAIN CAME UNCOMFORTABLE BLOATING. "I LOOKED LIKE I WAS FOUR MONTHS PREGNANT."



By the spring of 2020, the bloating had stopped dissipating when her period did. Then the pain spread to her back. She also found she could eat only small amounts before she felt full. Her doctor sent her for an ultrasound. "They're not allowed to tell you anything, but the technician looked scared," Dyal says. "She left to get her supervisor."

The ultrasound revealed that Dyal had ascites, a buildup of fluid in the abdomen. She was sent to the ER, where doctors "tapped" her stomach, inserting a long needle and removing a litre of dark brown fluid. "I was lying there watching it happen, and I was so

scared," she says. "It was surreal." She was told it could be cancer, or maybe an infection in her liver. Given her family history of cancer, she was terrified.

Dyal was discharged but returned the next day for more tests, including another ultrasound and a CT scan. She remained in the hospital for four days, but doctors couldn't figure out what was wrong. Ascites is most often associated with cirrhosis (scarring) of the liver, heart failure or cancer. Lab tests found only that the fluid was "hemorrhagic," or bloody. Dyal was referred to a liver oncologist, who ruled out cancer; a rheumatologist, who ruled out Crohn's; and a gastroenterologist, who used an endoscope to explore her stomach but couldn't find anything amiss.


By now Dyal, who was unmarried, was worried about her fertility and tried freezing her eggs, but due to all the fluid, doctors were able to retrieve only one. She froze it anyway. In November 2020, she underwent an exploratory surgery, and doctors discovered that once again her abdomen was full of bloody fluid. She also had tea-coloured patches of tissue on her liver, colon and inside the lining of her stomach. The surgical team suspected the test ruling out cancer may have been wrong, or that it was an infection. They biopsied several of the patches and were surprised when the lab results came back positive for endometriosis. Dyal was referred to one of the gynecology teams at Mount Sinai Hospital in Toronto.

Endometriosis is a condition in which tissue similar to that normally lining the uterus begins growing outside of it. Prevalent in roughly 10 per cent of Canadian women, it can typically take around seven years or longer for patients to be diagnosed because it is so often dismissed as “normal” period pain. Pain during the menstrual cycle is the most common symptom; fluid buildup is not. After the surgery, the fluid in Dyal’s abdomen continued to accumulate. “I couldn’t lie down because the pressure made it hard to breathe,” she says. “I had to prop myself up on pillows to sleep.”

Not long after that, Dr. Meghan McGrattan, an advanced gynecologic surgery fellow at Mount Sinai, removed almost three litres of fluid from Dyal’s abdomen. In the dozens of patients she’d tapped over the years, McGrattan had never seen ascites associated with endometriosis. She did some research and discovered that cases like Dyal’s are rare. Only about 127 endometriosis patients worldwide have presented with the same fluid buildup. “Endometriosis is not a well-understood cause of ascites, but we are continuing to learn

more about it,” says McGrattan. “If you don’t know to look for it, you won’t find it.” McGrattan hopes the discovery helps ensure women like Dyal won’t have to wait years for a diagnosis.

10 PER CENT OF WOMEN WILL HAVE ENDOMETRIOSIS—AND IT CAN TAKE YEARS TO GET A DIAGNOSIS.

Doctors are still working toward determining an exact cause of endometriosis and finding a definitive cure, but there are medications that keep the pain at bay. These medications can also increase fertility. “We counsel patients that it’s a chronic disease and that the treatment goal is to help them feel as well as possible,” McGrattan says. When Dyal learned that the lab test confirmed she had endometriosis, not cancer, she felt only relief. “I wish I could go back and tell my younger self that it isn’t normal to be in that much pain,” she says. “I might have pushed harder.” 



Phantastic Philosophy

Halloween wraps fear in innocence, as if it were a slightly sour sweet.

NICHOLAS GORDON, POET

A mask tells us more than a face.

OSCAR WILDE

THE 2022 READER'S DIGEST

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Remaining 2022 Winner: **Ford** (Pickup Truck category)



HOW TO

BY Sydney Loney

PHOTOGRAPH BY
NIKKI ORMEROD

Scientific breakthroughs are now helping to **PREVENT** the disease, and even put it into remission

BEAT

BETES

IN 2005, SUJAY NAZARETH,

a 25-year-old IT technician in Delta, B.C., suddenly felt thirsty all the time. He began losing weight without trying, and he was tired no matter how much sleep he got. Nazareth described his issues to his doctor, who ordered a blood test. The test revealed he had type 2 diabetes. But it wasn't a diagnosis he wanted to deal with, so he didn't.

"I felt a lot of fear and confusion, so for the first nine years, I just hid from it," he says. "I took my medication and tried to give up sugary things, like pop, but I wasn't as careful as I should have been." Nazareth also avoided doing the bloodwork his doctor routinely asked for because he was pretty sure the results wouldn't be good. It wasn't until his daughter was born in 2016 that he decided it was finally time to tackle his disease. "I realized that I wanted to be around for her," he says. "It just struck me, like okay, I need to smarten up now and start taking care of myself." He only wishes he'd started sooner.

A type 2 diabetes diagnosis means your body isn't producing enough insulin (the hormone that controls the

amount of sugar in your blood) or isn't able to use the insulin that it produces. Too much sugar in your bloodstream puts your organs, nerves and blood vessels at risk and, left untreated, can lead to everything from heart and kidney disease to blindness and nerve damage that can result in limb amputation. Diabetes can reduce your lifespan by anywhere from five to 15 years.

Rates of the disease are rising in Canada—11.7 million of us currently have diabetes or prediabetes, largely because we're living longer and are increasingly more sedentary. "The primary cause of type 2 diabetes is the natural aging process," says Dr. Tom Elliott, medical director at BCDiabetes in Vancouver. "As you get older, your hair goes grey, your skin wrinkles and your cells don't reproduce as quickly, including the beta cells that make your insulin."

Still, a diabetes diagnosis isn't as dire as it was even five years ago. Thanks to new treatments and technology, not to mention the promise of additional breakthroughs on the horizon, many specialists who treat the disease believe we may soon have the science to beat diabetes.

WHO GETS DIABETES?

You have a higher risk of developing diabetes before you reach senior citizen status if you are more than 40 years old, are overweight, smoke, aren't physically

active, have high blood pressure or have a family history of the disease (especially a parent or sibling). Because you can have type 2 diabetes without showing any signs or symptoms—and because making certain lifestyle changes might help prevent you from developing the disease in the first place—the Public Health Agency of Canada and the Canadian Task Force on Preventive Health Care created an online calculator where you input everything from your body mass index (BMI) to your exercise habits to help you identify your odds of becoming diabetic.

“Once you know your risk, then you can make changes, control your blood sugar levels and avoid the dreaded long-term complications that come with diabetes,” Elliott says. In addition to lifestyle changes, there are several new medications on the market that can help control weight and keep your blood sugar in check.

As with so many diseases, the sooner you discover that you’re sick, the better your treatment options will be. The most common symptoms of diabetes include increased thirst, feeling weak and tired, blurry vision, frequent urination, sudden unexplained weight loss and slow-healing sores. After following over 27,000 people for up to 11 years, Japanese researchers published a study in 2018 that found you might show early warning signs, including a high BMI and insulin resistance,

up to 10 years before receiving a diabetes diagnosis—all the more reason not to skip routine checkups.

PREVENTION POSSIBILITIES

Almost 6 million Canadians have prediabetes, which means that your blood sugar levels are higher than normal, just not high enough to give you a full-blown diabetes diagnosis.

Not every patient with prediabetes progresses to type 2, although most will if no intervention is made, says Dr. Tamara Spaic, an endocrinologist at St. Joseph’s Health Care in London, Ontario. “We know that through diet, exercise and weight loss, you can actually prevent diabetes from developing.” Studies show that 150 minutes of exercise



Digital sessions with a personal health coach

each week divided over five days can reduce your risk by as much as 60 per cent. Even though it isn't easy, the fact you can have that much control over your health and change the outcome is good news, Spaic adds.

To help patients with prediabetes navigate the lifestyle changes necessary to prevent the disease from progressing further, Diabetes Canada launched the Canadian Diabetes Prevention Program. Dr. Harpreet Bajaj, director of late-phase research at LMC Healthcare in Toronto, is the study's principal investigator and began recruiting participants three years ago to explore the effect that 12 months of one-on-one digital sessions with a personal health coach—such as a dietitian—might have on patients with prediabetes or who are at risk for type 2 diabetes (the results will be released in 2023).

The Canadian Diabetes Prevention Program is modelled after a similar initiative in the United States that led to a 58 per cent reduction in prediabetic participants developing type 2 diabetes. “We’re hoping to find something similar,” Bajaj says.

Peter Lang, a retired math teacher in Cobourg, Ont., is one of the study's participants. Lang, who is 74, was diagnosed with prediabetes four years ago. The program, he says, has taught him which foods to avoid—including white rice, cheese (with the exception of cottage cheese), and bananas, which get higher in

sugar the more they ripen. He's also learned how to keep his stress levels down by taking walks and getting exercise. “It hasn't been that hard to make changes. You just get into a routine,” he says. “My wife started doing it with me. We go to the basement after breakfast to do weights for half an hour, and now I walk for about two hours a day.” Lang's 12 months in the program are almost up, but he's already down to his target blood sugar level—and holding.

LIFESTYLE CHANGES

Once Nazareth decided to do something about his diabetes, he began seeing an endocrinologist. But by then, even dramatically adjusting his lifestyle wasn't going to be enough to get his blood sugar under control. Not only did he need insulin injections, he had also

Low-calorie, low-carb and high-protein foods



ISTOCKPHOTO.COM/RYZHKOV

developed diabetic retinopathy, caused by damage to blood vessels in the retina, that required monthly injections of corticosteroids into his eyes to prevent serious vision problems, including blindness.

Still, in addition to his medication, he worked hard at shutting down his sugar intake and increasing his physical activity. He cut down on empty carbs, like white bread, switched to Coca-Cola Zero, reduced his consumption of junk food and began walking every day. “During this time I was also diagnosed with an autoimmune condition,” he says. “And it got me thinking. I can’t control my autoimmune condition, but I can control my diabetes.”

Weight loss has always played a major role in controlling diabetes, and new research suggests it may be even more important than controlling blood sugar. Last year, an international panel of diabetes experts published a paper in *The Lancet* recommending that physicians shift their focus to weight first, blood sugar second. (The researchers found that dropping 15 per cent of a person’s body weight was more beneficial than lowering their glucose.)

While there are new medications that can help patients with diabetes lose weight, Canadian researchers have also been exploring how diet change might help put the disease into remission. In 2021, researchers from the University of

British Columbia found that after just 12 weeks of following a meal plan of low-calorie, low-carb and high-protein foods, more than one third of the 188 participants with type 2 diabetes no longer needed medication.

“For the longest time, diabetes was considered a chronic inevitability, a disease that would progress and cause serious complications no matter what we did,” says Spaic. “Now we think we can put people into remission, akin to what is done in cancer care.”

NEW DRUGS

Spaic is involved in some of the latest diabetes remission research, which involves treating the disease aggressively from the outset, as opposed to the conventional approach of starting patients off with a few lifestyle



changes—less sugar, more exercise, reduced stress—and waiting to see what happens to their blood sugar as a result. These so-called REMIT studies are designed to propel people with type 2 diabetes into remission.

Patients are treated with glucose-lowering medications, or the same medications combined with insulin, on top of intensive lifestyle changes, such as adopting a strict low-calorie diet. “We hope that after this intensive interven-

New Hope for TYPE 1 DIABETES

Type 1 diabetes is an autoimmune disease in which the pancreas is unable to produce insulin. Once called juvenile diabetes, because it usually develops in children and teens, the disease can surface at any age. As with type 2 diabetes, studies identifying new genes and research experimenting with stem cells show promise when it comes to treating, and maybe one day curing, type 1 diabetes. The most exciting recent development for people with type 1 diabetes is the arrival of the artificial pancreas in Canada, which combines a continuous glucose monitoring (CGM) device with an insulin pump that automatically delivers insulin to a patient based on their blood sugar levels.

tion, for at least three months, patients will have completely normal blood sugar levels without any need for medication,” Spaic says. While her own research is ongoing, other similar studies are showing a lot of promise.

Although a combination of weight loss, diet and exercise will always be at the core of diabetes care, Spaic says that some of the newer classes of drugs that have been approved by Health Canada in the last five years are having a major impact on treatment because they do more than just lower glucose. One class—called GLP 1 receptor agonists—helps with weight loss, while another—SGLT2 inhibitors—reduces the risk of heart and kidney disease.

“People with diabetes don’t die from high sugar levels. They die from cardiovascular diseases,” Spaic says, explaining that about two out of every three patients in coronary units have diabetes, while two out of five patients in dialysis units have it. “To be able to give patients a medication that will decrease their risk of heart and kidney disease by 20 to 30 per cent is huge.”

NEW TECH

Thanks to these new classes of diabetes medications, Nazareth no longer takes insulin and is down to a weekly injection of a GLP 1 receptor agonist that lowers his blood sugar and helps with weight control by suppressing his appetite. He also tracks his blood sugar



GLP 1 receptor
agonists

with a continuous glucose monitor (CGM), another relatively recent development in the world of diabetes management that is still evolving.

A CGM is a small wearable device with a toonie-sized sensor attached to a tiny needle that penetrates the top layer of your skin and tests your blood sugar levels every few minutes, then sends the reading to a separate receiving device, like a smartphone.

“CGMs are something I would never have dreamed possible when I was first diagnosed,” Nazareth says. The readings let him know if he needs to adjust his medications, activity level or food intake—all in real time.

Elliott says CGMs have, thankfully, almost made the old “finger poke”

method for testing blood glucose a thing of the past. CGM devices are accurate and reliable, although the sensors last only 10 to 14 days, and they are expensive. Not all provinces cover them. (Elliott successfully lobbied to get them covered by BC Pharmacare in 2021.)

“All of a sudden, you’ve got a device that tells you immediately if you made a good dietary choice. It shows you what happens if you exercise, and it shows you what happens if you get into a fight with your partner,” he says. “Just like that, we’ve got the key to the kinds of behaviour modification that each person with diabetes needs to do.”

New CGM models—smaller and even more accurate—will be arriving on the market in the next year or two, Elliott says.

NEXT STEPS

It costs the Canadian health care system about \$30 billion a year to treat people with diabetes, which may explain why the government invested more than \$15 million in diabetes research in 2021. But all the new research into new treatments and tools won’t make a difference if diabetes patients can’t access or afford them. Laura Syron, Diabetes Canada’s president and CEO (who was diagnosed with type 2 diabetes in 2017), pushed for a Canada-wide framework in a bill that was made law last year.

"We have a national strategy for cancer and one for mental health, but we didn't have one for diabetes." The framework will help turn the patchwork of programs across the country into a single unified network that can share information and best practices when it comes to everything from prevention and quality of care for patients to ensuring Canadians get equal access to the latest treatments.

Next, her goal is to change the conversation around the disease. Syron is tired of how diabetes is portrayed in the media, and that when the disease is mentioned in a newscast, the camera inevitably cuts to a shot of an overweight person eating ice cream. There is a persistent, misguided perception that if you have diabetes, it's your fault, she says. Syron would like to see greater compassion for people with the disease and more widespread understanding that there are multiple factors that cause it.

"When I was diagnosed, I felt like I'd failed, like I'd eaten too many french fries," Syron says. "I stigmatized myself." Over the years, reactions to her disease have ranged from apathy ("You're lucky it's not something worse") to blame ("You brought this on yourself").

"It's an exhausting disease, a constant worry where you can never stop monitoring yourself," Syron says. "But just 100 years ago, a diabetes diagnosis was a death sentence. When insulin was discovered, it was a huge leap forward, but since then we've seen only incremental changes—until now."

Lately it seems as though every month a new diabetes study is released, many of them Canadian. In January, a new clinical trial from researchers at the University of Alberta found that insulin-producing cells grown from stem cells can be safely implanted into the abdominal wall of a patient with diabetes. It was a small trial, but 35 per cent of the patients who received the credit card-sized implants showed signs of insulin production in their blood within six months of the implant, and 63 per cent showed signs of insulin production a year later.

All of this momentum, from investment to research, gives diabetes doctors hope that someday there will be a cure. "That's something that we have to continue to strive for," Spaic says. "Every generation likes to say we will have one in 10 to 15 years, but considering how today's diabetes research is expanding our understanding so exponentially, I'm sure that cure will come." **R**



Fine Distinction

When you start the game, they don't say "Work ball!" They say, "Play ball!"

WILLIE STARGELL, FORMER PITTSBURGH PIRATE

LAUGHTER
THE BEST MEDICINE

I'm not one to let people off the hook, except maybe the ones who get too close when I'm casting.

—[@JUSTMEBUTNOTI](#)

Passwords are like underwear. Don't share them, hide them under your keyboard or hang them from your monitor. Above all, change them frequently.

—[GCFL.NET](#)

Conversion Fail

An inchworm is just a centipede that didn't

make the switch to the metric system.

—[@A_SIMPL_MAN](#)

The four seasons are depression, allergies, tomatoes and spooky.

—[@MOLLYFITZ](#)

Tupperware Thief

If you rob a container store, does that count as organized crime?

—[@EMILY_MURNANE](#)

Soup Savings

I've started investing in stocks, mainly beef, chicken and vegetables.

One day I hope to be a bouillonnaire.

—[@DOCATCDI](#)

Outdoor Bird

A free-range chicken is easy to spot due to its backpack and rugged little hiking boots.

—[@SONICTYRANT](#)

The man at the tuxedo store kept hovering around me, so I asked him to leave me alone. He said, "Fine, suit yourself."

—[REDDIT.COM](#)

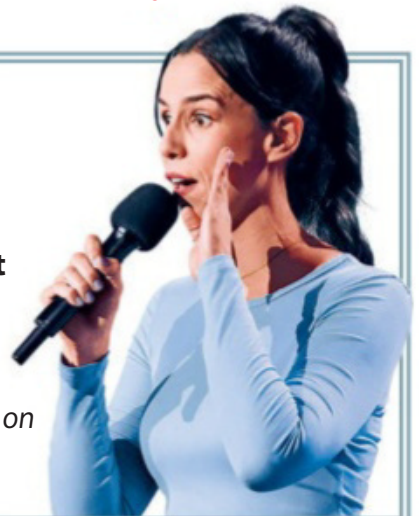
Send us your original jokes! You could earn \$50 and be featured in the magazine. See page 6 or [rd.ca/joke](#) for details.

THE BEST JOKE I EVER TOLD

By Allie Pearse

As a vegetarian, I hate when people order meat and turn to me and say, "Sorry!" Why are you saying sorry to me? Am I next?

Allie Pearse is a Toronto stand-up comedian and writer on Letterkenny. Follow her on Instagram, [@allie_pearse](#).





DRAMA IN REAL LIFE



When his boat struck a reef and
sank into the Caribbean, Don Cavers
jumped onto a life raft and watched
as the ocean carried him away



A D

BY Gary Stephen Ross

ILLUSTRATIONS BY STEVEN P. HUGHES

READER'S DIGEST

R I F T



A T
F I R S T
G L A N C E ,

it seemed like a good deal: a 12-metre Ericson 38-200 sailboat for US\$45,000. Named *Starlight II*, the boat was moored at the Puerto Velero marina near Barranquilla on the Colombian coast. Don Cavers, then 76, bought it in early 2021, intending to fly from his home near Shuswap Lake in the British Columbia interior and test it out. The pandemic made that impossible, so he didn't actually see the boat until he arrived in Colombia in November. It was more weathered and rusted than he'd imagined, but his life of adventure, sailing and farming had made him a jack of all trades, able to fix almost anything.

Cavers and his stepson, Omar Gaitan-Burns, planned to sail *Starlight* 1,200 kilometres to Puerto Rico. There, Cavers would meet up with other family members. They'd all sail around the British Virgin Islands for a couple of weeks before the others returned home and he carried on to Miami. If he chose not to keep the boat, he thought he

could probably sell it in Florida for more than he'd paid.

Cavers and Gaitan-Burns set sail from Colombia in late November. Things went smoothly until, two days later, halfway to Puerto Rico, *Starlight's* electrical system failed: no light, no GPS, no auto-navigation, no way to charge devices. Cavers was unperturbed but Gaitan-Burns, alarmed, his phone almost out of juice, sent emergency emails to Cavers's daughter, Annelise Grube-Cavers, in B.C., saying they had no power and needed help. She contacted the Colombian coast guard and gave them *Starlight's* coordinates. A vessel soon found the boat and accompanied it back to the marina for repairs.

At the marina, it took Cavers a week to find and install a new alternator (which turns mechanical energy into electricity). Gaitan-Burns had to head off to a wedding, so this time Cavers set sail on his own. Heading north at nightfall, into wind and heavy waves, he made

steady progress. The next day, changing course to the east, he noticed that the boat was moving sluggishly through the heavy, rolling, four-metre seas.

Donning his headlamp and checking below, he saw why: salt water was sloshing back and forth on the floor. Each time a wave broke across the deck, water sprayed down through the closed hatches—the seals needed replacing. The maps and papers he'd laid out were a sodden mess. The bilge pump had failed, so the sea water had nowhere to drain.

This wasn't going to be much fun. Bucket in hand, Cavers braced his lower back against the hull and began to bail. Waves pummelled the boat as it headed north on autopilot. It was like trying to stay on a bucking bronco. By the time the water was mostly bailed, he'd badly scraped his lower back and buttocks.

The next day, the electrical system failed again. Bummed out and exhausted, he felt a surge of adrenaline. Without auto-navigation, he had to hand-steer through the wind and cresting seas. The problem was how to keep his hands on the wheel as the boat rolled and pitched. Some 16 or 18 hours passed. When exhaustion overtook him, he hove to—set the foresail and mainsail in opposition to each other—to stall the boat. That let him doze off for a time before his head bobbed, jerking him awake. *Steer the boat! If it capsizes, game over.*

As the waves subsided to two metres or so, Cavers realized his mainsail was damaged. He went below deck and managed to get the autopilot working again. Everything was covered in salt, including Cavers himself. Every surface was conductive, and as he tinkered he kept getting jolted by the 12-volt battery system. It was like touching a horse fence, except you didn't know when it was coming.

SOMETIME THAT NIGHT, CAVERS WAS STARTLED AWAKE WHEN STARLIGHT STRUCK A REEF.

On day four aboard the disabled yacht, the weather calmer now, Cavers passed within sight of a fishing boat. He waved and hailed it on his handheld VHF radio. He had enough Spanish to make his plight known—"No power, I need a location!" Maritime law obliges every captain to help any boat or seaman in distress, but the crew ignored him—likely fishing illegally and worried about revealing their location. Half an hour later, it happened again with another boat. Angry and disheartened, he went below and fell into an exhausted sleep.

Sometime that night, Cavers was startled awake when *Starlight* struck a

reef. He did a quick inspection as the boat rocked and rose and crashed down again. Could he break free of the reef? Using an auxiliary battery, he got the motor started. Maybe, if he timed it right, he could power off just as a wave lifted the boat. He got the bow turned into the surf, but when he put the engine in gear the boat's rudder, hung up on the reef, tore a hole in the stern. Water flooded in.

IN THE RAFT, ROCKED BY THE WAVES, CAVERS THOUGHT ABOUT WHAT HE SHOULD HAVE DONE.

No choice: abandon ship. Cavers, wearing his life jacket, found his handheld VHF radio, emergency locator beacon, computer, a rain coat, flare gun and a bit of food—nacho chips and crackers. He stuffed everything into his dry bag and loaded it, along with a precious 20 litres of water, into the dinghy he'd brought along for an emergency. He also had a life raft in a clamshell case as a last resort. He set it to inflate—it was no bigger than a coffin—then tied it to the dinghy.

In the distance, he could make out a lighthouse, perhaps on a small island. Ten kilometres distant? Fifteen? Impossible to tell. He wanted to stay with the

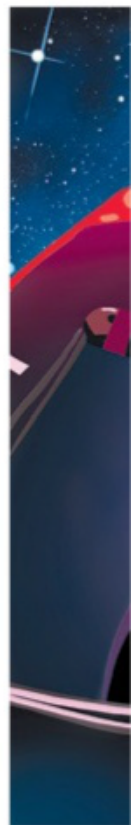
yacht and wait through the night for help, but the boat crashed about unpredictably and the anchor, loose on deck, threatened to damage the dinghy. It was too dangerous. When the dinghy line snagged on the reef, he had to transfer himself and his provisions to the life raft and cut it free. He was now at the mercy of wind and current.

In the raft, rocked by the waves, Cavers thought of what he should have done—stored his electronics in the dry bag, grabbed some canned food and put the oars in the dinghy so he could have rowed toward the lighthouse. At least he'd got hold of a bumper floating away from the wreck, which helped him get more comfortable.

Cavers was completely played out. His shorts and T-shirt were sodden and rank. His back and butt were badly abraded, but he was safe, and the night air was pleasantly warm. When he looked back to where he'd spotted the lighthouse, he could see only dark, rolling waves and the vast, starry sky.

The raft was drifting in the opposite direction.

ON AN ORGANIC FARM near Armstrong, B.C., Annelise Grube-Cavers raises livestock with her partner. Her dad had promised he'd check in each morning at 9 a.m. On his first day solo he had done so. Since then, however: nothing. She knew he had an Iridium Go, a device that



enabled global voice and data, but she wasn't sure it was working properly and he'd never been the most reliable communicator.

Now, after four days of silence, she was worried. Her dad was in good shape for his age, but he'd had a hip replacement, needed his knee replaced and was alone on an unfamiliar yacht that had previously had problems. He'd always been good at getting out of emergency situations, true, but he was also good at getting into them.

Grube-Cavers contacted an organization called Boatwatch.org, which is run by spouses Glenn and Eddie Tuttle in Florida. The Tutttles are retired FBI

agents who use their investigative skills to find overdue, missing and stolen boats. It wasn't really an emergency, Grube-Cavers said, but her father should probably have reached Puerto Rico by then. The Tutttles instructed Grube-Cavers to call the coast guard in Puerto Rico right away.

Eddie Tuttle was unequivocal: "You have to have him declared missing," she said. "Alert every possible authority" — meaning the U.S. Coast Guard in Miami, Canadian embassies in the Caribbean, emergency consular services in nearby countries, anyone who could help.

Guided by the Tutttles, Grube-Cavers became the point person for concerned



family and friends. Over the following days she spent hours at her computer and on her phone, navigating the territorial complexities that arise when someone from B.C.—presumed to be sailing from Colombia, a sovereign nation, to Puerto Rico, a U.S. protectorate, on a yacht registered in Canada—goes missing, perhaps in Cuban waters.

NINE DAYS AFTER LOSING POWER, CAVERS HAD FINALLY ACTIVATED HIS EMERGENCY BEACON.

SIX DAYS AFTER setting sail from Colombia, now adrift on the Caribbean, the weather clear and sunny, Cavers had ample time to reflect. He reminded himself that he'd been in tight spots before. He'd once suffered a compression fracture of a cervical vertebra falling off a ladder. Near-fatal amoebic dysentery as a young man travelling in Afghanistan. He'd tried to enter Cambodia just as Pol Pot took over in 1975 (a day earlier and he might not have gotten back out). Sailed up from Mexico in eerie calm and narrowly avoided hurricane-force winds. Ran into problems flying his little Murphy SR 2500 monoplane and ended up in a ditch, tangled in barbed wire, during an emergency landing.

The secret, he knew, was not to panic. One thing after another. Ration the chips and crackers. Adjust the flaps to protect against wind and water. Try to get comfortable. When he got hungry, he took a slug of water. His posterior wounds had become infected, so he kept his shorts lowered. A small bucket served sanitary purposes.

In his dry bag he found a survival manual in French, and he began journaling in the white spaces: *When you have absolutely nothing to do but wait, it makes for a long day.* Evenings passed gradually into darkness, glazed meditation into unconsciousness, night back into morning. Cavers lost track of what day it was. *Constantly playing out rescue scenarios in my mind. Not much else for it to do.*

He was drifting southwest. When a bit of debris floated by, he timed its progress. It was moving, he reckoned, at maybe three knots. The life raft was drifting more slowly. At this rate, he estimated, he might cover 25 nautical miles a day. If he was more or less where he imagined, he might wash up in southern Mexico, or perhaps Honduras, in three weeks or so.

Cavers noticed that the antenna on his locator beacon was broken. Was it sending out an emergency signal? He replaced the broken antenna with the one from his hand-held radio and noticed a button that said HOLD FOR 5 SECONDS. He tried it, but the unit didn't do anything different—or so he thought.

In fact, nine days after *Starlight* lost power, and three days after he'd taken to the raft, he'd finally activated his emergency beacon.

CAVERS'S DEVICE WAS sending a signal to a SARSAT satellite, which tagged the beacon's country of registration before relaying the signal to a rescue network on the ground. Since Cavers had a Canadian-tagged beacon, personnel at the Joint Rescue Coordination Centre in Trenton, Ont., swung into action. The JRCC deals with about 4,000 emergency alerts a year, most of them maritime incidents. They sought to establish the beacon's location and who it belonged to, and then to alert the appropriate rescue agencies. Their task was complicated by the fact that the beacon's registration hadn't been changed over from the boat's previous owner. It took them a day to track down Cavers's family in B.C. and let them know they'd received the signal—a huge relief.

Since the signal was coming from Cuban territorial waters, Trenton relayed the location to that country's coast guard. The Cubans were not especially helpful. They later claimed to have sent a vessel to the reported position but found nothing and considered the matter closed.

Trenton was also in touch with the U.S. Coast Guard in Miami. When the next day brought no news, it was time to issue an AMVER (automated mutual-assistance vessel rescue) alert,

which interrupts the radios of ships in the area of the beacon's last location.

The AMVER alert buoyed Grube-Cavers's spirits. She'd been imagining the worst. Had her father been waylaid in Colombia before even leaving? (The marina confirmed he had set sail.) Was piracy on the open seas a possibility?

Was he still alive?

GROGGY, HE REALIZED THAT A HUGE BULK CARRIER WAS BEARING DOWN ON HIS RAFT.

CAVERS'S LIFE RAFT was stabilized by a cone-shaped drogue—a sea anchor shaped like the windsock at an airfield. Because it could destabilize the raft in heavy weather, he hauled it in each evening.

On his fifth day adrift, growing weaker, he noticed minnows caught in the drogue's mesh. *Never been a big fan of sashimi*, he wrote. Six tiny fish on a soggy cracker made a meal, his first bit of protein. *Not sure I want to lose any more weight*, he thought. He took a sip of water and dozed off.

On the open sea, a ship's whistle is generally a warning to a smaller vessel to get out of the way. Jolted awake, groggy, Cavers realized that a huge bulk carrier was bearing down on his raft.



A rescued Cavers safely aboard the *Bulk Pangaea*

Having no way to evade the ship, he unzipped the raft's flap and fired up one flare, then another, and got on his radio.

"Cargo ship! Cargo ship! This is life raft from pleasure craft *Starlight*. I'm adrift."

"This is *Bulk Pangaea*," someone replied. "We see you."

"I can't get out of your way!"

"That's OK," said the crewman. "We're here to rescue you."

Overwhelmed with gratitude and relief, Cavers admired the seamanship of the Russian captain and his Filipino crew as they brought a vessel the length of two football fields to rest alongside his little orange raft. The *Bulk Pangaea*, registered in Panama, was returning empty to Jamaica after hauling bauxite to Louisiana. The captain, Vladimir

Bakhar, had answered the AMVER alert and changed course to search the location of Cavers's beacon. They'd found him between Cuba and Jamaica.

MID-AFTERNOON ON December 14, Miami Coast Guard called Annalise Grube-Cavers in B.C. to report that a freighter had responded to the AMVER alert for *Starlight*. The freighter was 16 kilometres from the beacon's last location and heading for it.

At last! Hope! But then, inevitably, came the sobering questions. Was the beacon still on the boat? Had the yacht gone down, and her dad with it? Was the beacon floating free in the Caribbean?

She didn't have to wait long for an answer. Less than two hours later,

Miami called again. “Is your father named Don Cavers?”

“Yes!”

“A merchant ship has rescued him from a life raft. He’s OK. He’s safe.”

CREW MEMBERS HAD dropped a rope ladder from the deck. Cavers didn’t realize how weak he’d become until he tried to climb it. It felt, he said later, “like climbing Mount Everest.” On board he was checked out, deemed healthy, fed a bit of chicken and gravy, and given a robe and size-10 Crocs for his size-13 feet. His infected lacerations were attended to, and then he slept.


Cavers spent three days aboard the *Bulk Pangaea* en route to Jamaica, then three more days in port confined to a room as a Covid-19 quarantine precaution. Before he disembarked, the crew gave him a handmade “Rebirth Certificate.” Finally out of quarantine, he passed through customs and was taken to Montego Bay. There he boarded a flight to Toronto, and then home to B.C.

Grube-Cavers and her brother, Tristan, met him at the airport in Kelowna. After an emotional reunion—

their dad was grizzled and seven kilograms lighter, but otherwise fine—his children drove him home.

Only later did it occur to Cavers how close he’d come to perishing. He was lucky. During his time adrift, the Caribbean had been calm. If he hadn’t happened to activate the emergency beacon and been picked up by the *Bulk Pangaea*, he could easily have become a drifting corpse. “Ninety-nine times out of 100,” Captain Jean House of the Joint Rescue Coordination Centre in Trenton told the CBC, “it would have gone the other way.”

Compared to most of us, Don Cavers is a heroic adventurer. Today, grateful to be able to play with his grandkids and tend his garden, he regrets that he didn’t properly test the boat’s systems. He regrets that he didn’t have a portable, waterproof GPS with him. He regrets inconveniencing so many people. He regrets the loss of his uninsured boat.

Mostly, he regrets the worry and grief he caused his family. “It was not a hero’s journey,” he says. “It was a fool’s journey.” 



Paper Trail

Books are a uniquely portable magic.

STEPHEN KING

Every reader exists to ensure for a book a modest immortality.

Reading is, in this sense, a ritual of rebirth.

ALBERTO MANGUEL

AS KIDS SEE IT



“Honey, do you think you could try being a little less overprotective?”

You know you’ll be subjected to many years of practical jokes when your toddler swings open your washroom door and points a pair of binoculars right at you.

— ASHLEY ASHFIELD,
Hampton, N.B.

When I was a teacher, I’d ask students to find a word in the dictionary, give the meaning and use it in a sentence. My favourite answer was: “My word is pregnant. It means carrying a child, like the fireman went

up the ladder and came down pregnant.”

— ORVILLE COLE,
Dartmouth, N.S.

We gave our grandson a fishing pole for his fourth birthday. When he opened his present

he exclaimed, “Wow! A fishing machine.”

— BONNIE HUGHES,

North Webster, Yukon

My daughter has just learned how to wiggle her eyebrows. She asked me if I could do it, so I did. Then she said, “Wow, you can do it so fast! It must be because you only have one eyebrow so it’s easier.”

—  @SHARRZEOR

I was babysitting my five-year-old granddaughter and as a treat I took her to McDonald’s to get an ice cream cone. When she finished, I asked if she enjoyed it. Her response was, “Yes, but now my tummy’s cold so I think I need fries to warm it up.”

— JOYCE HELLEWELL,

Windsor, Ont.

When my son was young, he became vegetarian for a year, and we always thought it was because of his kind heart and love of animals. He’s a teenager

My six-year-old couldn’t remember the word “tomorrow” so she called it “nexterday.”

—  @KBROUGH

now and just revealed it seemed like the only way out of eating the meatloaf they served at preschool.

— JESSICA HOLMES,

comedian

After our special Mother’s Day breakfast, I heard my three-year-old say to his sister, “Have you heard of Brother’s Day? It’s where you make your brother a really special breakfast to show him how much you love him.”

— TAMMY TSANG, *Toronto*

My son begged for a sibling for years and then it finally happened. When my daughter was one, she would pull toys out faster than we were able to put them away. I looked at her six-year-old brother and said, “What are we going to do with her?” He replied with a very serious face,

“Keep her. I worked hard to get her here!”

— SHAWNA MATHIESON,

Watson, Sask.

My seven-year-old asked if I could get him something so he could send a letter the old-fashioned way. Paper? An envelope? A stamp? No, he wanted his own email address.

—  @MOMMAJESSIEC

During a conversation with my nine-year-old granddaughter, I told her that when I was her age our house was the first on the block to have a colour TV. She asked me, “What colour was it?”

— DEBORAH BRETTELL,

Williams Lake, B.C.

Send us your original jokes! You could earn \$50 and be featured in the magazine. See page 6 or rd.ca/joke for details.

'Chansonette'



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An unlikely
friendship helped
my son grapple
with divorce,
death and...

The Great Unknown

BY Jowita Bydlowska

ILLUSTRATION BY NIKKI ERNST

THE APARTMENT MY SON, Hugo, and I moved into after my divorce was nice, but the feeling we had was of holding on to a raft amidst angry waters. We were on the west side of Toronto, about a 30-minute drive from Hugo's dad's new home. During the first week he stayed with me there, my eight-year-old son responded to the change in his life by trashing his room before finally letting tears come and allowing me to hug him.

At that time, he also developed a new fear—the fear of death. “I can’t sleep. I am thinking about death,” he would say when I would catch him with his eyes wide open, in the darkness of his bedroom, his little body tightly surrounded by a cordon of beady-eyed stuffies.

Hugo had always considered himself an atheist, ever since his dad had told him at age four that God, like Santa, wasn't real—and that when we die, we turn to dust. For Hugo, it had been just something to say to make adults laugh and confuse his innocent buddies in kindergarten. But now that he was growing up, he was finally grasping the concept of time, and that he was slowly but surely moving toward the big unknown. But I think his fear of death also came about because nothing seemed certain anymore: our little family was no longer a unit, and our lives were divided into split-custody homes. When the nights got too hard for Hugo, we'd fall asleep holding on to each other like two monkeys, all the unknowns stayed away for one more night.

THAT SAME YEAR, I'd started going to a new addictions group that met twice a week. The group was a safe place where no hard topic was off the table. The best conversations would often happen after our meetings were over, and my favorite person to talk to was Denis, an 80-year-old contrarian and cancer survivor who was considered by everyone else in the group to be a grump. At the end of each meeting, we were supposed to stand up and hold hands. I would do this even though it made me uncomfortable—I disliked the forced intimacy of it—but Denis refused. Like a broken link in a circle, he stood there with his

hands folded, and it was this little rebellion that made me trust him. He was one of the first people I confided in about my divorce. His pragmatic response and lack of sentimentality—"It sucks now, but it will get better"—helped me gain perspective on my grief. I knew that Denis himself had gone through many hardships, his recent cancer being one, and yet he had a healthy, no-nonsense attitude that inspired me.

MY SON HAD BEEN AN ATHEIST EVER SINCE HIS DAD TOLD HIM AT AGE FOUR THAT GOD DIDN'T EXIST.

I was not the only person taken with Denis—my son became an instant fan when they met at a celebration of my one year of sobriety. As we socialized while balancing our slices of cake on flimsy Styrofoam plates, Hugo was polite and charming, but he felt the adults were talking down to him and he was squirming to leave. That is, until Denis introduced himself, shaking his hand and asking Hugo what he thought about the "bad cake." Hugo said he thought the cake was just fine and then pressed Denis about why he didn't hold hands at the end of the group meetings, a detail I'd shared with Hugo.

"I'm not in kindergarten," Denis said, and my son chuckled. Then they talked about being atheists, because Denis remembered from my stories about my precocious kid that this was something they had in common. He told Hugo that he'd never met an eight-year-old atheist before.

HUGO WONDERED
IF DENIS WAS GOING
TO DIE AND I TOLD
HIM HE WAS.
"SOON?" HE ASKED.

"I've never met an 80-year-old atheist before," Hugo deadpanned, and Denis erupted in laughter. From that time on, the two would ask for updates on each other ("Denis got a new camera to take his bird-watching to the next level"; "Hugo has finished all the Harry Potters."). The updates included, eventually, a devastating one when Denis's cancer came back.

I explained to Hugo that his octogenarian buddy was staying at the Princess Margaret Cancer Centre now, and said I was going to visit.

"Is he going to die?" Hugo asked.

"Yes," I told him.

"Soon?"

"Sooner rather than later. Before the summer is over," I answered. I spoke gently but firmly, feeling my throat

clenching a bit as I held back tears. Maybe I was harsh, but I had a vague notion of wanting to teach my son about death, of showing him that death, like friendship (or love that ends in a divorce), was part of life. I hoped that, by nurturing a relationship between Denis and Hugo, I could normalize this terrifying thing for my kid, who still worried about his own end.

Hugo's big brown eyes searched my face, his forehead scrunching as he said quietly, "Okay. Can I visit him?"

And so he did. On our way to Princess Margaret's, Hugo insisted on getting a gift. What do you get a grumpy old man whose only request was, at its most extravagant, a Tim Hortons coffee, black? A sparkly Beanie Baby dragon, of course—the perfect gift, we joked, for someone with such a sparkly demeanour. Denis was amused and proudly displayed the dragon next to a stuffed elf someone else had given to him, also as a joke. He let Hugo have his hospital pudding. We went into the common room and played the card game Up and Down the River, with Hugo writing down scores on a sheet of paper. He's always loved numbers and charts and strategy.

"We should play chess," Denis said. "Do you play chess?"

"No, but you can teach me," Hugo allowed.

Denis pretended to be appalled, "If I have to," he said. "What kind of person doesn't play chess?"

I SET UP visits with Denis every Sunday, always bringing my son with me. We ate Tim Hortons while they played chess, and we talked about Denis's wild adventures as a farm labourer in Alberta before he became a lawyer in his 50s, "just to see what that was like." Denis never talked about his cancer, but Hugo had said more than once that maybe they—the doctors—had made a mistake. Denis seemed totally fine!

AS DENIS'S HEALTH DETERIORATED, WE STUCK TO HIS ROOM, WHERE HE AND HUGO PLAYED CHESS.

Except he wasn't. He'd long walked with a cane, but that gave way to a walker, which then became a wheelchair. Eventually, Denis was moved to Hennick Bridgepoint Hospital for palliative care. Hugo's only comment on the new location, which he called the "dying hospital," was that it didn't seem like anyone was dying in it. Compared to Princess Margaret's, which was surrounded by the concrete of the downtown and filled with fragile people in hospital gowns, Bridgepoint was bright and clean and not depressing at all. From Denis's windows, we could view a sprawling hill of trees and bushes, grounds dotted with fountains,

and the wide, murky Don River. On our first visit there, Denis pointed out that the Don Jail shared the parking lot with the facilities—and told Hugo a morbid tale about the last execution there in 1962, of two men by hanging, one of whom maintained his innocence until the end. "It's all haunted up there," he added casually, and laughed when Hugo's eyes went wide.

Once, when feeling particularly sparkly, Denis convinced us to head out for tacos at a cheap street-food joint a 10-minute walk away that took us half an hour when he allowed Hugo to push him all the way there. It wasn't an easy task, as the wheelchair kept getting jammed in the crevices of the streetcar rails. Denis felt proud of being able to treat us, and my kid put on a show of pretending to dine as if in a fine restaurant, bending his plastic utensils in ridiculous ways as he tried to cut up the tacos.


AS DENIS'S HEALTH deteriorated, we'd sometimes only make it to the hospital's rooftop patio, or stick to Denis's room, where they'd play chess.

Throughout all this time, we didn't talk about his illness or the fact that he was going to soon die or what it all meant. But eventually we had to deal with the issue of our last visit—the one when saying goodbye would mean saying goodbye for good. Hugo and I were scheduled to go to Europe for the rest of the summer, and we came by

with some coffee and then went up onto the roof, where it was so windy that the chess pieces kept falling over. Afterwards, Hugo pushed Denis down the long, bright hallways, running at some points and making one wild turn that caused Denis to huff loudly. Hugo kept forgetting that his friend was so fragile, and Denis didn't have the heart to reprimand him. We dropped him off in his room, and it was the first and the last time we hugged, stiffly—Denis's disdain for physical contact taking a back seat to this sweet, awkward moment.

And then we left. Hugo cried on the streetcar.

WHILE WE WERE AWAY, A RELATIVE OF DENIS'S CALLED TO TELL US HE ONLY HAD DAYS, OR HOURS LEFT.




A month later, a relative of Denis's called me while Hugo and I were on the Adriatic coast, the shimmering sea visible from the windows of our villa as I took the call. He had only days, maybe hours, left, they told us. He could no longer speak. After hanging up, Hugo and I decided we would record a voice mail for him. "What should I say?" Hugo wondered.

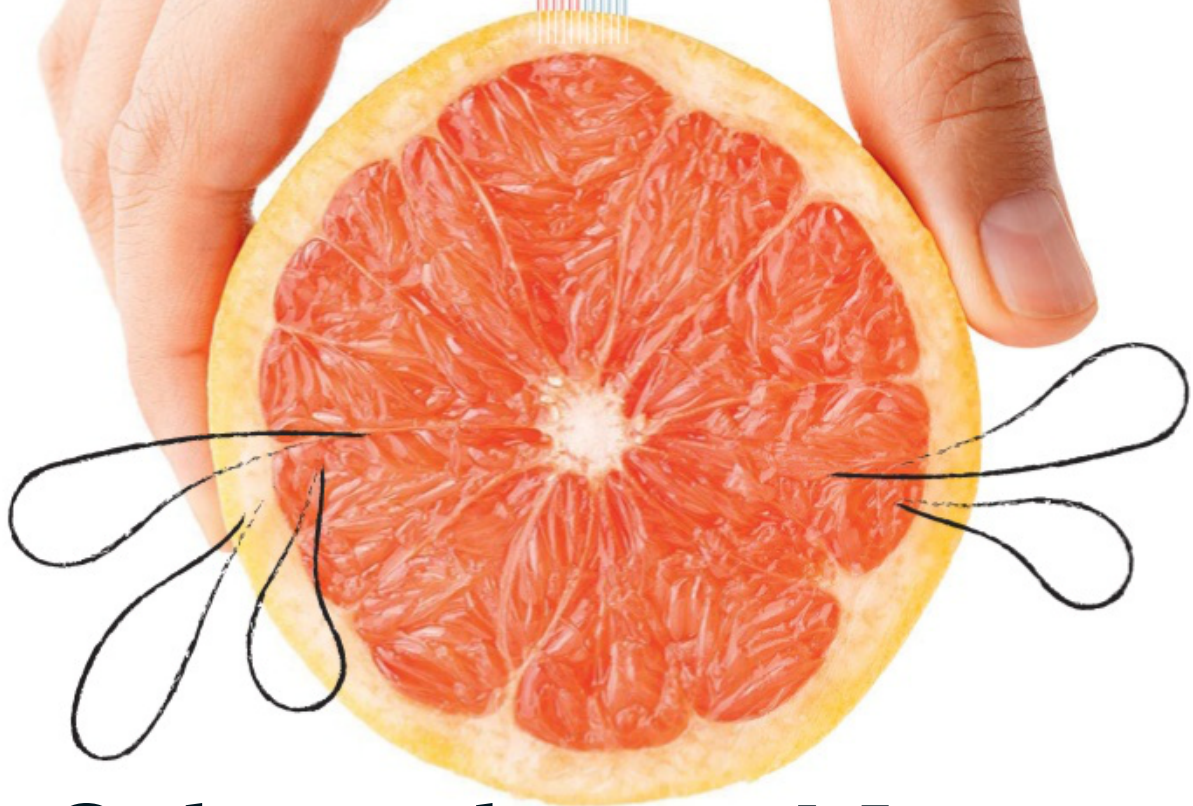
"What do you want to say?"

"I don't know. Have a nice trip?" he said and laughed uneasily. After we'd left a clunky message, he added, "But he's an atheist, so he's not even going anywhere."

TWO YEARS LATER, in January of 2020, Hugo's beloved grandmother passed away, and he accepted her death stoically, quipping that he had had training in death with Denis. I don't know if my son's sleepless nights went away because of those Sunday visits, but we did settle into our new life, despite all the uncertainty. My son no longer obsesses over death, although he has admitted that he's still scared of the big unknown—but who isn't? And I'm not sure if he's an atheist anymore, either. While replacing his phone this past Christmas, I found a couple of messages sent to his grandmother's number, one reading: "Where are you?"

When I asked him about it, he said, "I was sad and I missed her. It was comforting."

Like all parents, I try to soften blows and dispel myths and monsters, and I know that with Denis, I was trying to make death less scary, give it a human face or, even more straightforwardly, help him make friends with it. I don't know if Hugo texting his grandmother is a sign of a spell being broken, but I know that he understands now that people live on after they're gone, and recognizing that is one way to make peace with the great unknown. 



Orbisculation Nation

Their dad invented
the perfect word.
After he died, they
started a quest to get
it into the dictionary.

BY Sadie Dingfelder
FROM *THE WASHINGTON POST*

IN THE EARLY AUGHTS, Hilary Krieger, now 44, was sitting in her parents' Boston home when her friend accidentally squirted himself with an orange slice. "I said, 'Oh, the orange just orbisculated,'" she recalls. "And he said, 'It did what?'" The two made a five-dollar bet, and Hilary gleefully grabbed the family dictionary. She flipped to the "O" section and stared at the spot on the page where "orbisculate" should have been: "My first thought was, What's wrong with this dictionary?"

Aghast, Hilary burst into her dad's study and told him the shocking news: "Orbisculate" was not in the dictionary!

Looking sheepish, her father confessed that he had made up the word when he was in college. He defined “orbisculate” as the action that happens “when you dig your spoon into a grapefruit and it squirts juice directly into your eye,” though the family also applied it to other fruits and vegetables that unexpectedly spritzed. “We had been using it our whole lives, as if it were a real word,” Hilary says.

Out five dollars and wondering what other fake words might be lurking in her vocabulary, Hilary was mad. But she quickly came to see her dad’s made-up word as a gift, one that encapsulated his mischievous and inventive spirit. “It speaks to his creativity and the idea that, even when something’s painful and annoying, like getting grapefruit juice in your eye, you can laugh and have fun with it,” she says.

Two decades later, Hilary told that funny story again and again, in sad circumstances. Her father, Neil Krieger, died of complications from Covid-19 in April 2020, at age 78. Since the Kriegers couldn’t have a proper funeral, Hilary, who now lives in New York, spent a lot of time on the phone talking with friends and family, and the “orbisculate” story kept coming up.

“I began to think ‘orbisculate’ is such a great word; it should be in the dictionary!” says Hilary, an editor at NBC News. She called her younger brother, Jonathan, who lives in Boston and runs an online trivia company. Together they

hatched an elaborate plan to get the word officially recognized.

THE SIBLINGS’ GOAL is to put the word to use publicly enough that it has a chance of becoming legitimate. Getting a word into the dictionary isn’t easy, but the Kriegers’ 78-point plan, as described on their website, orbisculate.com, is spot-on. Encouraging people to use “orbisculate” in a wide variety of contexts, such as in comic strips, news stories and the name of a Ben & Jerry’s sorbet flavour, will leave a compelling trail of evidence for lexicographers to follow.

Merriam-Webster adds about 1,000 new words to its master database every year, words that then trickle down to the company’s print and online dictionaries. The batch of new words the company released in January 2021 was heavy on pandemic-related vocabulary such as “long-hauler” and “pod.”

Editors at the dictionary’s whisperquiet office in Springfield, Massachusetts, scour newspapers, academic journals, books and even cartoon captions for new words. “What we’re looking for is usage in publications with a large and broad readership,” says senior editor Emily Brewster.

Brewster and her colleagues generally track words for years or even decades before nominating them for dictionary status. This ensures that flash-in-the-pan coinages—think Will Smith’s use of “jiggy,” to mean trendy

(briefly popular in the '90s)—can't sneak in. But if a word really takes off, it can quickly become official. "The word that has the record for most quickly entering the dictionary is Covid-19, at 34 days," Brewster says. "The term before that was AIDS."

In addition to diseases, words describing concrete phenomena that affect many people tend to get picked up. "That's one of the things 'orbisculate' has going for it—there is no single word that captures the squirting in the eye that certain fruits do," she says.

If the Kriegers accomplish all of the goals they outline on their website, "The word's status as an established member of the English language would be pretty irrefutable," Brewster says.

But to make it all happen, they need help from friends and strangers.


EVEN IF THEY don't succeed in getting the word added to the dictionary, the Kriegers' project may still help buffer them against some of the feelings of despair and hopelessness that have struck many families who have lost loved ones to Covid-19, says psychologist Robert A. Neimeyer, director of the Portland Institute for Loss and Transition. "They have come up with a creative way of memorializing their father, by building a community around this thing that's distinctive about him," Neimeyer says.

That community, which the Kriegers named Orbisculation Nation, even has

a uniform of sorts—a citrus-festooned T-shirt that you can buy on their website. (Proceeds go to Carson's Village, a charity that helps families in mourning.) Friends of the Kriegers often take pictures of themselves wearing their T-shirts and text the images to the siblings. The Orbisculation Nation is also helping the Kriegers check off items on their list for orbisculation domination.

One family friend went rogue and put a homemade orbisculation warning sign on a pile of clementines in a grocery store (Goal No. 16). Strangers who were inspired by the campaign used the word in an online crossword puzzle (Goal No. 1) and a homemade cartoon (Goal No. 25).

And when the "Because Language" podcast announced online voting to determine its word of the year in 2020, Orbisculation Nation put its favourite word over the top. "'Orbisculate' felt like a refreshing splash of citrus in an otherwise grim year of words," says podcast host Daniel Midgley.

It has been more than two years since Neil's death, and his children are still reeling from the loss. But their campaign to get their father's word into the dictionary has helped them recapture a little of the joy that has been missing from their lives. "I could picture him being really excited," Jonathan says. "He'd say, 'It's dynamite!' That's a thing he always used to say." 

THE WASHINGTON POST (MARCH 10, 2021).
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FRIGHT NIGHT



“This brew is quite hoppy—
they must have added too much toad.”

Candy Crush

Halloween never scared me until I became a parent. There is nothing scarier than overtired kids in costumes getting hyper from sugar.

—[@OUTSMARTEDMOMMY](#)

What Goes Around...

I threw a boomerang at a ghost the other day. I

knew it would come back to haunt me.

—[REDDIT.COM](#)

Going the Distance

One year a trick-or-treater came to my door dressed as Rocky, in boxing gloves and satin shorts. Shortly after I gave him some goodies, he returned. “Aren’t you

the same Rocky who was just here?” I asked. “Yes,” he replied, “but now I’m the sequel.”

—[GCFL.NET](#)

Why couldn’t the skeleton cross the road? He didn’t have the guts.

—[REDDIT.COM](#)

Spider’s Swindle

Halloween is just a scam by Big Cobweb to sell more big cobwebs.

—[@CHASEMIT](#)

It’s my favourite holiday because you can trespass on a stranger’s property and make a non-negotiable demand without getting in trouble.

—[@MCNASTY](#)

Why did the vampire take an art class? He wanted to learn how to draw blood.

—[@ALIOOP326](#)

Send us your original jokes! You could earn \$50 and be featured in the magazine. See page 6 or rd.ca/joke for details.

MIS GUIDED

How to spot bad advice

BY Christina Palassio

ILLUSTRATION BY JEANNIE PHAN

I RECENTLY FOUND MYSELF agonizing over a financial decision. I had three options, and having spent considerable time researching them felt reasonably informed, but I was still not fully confident in which to choose. So

when I later saw a financially savvy acquaintance at a party, I decided to ask for her advice.

As the conversation deepened, however, I felt my stomach tighten in frustration. While I'm sure my friend wanted to help, her advice was immediately off the mark. She didn't ask me questions or consider how my goals might differ from hers. She simply told me what she would do, and I quickly found myself tuning out her monologue. The exchange left me feeling discouraged.

When we ask someone for advice, we look for a range of responses: a



thoughtful and objective perspective, information to fill a knowledge gap, guidance from someone we trust. Done well, the exchange can benefit both parties, adding nuance to each person's thinking and strengthening their bonds.

Bad advice, on the other hand, can harm relationships and make a tough decision even tougher. The worst advice-givers can invite second-guessing, undermine your values and lead you astray. Even the most well-intentioned bad guidance can leave us feeling exasperated, misunderstood and even more confused. Luckily there are things we can all do to avoid giving—and receiving—bum advice.

CONSIDER YOUR "ASK"

To help head off bad advice, get clear on your needs. Are you asking someone to help you think through options you might take to resolve a problem? Are you asking someone to provide advice as your friend or as an objective observer? Do you want help with something that's closer to instruction or coaching—like how to plant a fall garden or ensure you get the next big promotion at work? Communicating both your problem and your expectations will help your advice-giver approach your questions thoughtfully and with a goal of their own in mind.

Next, make sure you're intentional about whom you ask, and consider if you need a range of opinions or one well-informed perspective. Don't be

afraid to get creative with whom you ask, and don't assume you know everyone's expertise. When you receive the advice, listen to your body. Are you tensing up or resisting? It could be a sign that the advice that's coming your way isn't right for you—or it could mean someone is challenging your own biases and assumptions. Take the time to check in with yourself on which it is.

ARE THEY ENGAGED?

David Eddie was an advice columnist for nearly two decades. In that time, he learned that good advice-givers ask questions that help them better understand where you're coming from and what your goals are. They don't assume they know the answer—or that you have the time, resources or ability to approach the challenge in the same way they would. "You want someone who's going to drill down into the problem with you and take the time to understand the shape of it," he says.

I wish my friend and I had talked more about my financial situation before she delivered her advice. She may have given different tips if we'd been able to walk through my goals and concerns, which options I was considering, and who else I had consulted. Don't assume your advice-giver is being self-centred. It can take time to formulate smart, empathetic questions—and a run-in at a party, for example, may not be the best setting for true consideration.

DO THEY UNDERSTAND YOUR VALUES?

When it comes to human relationships, things can get murky. Our different backgrounds, beliefs and personal philosophies mean there often aren't one-size-fits-all solutions. When advice-givers assume that what's best for them is also what's best for you, or that their advice should always guide you to what's most socially or culturally acceptable, problems can arise.

Sahaj Kaur Kohli knows this firsthand. When she was 30, the *New Yorker* and first-generation American founded Brown Girl Therapy, an Instagram mental health community for children of immigrants that now has over 200,000 followers. But when Kohli decided to go back to school to become a clinical mental health counsellor, she was advised to delete her social media accounts and try to remove information about herself from the Internet. The advice-giver felt it might interfere with her new career. But Kohli disagreed.

"It felt like a rejection of what I wanted to do with my life," she says. Kohli pinpointed generational and racial differences in how she and the other person thought about mental health and therapy. Whereas her advice-giver saw her social media presence as a career blocker, Kohli believed it was an important way for her to build a community. She saw no reason to hide her lived experience; in fact, it was an asset.

While Kohli ultimately ignored the advice, she wishes she'd asked herself if the other party understood her values before entertaining—and fretting over—their advice.

TRUST YOURSELF

Personally motivated advice is usually pretty easy to spot. A parent may encourage a certain university path because they believe it brings more prestige or financial independence. A friend may advise their secret crush to leave their current partner. It's harder when people don't recognize their own underlying biases.

That's why Eddie often gathers a range of perspectives. He calls his group of advice-givers The Panel, and it's made up of his wife, mom and some friends and colleagues. Their advice helps him see different sides of sticky issues—pushing him to consider different angles and outcomes. But in the end, he's the one who makes the decision. "I believe in the saying, 'Seek the advice of many, but follow your own counsel,'" he says.

In other words: trust your gut. Kohli subscribes to the same approach for herself and her clients. One of the biggest lessons she's learned as a mental health professional, she says, is that everyone is an expert on their own life. She sees her role as asking questions to help a person get the perspective they need to make a choice—even if those around them may disagree with it. Now that's good advice. **R**

As the climate crisis turns communities into danger zones, one Alberta town is left behind

BY Drew Anderson
FROM *THE NARWHAL*





FLOOD

A resident of Drumheller, Alberta,
during the destructive flooding of 2005

DRIVING INTO THE VALLEY housing the little spit of land that is the tiny community of Lehigh, Alta., feels like entering another world. Wide-open prairie drops suddenly into a landscape more suited to a moon of Jupiter.

The valley was shaped by the forces of climate and change: water cascaded from glacial lakes as the ice age slowly whimpered away. Rivers, rain, snow and wind carved channels into the land. The process left a deep and long scar.

Nestled in that valley, the town of Drumheller stretches along a flood plain encompassing several communities. Among them is Lehigh, a once-bustling hamlet of coal miners and their families, now reduced to a smattering of homes spread out over a small, flat plain. All of them hug the temperamental Red Deer River.

The area is prone to flooding, and almost all of the inhabited areas are identified by the provincial government as flood zones. Drumheller was walloped in 2005 and again in 2013, but the recorded history of flooding dates back over a century. The situation is only expected to get more intense.

Climate projections show that the area will face more extremes in the near future. A warmer climate can hold more water and dump it at will. Lehigh will face an inundation.

Drumheller is not alone. Whether it's due to sea level rise, wildfires or land sliding into the sea as permafrost melts, communities across Canada are

grappling with similar problems: climate change has made areas that were once livable—even desirable—into danger zones.

Across the country, flooding is considered the biggest climate change risk, consuming more than 75 per cent of federal disaster assistance, according to a 2020 policy brief from the think tank Centre for International Governance Innovation.

The slow-but-steady impact of climate change means, says the World Bank, that as many as 216 million people could be forced to move within their own countries. As of July 2022, about a dozen of them live in Lehigh.

The local government is busy fortifying. The Town of Drumheller has over \$55 million, mostly from the provincial and federal governments, to spend on dikes and berms to protect itself. But about \$20 million of that funding has been allocated to buy out properties and force many residents out of their homes. The government plans to wipe these communities off the map before the flood waters do.

In Lehigh, the entire community will disappear. Residents find themselves caught up by forces they can't control, where questions of fairness, of equity or the subjective values of home and hope take a back seat to the pressures of climate adaptation. Also at play are billions in infrastructure and a government bureaucracy hell-bent on keeping Alberta's rivers at bay.

Many feel they are not getting a fair shake for their little plot of Alberta, or that their best interests are being ignored as Drumheller races ahead to protect itself from the next flood.

JOHN CARLS HAS LIVED his whole life in the Drumheller Valley, looking after land for an oil company for almost 30 years while his wife worked as a nurse at the hospital in town. She continues to work there, while he's now retired. Nineteen years ago, they bought a home in Lehigh and settled in. It's where Carls wanted to live out his days.

"Somebody comes and tells you that you need to get out of your house—it's not good," he says. "You buy a house, you figure you're there. I'm 83 years old. It's not the time to pack up and start moving."

Lehigh is a small community on a patch of land that extends from Highway 10 to the Red Deer River. Tall cottonwood trees are flanked by sandy cliffs. Stretches of highway separate it from Drumheller proper and the slightly larger community of East Coulee, where an old hotel sits vacant off the highway—a sign of livelier times.

Carls says that being forced to move elsewhere means his wife will have to quit her job. But they don't want to buy a new place, and the offers his neighbours have received for their homes

don't inspire him. Plus, he says, he's embittered with the way the flood-mitigation process has played out. It boiled over at a meeting earlier this year, where he "said a few words" that resulted in charges of uttering threats against a town employee. (Those charges have since been dropped.)

For Carls, the central issue is that he doesn't want to leave his home. He refused access for an appraisal and has told the town to talk to Don Mallon, the expropriation lawyer he shares with several other residents of Lehigh. But he's also lost faith in the area he once considered home. "I'm getting out of Drumheller altogether," Carls says. "I'll never live here again in my life. Terrible place. They just seem to be able to push people around whenever they feel like it."

Drumheller, located next to the Red Deer River, is a perennial flood risk.



If he must go, Carls plans to move to Barrhead, northwest of Edmonton, where his son lives. For others, there is resentment at being forced to leave, but a grudging acceptance that climate mitigation is important and they'll have to go. For them, fair pay for the land they leave behind is critical.

Penny Head moved to Lehigh in 2012, one year before flood waters inundated her home. She and her husband chose the area because they loved the valley and wanted to live near the river. She says her house, now clean and upgraded, was "a shack, overgrown and horrible" when they bought it.

She too plans to leave the Drumheller area and has signed on with the same lawyer as Carls. Both say they've been frustrated with the town's actions. But Head wonders where they will go and what they'll be able to afford.

"We've put a fortune into this house," Head says, explaining that they put their life savings into it. "Because this was our forever home, nothing's been done cheap."

FLOOD MAPPING BY THE province following the 2013 devastation of southern Alberta showed that Drumheller should prepare for floods with a metre or more of water beyond earlier projections, says Darryl Drohomerski, the town's chief administrative officer. In the 2013 flood, river waters raged through Lehigh at 1,370 cubic metres per second. New guidelines suggest the community

should prepare for an even greater torrent in future floods, potentially up to 1,850 cubic metres per second.

"Some of those areas that were borderline before would be under minimum of a half-metre of water now," Drohomerski explains.

The town's plan calls for a series of berms—both new ones and older ones that will be fortified—stretching from east to west to form a protective barrier around many buildings and homes. But in the seemingly callous calculations of government, the province requires projects it funds to protect at least as much property value as the mitigation will cost.

According to the provincial government's 2014 Red Deer River Basin flood study, it would cost more than \$1.3 million to protect Lehigh—more than the value of all the properties.

The town looked at other options, including dredging the river to make it deeper, widening the channel to allow more water to flow by or even raising houses. In all cases, says Drohomerski, the process was expensive and wouldn't work.

That means residents can either take the offers to buy their properties or go through expropriation, but one way or another, the town will clear the land.

Lehigh is just one small example of what's known as "managed retreat" or "planned relocation"—moving homes and communities out of harm's way as part of climate change adaptation.

Robert McLeman, a professor of geography and environmental studies at Wilfrid Laurier University who studies climate change impacts and migration, says it is an enormous issue that governments are just now starting to grapple with.

He points to Miami Beach as an example where the costs to relocate in the face of rising oceans are astronomical. “You’re talking about tens, if not hundreds, of billions of dollars to relocate these folks,” McLeman says. “There isn’t enough money in the United States to do it properly.”

In the U.S., the federal government has already allocated billions of dollars for large-scale managed-retreat programs to replace piecemeal efforts at buying out individual properties.

Canada, with a smaller population and fewer large cities hugging its coastlines, doesn’t have to grapple with that same scale of disaster-proofing, but it’s still an enormous problem that will impact northern communities, cities like Vancouver and Halifax and river valleys across the country. “These decisions are going to come up time and time again,” McLeman says.

Just like in Lehigh, the cost-benefit analysis that drives these decisions for governments is cold comfort to those in the community. McLeman



Drumheller residents stand near the swollen Red Deer River in June 2013, with the town’s famous T. Rex statue in the distance.

points to the debate about rebuilding in New Orleans or balancing Indigenous connections to the land with alleviating environmental risk.

“To be successful, the people who are going to be relocated, or at risk of being relocated, need to be part of the planning process,” he says. “If it’s just sort of imposed upon them, then everyone’s going to be unhappy. And there could be pushback.”

DAWN JAMES OWNS THREE LOTS without homes in Lehigh after hers was destroyed by the 2005 floods. She says that she and her husband, who currently live in Calgary, were finally in a place to start rebuilding and hoped to retire to the community.

She too is holding out for expropriation. She’s working with the same lawyer as Carls and Head and says the town has

not been fair in the way it has dealt with residents. "They're not making it so you want to take their offer," James says.

In mid-March, the town offered her \$29,000 total for all three of her lots, an offer she scoffed at.

The town says it is basing its offer on the appraised value of the properties, and residents are welcome to have their own appraisals done. If a resident's appraisal is within five per cent of that of the town, the town will pay the higher price. Otherwise, a third-party appraiser will be brought in.

James wants the town to pay market value for their homes and to also cover costs, including moving expenses. She can't understand why the town would come in with low offers when expropriation could cost them more in fees and likely more in payouts to residents.

Eran Kaplinsky, a law professor at the University of Alberta, says under expropriation, the owner would get market value—based on the value before it was reduced by, say, a municipality saying the homes would be razed. There could be compensation for expenses, improvements to your property or even a higher payout that would allow you to afford an equivalent property elsewhere. The town would also cover legal fees.

"But if the value of the property is already low because of the circumstances, the environmental risks or other factors, then that is reflected in market value, because that has nothing to do

with expropriation," Kaplinsky says.

What the process can't really account for is the true value of the home to its owner.

"That may have fairness implications because maybe somebody else doesn't want to buy my property, but I'm willing to live here," Kaplinsky says. "In fact, this place is more valuable to me than it is to others. I have roots in the community. I have a history here."

THE EXPROPRIATION PROCESS CAN'T REALLY ACCOUNT FOR THE TRUE VALUE OF A HOME TO ITS OWNER.

MANY LEHIGH RESIDENTS are frustrated and have lost trust in the town government. They say the communication has been poor and they feel that consultations have only amounted to the town telling them what has already been decided.

James went so far as to help with a petition that was submitted in June 2021 and ended up with approximately 2,300 signatures collected from around Drumheller asking the province to investigate the flood-mitigation office through what's known as a municipal inspection. The province reviewed the complaints but stopped short of a serious knuckle-rapping.

“While the review noted some inconsistencies with respect to communication and transparency of the town’s flood-mitigation project, the remaining concerns are not of sufficient severity to warrant an inspection,” Alberta Minister of Municipal Affairs Ric McIver wrote to Drumheller Mayor Heather Colberg in response to the petition.

Drohomerski feels the town has done a good job of reaching out to residents and contends there’s a lot of misinformation spreading. Neither Head, James nor Carls agree, and they feel that communication hasn’t improved.

Hana Ambury, a researcher with the Alberta Land Institute, which works to inform public debate and decision making around land use in the province, and of which Kaplinsky is also the director of research, says that municipalities are starting to realize that they have to clearly communicate environmental risks to residents to prevent confusion and frustration in the future, but that doesn’t necessarily help those already living in a disaster-prone community.


“In our research, we’ve seen that those people who are attached to their communities, who are attached to their homes, often have a lower rate of accepting mitigation and transformative action on the landscape,” she says. “So, for example, in Fort McMurray, we’ve seen that people don’t want the trees around their homes cut down, even though that will reduce their wildfire risk, because that’s not why they bought their homes.”

THE DRUMHELLER VALLEY has changed over the years. The coal mine closed in 1984, one year before the Royal Tyrrell Museum of Paleontology opened. Now the town is eyeing a future based more on tourism than on natural resources.

The town centre, with its recreation facility just down from a giant *Tyrannosaurus rex* statue, will be safe behind a new flood barrier, and river views for many will transform into a mound of earth several metres tall. The flooding will be held at bay.

In Lehigh, however, the small community’s history will come to an end. Homes will be torn down by 2024, according to government plans. The spit of land that was Lehigh will inevitably flood again, with only the cottonwoods to impede the flow. Head will live elsewhere, possibly on a property she owns on Pine Lake, southeast of Red Deer, if she gets enough money to build. James will find another place to retire. Carls is off to Barrhead.

“What they don’t understand is that we’re very much a community. We all know each other, and most of us are friends,” Head says.

“I was looking forward to them building there,” she says, pointing to the empty lot across the way where James was planning to put up a house. “We could sit out and have a glass of wine in the evening or something. But all of that is gone.” 

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SOCIETY



Burger Baron

SIT-IN & DRIVE THRU.

TUESDAY SPECIAL
2 MUSHROOM
BURGERS



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A MUSHROOM BURGER IS, well, a burger with mushrooms. After that, the sky's the limit. It might be topped with white, yellow or blue cheese, onion rings, avocado—whatever floats your 'shroom.

But there's one region of the world where the mushroom burger is a definable entree—a sizable beef patty smothered in sautéed canned mushrooms and sauce comprised mostly of cream of mushroom soup. You'll find it across Alberta and inland British Columbia, but also 10,000 kilometres away, in the mountains of Lebanon—hometown of the man who popularized it in Western Canada.

Rudy Kemaldeen didn't actually bring the burger recipe with him in the 1950s, when he immigrated

How Lebanese immigrants made the **mushroom burger** a menu staple

BY Omar Mouallem
FROM *QUENCH MAGAZINE*

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
AMBER BRACKEN

The Secret Sauce

with his brother from Baalchmay, a village 15 kilometres uphill from Beirut. He found the sauce in Edmonton, at one of a few remaining outlets of Burger Baron, a floundering fast-food shack that made a roaring comeback after he bought it. His relatives joined him, and the Kemaldeans/Kamaledines (the spelling varies depending on which brother filed the paperwork) were soon running a dozen Burger Barons. After civil war broke out in Lebanon, these restaurants became training grounds for future Canadian citizens who were hired as cooks, learned the recipes and then took those secret sauces with them to small Prairie towns when it was time to strike out on their own.

They opened dozens of burger joints, often under the same name and logo, without any legal permission.

WHILE THE MUSHROOM BURGER recipe is standardized, the Burger Baron franchise isn't. It's not really even a franchise. The original iteration of Burger Baron, branded by Jack McDonnell, went bankrupt in 1961, a few years before the Lebanese immigrants discovered it, and since the status of the company's intellectual property was unclear following the bankruptcy, the entire brand was basically public domain.

The McDonnell and Kemaldean families did manage to come to an agreement, and trademarks for the Burger Baron name and logo were granted in 1998, but the legal grounds of the Kemaldeans' corporate ownership are shaky. Regardless, you can't patent a recipe—only an entirely novel food—and so their secret mushroom sauce remains part of the collective memory of Lebanese Canadians.

Only a few Burger Barons remain in Edmonton, but you'll find the iconic burger at mom-and-pop diners throughout the city and beyond. Whether the restaurant owners call their establishment Burger Baron, Burger Barn, Baron Family Restaurant or something else entirely, their businesses thrive in mostly rural communities. I'm related to several of these proprietors, and one, the owner of Boondocks Grill in High Prairie, 370 kilometres northwest of Edmonton, is my brother, Ali.



The mushroom burger and its signature sauce

Despite small discrepancies between the mushroom burgers, they are remarkably consistent. Ali learned the recipe from our dad, back when the family business was in fact called Burger Baron Pizza & Steak. Our dad trained with his uncle, who bought one of the original Burger Barons, in a neighbouring town, from another Lebanese man who apprenticed with Rudy in the '70s. I have tasted all four of their mushroom burgers—and many more spanning Alberta—and they all strike the same balance of tanginess, saltiness and soupiness.

The sauce base is an open secret. Nothing can conceal the distinctiveness of Campbell's cream of mushroom soup, and the restaurant owners have given up trying. It's the other ingredients that are harder to pin down.

I HAVE INTERVIEWED many Burger Baron owners about the secret sauce. Nobody was willing to reveal the recipe, with the exception of Sam Chehdi. The long-time restaurateur in Mayerthorpe (population 1,140) insisted the sauce is nothing more than soup, straight out of the can. To prove it, he proceeded to cook mushroom burgers this way for us while our cameras rolled. He then fed them to our crew. Though it was a very flavourful burger, something tasted off.

Walid Sahr of Whitecourt, who immigrated in 2000 and got into the business based on his first transcendent experience with a mushroom burger,

fessed up to three more additions—soya sauce, Tabasco, Worcestershire—then, somewhat suspiciously, he added, “There are some spices.”

“Sumac? Cumin?” I asked.

“I don't like to talk about that.”

Khalid “Kelly” Kamaledine denied using any spices but insisted there was a fifth ingredient, plus a specialty soya sauce. I wasn't sure if these were red herrings. When I pressed him, he said, “Go ask your dad.”

I did—but my dad, long retired, could not remember the proportions or whether there was, in fact, a fifth ingredient. So I asked my brother.

Ali could only recall it the way he was taught, using industrial soup cans. Indeed, his recipe was a square dance of soup, Tabasco, soya and Worcestershire.

Does he cook the soup or thin it out with water? I asked. No—but make sure the soup is Campbell's recipe. “No low sodium or low fat.”

“Families like yours and many others were given a chance at making something for themselves,” Rawan Kemal-dean, the daughter of retired Burger Baron owners, told me. There may not be a patent to the brand and food, and each location may have mastered their own style of the sauce, but she hoped we would covet this one secret to living out the immigrant dream.

And so, for now, it remains a trade secret of the Lebanese burger mafia. **R**

OMAR MOUALLEM IS THE WRITER AND DIRECTOR OF *THE LAST BARON*, A DOCUMENTARY ABOUT BURGER BARON, ON CBC GEM (BURGERBARONMOVIE.COM).

MyHut

A backyard sanctuary promised solitude—until I realized that I didn't want to be alone



BY Cathrin Bradbury
FROM *THE TORONTO STAR*
ILLUSTRATION BY GRAHAM ROUMIEU

MY FIRST REACTION when my son told me last summer I was going to be a grandmother, and that the baby and his parents would live with me, was unbounded joy. My second reaction was to build a 10x10 wooden hut in my backyard. It comes with a silver key that is mine alone.

My son, Kelly, and his partner, Vonnie, moved in a few months later, in between relocating to Toronto from Guatemala and saving up for their dream bachelor apartment. Meanwhile, we all fit in the white stucco two-storey family home in midtown Toronto, eat mostly healthy meals—sometimes together, sometimes not,



no pressure—and share a copacetic, early-to-bed-and-rise schedule.

With a full house, however, I now work where I sleep. The surprise baby news was when my gaze turned to the potential of the old tool shed at the back of our haphazard yard. Where others saw a teardown, I saw a magical portal to another world. A place, after a modest fix-up with a few nails and a hammer, to write and explore an unabashedly interior life, just a few footsteps away.

IN A HUT, THE ONLY MOVEMENT IS OF YOUR OWN THOUGHTS.



ONE OF THE things about building a hut is that it requires a lot of decisions. The mind-twister is that you need a hut, and the room it provides for contemplation, to decide whether you need a hut. In this period of decision making, which lasted about six weeks, people would say words to me, and I would wonder how long good manners decreed before I could steer the conversation to my hut. (About a minute was where I generally landed.) Existing shed or new prefab? (the latter, in the end); facing garden or house (garden); roof angle (sloping down to the north); wiring complexities; heating. A hut

needs a cement slab, which involves soil disposal bins, a cement mixer and a four-person work crew.

“Doing a lot of these huts, I hear,” I said to the cement boss.

“These what?”

“Huts. You know. What we’re building.”

“I wouldn’t know anything about that,” he said, smoothing the fresh cement in broad sweeps with his pallet. “We call these shed slabs.”

A HUT IS not a house.

This is the kind of profound thinking that comes from working inside my now finished hut.

In footsteps, this gleaming spruce-wood structure is 33 small steps from my back door. But in all other ways my daily journey to the end of the backyard can’t be measured in something as unremarkable as putting one foot in front of the other while holding a mug of coffee, the key that unlocks the hut door and a woollen blanket, because it gets chilly out here sometimes.

There are the sounds, to begin there. From the house, the noises are of cars and ambulances and boots over ice and snow. Back here, it’s rain, sleet and wind, except it’s like the weather is happening inside the thin walls of the hut, not outside. It can be worrying, but it keeps you alert. The birds’ songs are nice; the manic squirrels trying to dig through the roof—they seem affronted by my presence—less so.

The other thing about a hut that is nothing like a house (or an apartment, or anywhere people live) is that a house has momentum. People arrive and leave, things are dropped off at the door, mail is delivered, garbage is taken away. In a hut, the only movement is of your own thoughts. That the word “hut” was taken over by marketing to mean something welcoming and fun—Pizza Hut! Sunglass Hut!—is a misdirection. Hut comes from the old English *hydan*, to hide, cover or conceal. The plot twist is that a hut is less a place to hide out in, or to give the slip to prospective grandchildren, than it is a place to find what is hidden from you.

I think about my grandchild-to-be—a recurring hut fantasy is him running to the end of the path and knocking on the hut door; yes, he knocks, he is a polite child—and the risk of new love. And whether I can protect him from the dangerous world, and how this hut is going to be too cold for him in the winter and I’d better get more blankets.

As day darkens into evening, Kelly and Vonnie come down from working upstairs in their own offices, and then the kitchen at the back of the house is suddenly ablaze with light. It’s one of the best parts of my day, when those lights come on. It’s when I understand that the hut, and my retreat to it, is made warmer by the light that comes from the house.

I quickly turn off the hut’s heat and lights, gather up my mug, key and

blanket, and walk the 33 steps back to the house. Kelly is the house cook; Vonnie and I the sous-chefs. Kelly hands me a head of cabbage for the fish tacos, explaining how he wants it. “Thinly sliced. Not chopped.”

“So, Mom,” he says after a bit, looking sadly down at my unevenly sliced cabbage. “We’re thinking we’re going to maybe keep our eyes open for an apartment nearby.”

“An apartment? But how will the baby get to my hut?” I was shaken as much by the idea of them moving as by the ancient wobbly timbre of my voice. I sounded like one of the hysterical fathers in a Jane Austen novel when his daughter announces her plans to move a few hundred metres across the flowering meadow to live with her new husband.

“You know, a place of our own,” said Kelly.

“Ah,” I said. “Right. Of course.”

I can’t think what it’ll be like when they’re gone. If their light doesn’t shine on my hut at the end of the day, does the hut even exist? Or, if it does exist, should it? It’s too big a thought to grapple with as we assemble the fish tacos.

I’ll think about it on Monday. In the hut. 

Cathrin Bradbury is the author of The Bright Side.

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EDITORS' CHOICE

BOUND

The conviction of **Guy Paul Morin** for the killing of nine-year-old **Christine Jessop** remains one of the most notorious Canadian cases of failed justice.

Thirty-six years later, aided by forensic genealogy and new resolve, they found her real killer.

IN INFAMY

BY Malcolm Johnston FROM *TORONTO LIFE*

ON WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 3, 1984,

Janet Jessop was returning home to rural Queensville, Ont., from a day trip to Toronto with her son, Kenny, 14. They'd been visiting Kenny's father, Bob, who was spending 18 months in the Toronto East Detention Centre for swindling some elderly friends. Janet planned to get home soon after Christine, her nine-year-old daughter, stepped off the school bus. Christine was an explorer, an imaginative kid who would happily spend hours playing in the cemetery behind their house. Her dog, a beagle named Freckles, was her constant companion.

In music class, her teacher had handed out recorders, and Christine was eager to show hers off to her mom and Kenny. But she found the family's two-storey farmhouse still empty. Christine had made plans that day to meet her friend Leslie Chipman around 4 p.m. at the park. As arranged, Leslie arrived at their spot and waited for her friend to show. And then waited some more.

Janet arrived home with Kenny at around 4:10. Oddly, Christine's red bicycle was lying on its side in the shed, its kickstand damaged. They walked inside and noticed Christine's jacket

hanging on the hook higher than the little girl could reach. Her school bag was on the counter, and the mail and newspaper had been brought inside. Around 5 p.m., Christine still hadn't returned home, so Janet went to the park to search. She walked through the cemetery calling out her daughter's name. She phoned Christine's friends, including Leslie Chipman, who explained that she went home when Christine didn't show up for their park date.

After sunset, Janet called the York Regional Police. The York force was small, with one officer for every 860 residents. They had no major crimes unit and had never dealt with a child abduction or a child murder. When a constable arrived on scene, he removed Christine's coat from the hook for closer inspection. Detectives came in through the back and side doors. The plastic wrapping of the newspaper was thrown away without being dusted for fingerprints. Well-meaning neighbours passed in and out of the home, touching this and that. If Christine had been abducted, crucial evidence was now compromised.

Police set up a command post in the nearby fire hall and enlisted residents to help conduct a series of haphazard searches of the area. Still, day after day, not a trace.

Bob Jessop was released from jail on humanitarian grounds, and he and Janet issued desperate pleas to the public for their daughter's return. Police knew that most abductions weren't random; they're usually perpetrated by someone with a pre-existing relationship. And so the Jessops supplied the names and numbers of anyone allowed to enter the home without a family member being present. One of those names was Calvin Hoover, a family friend who worked with Bob at Eastern Independent Telecom, which provided telephone wiring for businesses across the area.

The day after the disappearance, Calvin's wife, Heather Hoover, had rushed to console Janet and help where she could. Sergeant Raymond Bunce of the York police interviewed her. Heather explained that she had been at work on the day of Christine's disappearance. She assumed her husband had been working too, and told Bunce as much. Eventually, after patiently answering a long series of questions, Heather told the officer that her husband was with their children and she had to hurry home. Calvin Hoover, the man who abducted Christine Jessop, was never interviewed. The conversation ended, and Bunce left it at that, unaware that

he was as close to the culprit as he would ever be.

CALVIN HOOVER HAD dark hair, prominent front teeth and a thin face made to look even thinner by his oversized glasses. He was a 28-year-old tradesman from Scarborough who had a predilection for drinking, partying and gambling.

Both Calvin and Heather worked at Eastern Independent Telecom. Heather was a dispatcher and Calvin did installations. Bob, Christine's father, was the lead installer. The itinerant nature of the work gave Calvin cover to come and go from home when he wanted, and he would occasionally leave for hours at a time, day or night, speeding off without explanation.

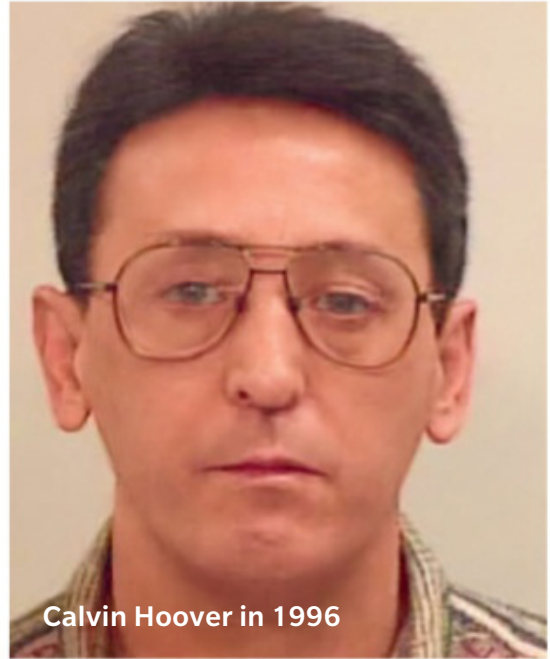
THE LONGER CHRISTINE WAS MISSING, THE MORE INEVITABLE TRAGEDY FELT TO THE JESSOPS.

At work, he developed a friendship with Bob, and the two families—Hoovers and Jessops—gathered for barbecues and birthdays. Heather sometimes babysat Christine, who referred to her as "Auntie Heather." Though they lived more than 50 kilometres apart, Janet and Heather would meet often to share a pot of tea and watch the kids play.

One such visit happened two days before Christine went missing. On the evening of October 1, 1984, Janet loaded Christine and Kenny into the car to visit the Hoovers. While she was there, Janet mentioned that she would be going to visit Bob in jail two days from then and that Christine was too young to be in such a grim environment. It's possible—even probable—that Calvin learned from Heather that the little girl would be home alone. The opportunity, however, would prove to be dangerously brief. There would be only minutes between when Christine stepped off the school bus and when Janet and Kenny returned home.

IN THE DAYS AFTER CHRISTINE disappeared, the Jessops prayed for the safe return of their daughter, but the longer she was missing, the more inevitable tragedy felt. At the Jessop house, Christmas passed with no tree, and only a few presents for Kenny. No one felt much like celebrating.

By December 31, 90 excruciating days had passed without progress. While residents across the province prepared to ring in the new year, in the hamlet of Sunderland, 56 kilometres east of Queensville, a man named Fred Patterson and his two daughters went looking for their dog on the large, wooded property next to their home. Just off the bend of a trail, Patterson spotted something unusual—what looked like a pile of garbage next to a



Calvin Hoover in 1996

half-dug pit. He walked closer and realized with horror what it was: a corpse, badly decomposed. There were multiple stab wounds to the chest, some deep enough to penetrate the vertebrae—these were later deemed the official cause of death. The body was dressed in a beige turtleneck sweater with a blue pullover, and a blouse with buttons missing. Next to the right foot was a pair of little girl's underwear. In the tall grass lay a recorder with "Christine Jessop" written on it.

When the Jessops heard the news, they were shattered. The torturous waiting and wondering were over, but now a lifetime of mourning lay ahead.

BECAUSE THE BODY WAS found in Durham Region, the case shifted from the York police to the Durham

COURTESY OF TORONTO POLICE SERVICE

Regional Police. The scrutiny of a homicide investigation would be overwhelming, unlike anything its officers had dealt with before.

Investigating the case were two veteran detectives named Bernie Fitzpatrick and John Shephard, who went by Fitz and Shep. They pressed the Jessops for a list of possible suspects—anyone who stood out. Next door, just over the fence, lived the Morins, a close-knit family. Their younger son, 25-year-old Guy Paul, was kind and respectful. He had no criminal record. But, Janet recalled, Guy Paul hadn't participated in the search for Christine when just about everyone else in Queensville had pitched in. She also happened to mention that Guy Paul played the clarinet and kept honeybees. Fitz scribbled in his notepad words that would destroy a life: "Clarinet player. Weird-type guy."

GUY PAUL, THE SECOND-YOUNGEST of six siblings, was classically handsome, with a neat part and strong brow. He loved woodworking, puzzles, little problems that required patience and focus. On the clarinet he was a virtuoso, able to play intricate pieces from memory.

On the afternoon of February 22, 1985, Fitz and Shep wandered over and engaged Morin in conversation. Casual, friendly, they invited him into their car for a chat. How well did he know Christine Jessop? Not well, he said. She was more than 16 years

his junior, so there wasn't much cause for interaction. He once helped her catch Freckles, who was running loose. Another time, Morin had gone over to help relight the pilot on the Jessops' furnace. That was the extent of it.

The detectives asked about his whereabouts on the day Christine went missing. Morin knew he had been at work, a furniture manufacturing facility in Vaughan, 57 kilometres to the south. Fitz and Shep would later discover that he had punched out at 3:32 p.m. That meant he could have returned home no earlier than 4:14 p.m., too late to abduct Christine before Janet and Kenny got home at 4:10.

THE DETECTIVES KNEW JURIES WERE HARD TO CONVINCED. BUT SCIENCE WAS IRREFUTABLE.



The detectives playfully engaged the young man in more small talk. They asked him what he thought of Christine, and Morin described her as "sweet and innocent." Morin, who had a habit of filling anticipated lulls with whatever thought was in his head, fatefully added: "But they sometimes grow up to be corrupt." Today, Morin doesn't deny having said that, but he says he meant it in a general sense: as girls

become adults, they lose their childlike innocence, which to most ears is hardly a controversial statement. To the detectives, it was tantamount to motive.

CALVIN HOOVER SHOWED UP at Christine's funeral and wake, extending his condolences to the family. At both, police officers were in attendance, snapping photos of attendees.

Hoover had been careful enough not to be seen picking up Christine after school. Yet at the same time, he had committed his crime so hastily that he'd left a trail of leads. His semen was on Christine's underwear, and a single dark hair was trapped in her necklace. Police rushed that strand to the Centre of Forensic Sciences in Toronto. Juries, the detectives knew, were hard to convince. But science was irrefutable. A hair match could change everything.

A few weeks later, Morin arrived at his jazz group and learned that the band leader's daughter, accompanied by her friend and classmate—who happened to be an undercover police officer—was doing a cosmetics class project on hair analysis. She asked the group whether they would mind if she plucked a few strands of everyone's hair. After she left, the officer discarded all the hair samples but Morin's, which she handed over to her colleagues Fitz and Shep.

Hair analysis was fashionable at the time and often used in criminal proceedings, yet its usefulness was limited: it was a reliable way to exclude

suspects—for example, if a blond hair was found but the suspect had brown hair. It was unreliable, though, for including suspects: that is, proving a definitive match. That's because characteristics of hairs from one person's head vary from hair to hair, and even the characteristics of a single hair may differ from tip to bulb.

**“CONSISTENT”
WAS THE WORD THE
DETECTIVES WANTED
TO HEAR. THEY NOW
HAD THEIR MAN.**

After so much time exposed to the elements—as long as 90 days—the Jes-sop necklace hair had severely degraded. A forensic scientist named Stephanie Nyznyk, however, told Fitz and Shep that the hairs were “macroscopically similar”—which essentially meant that to the naked eye, both hairs were the same colour. Nyznyk went further, stating that, microscopically, Morin's hair was “consistent with” the necklace hair, according to Shep's recollection.

“Consistent” was the word the detectives wanted to hear. They now had their man.

Guy Paul Morin was on his way to band practice on the evening of April 22, 1985, when he saw flashing lights in his rear-view mirror. He pulled over,

COURTESY OF GUY PAUL MORIN



Guy Paul
Morin in 1981,
outside his
family's home

feeling sheepish. He watched as two cops approached the car and was surprised to recognize the friendly detectives he'd spoken to weeks earlier. "What's up guys?" he said. Fitz and Shep told him they were arresting him for the murder of Christine Jessop. "What? You're joking," said Morin.

WHEN THE VERDICT WAS READ ALOUD, THE COURTROOM SAT IN STUNNED SILENCE FOR SEVERAL SECONDS.

FOR FITZ AND SHEP, the easy part—finding a suspect—was done. The difficult part was making the evidence line up. The most problematic issue was Morin's rock-solid alibi.

Fitz and Shep retraced Janet and Kenny's route on the day of the abduction and suggested that Janet must have remembered it all wrong. She replied that she'd made no such mistake. She knew she had to make an important call to her husband's lawyer at 4:50 p.m., and she remembered looking at the clock on the wall when she got home. Perhaps, suggested Fitz, the clock was running slow? Janet allowed that it was conceivable. Gradually, over the months that followed, their steady pressure eroded her confidence, and she eventually revised her timing. It

was, she decided, closer to 4:20 p.m.—perhaps even as late as 4:35 p.m.—that she'd returned home.

At trial, flimsy evidence was brazenly torqued to present Morin as the sadistic killer the Crown needed him to be. Mysterious red fibres found on Christine's body and in Morin's car were presented to the court as evidence that the little girl had been inside the car. But an anonymous letter later claimed that the technician testing the fibres had worn a red sweater and no lab coat, facts that Nyznyk's boss investigated and ultimately kept to himself. And as for the Morins' story that their son hadn't arrived home on the day of the disappearance until 5:30 p.m. (he had stopped for groceries and gas after work): a psychologist who interviewed the Morins testified that they were a part of a secretive, protective, pathological family system.

The police had also planted an undercover sergeant named Gordon Hobbs in Morin's jail cell. Morin, he testified, had made stabbing motions toward his own chest, demonstrating the way he'd committed the crime. Hobbs also explained that Morin had confessed by saying that he would "redrum the innocent." The story, according to Morin, had been horrifically mangled. Hobbs had asked him about his favourite movies. Morin had seen the 1980 horror film *The Shining*, wherein the little boy repeatedly croaks "redrum"—murder spelled

backwards—in the film’s scariest scene. Morin couldn’t remember the title so referenced “redrum” instead.

When that sensational little nugget got into the papers, Morin’s fate seemed sealed. There were too many enigmatic utterances, too much strange behaviour, and police hadn’t turned up any better candidates.

In the end, after a masterful closing statement by his lawyer, Clayton Ruby, and just one day of deliberation, the jury decided that Morin was not guilty. When the verdict was read aloud, the courtroom sat in stunned silence for several seconds. Kenny Jessop wept openly. Immediately afterwards, the Crown told the media they were considering an appeal.



A decade after his initial arrest, Morin was acquitted.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

A FRESH FEAR PERVADED Queensville after the verdict. Many people believed Morin was guilty and had simply gotten lucky. Media thronged outside the Morins’ home. The family found menacing notes in the mailbox. One night, someone threw a beer bottle through their window.

In the wake of the acquittal, the police and the Crown were embarrassed, their failings on full display. But there were no suspects they liked any better than Morin. In May 1990, a new trial commenced on a technicality related to instructions the original judge had given to the jury regarding the meaning of reasonable doubt. This time, the Crown’s theory was even more absurd: Morin, they argued, must have seen Christine holding her new recorder and, like some sadistic pied piper, lured her with the sound of his own woodwind into his car. As he had done in the first trial, Morin mounted the stand and proclaimed his innocence.

The jury retired on July 23, 1992, and eight days later returned a unanimous verdict: guilty. One jury member, later interviewed by Linden MacIntyre of *The Fifth Estate*, said she knew Morin was guilty by the way he never looked at the jury while he was testifying. Morin, 32 by this point, was sentenced to life in prison.

THE KINGSTON PENITENTIARY was home to Canada’s vilest humans, yet to many of them, Morin, a convicted

child rapist and murderer, was the most despicable creature among them. Morin learned that many inmates wanted to mete out justice of their own. Thankfully, the most feared inmate on Morin's cell block had followed his story and decided he was innocent. He put out the word that Morin wasn't to be touched.

IN THE PUBLIC EYE, SUSPICION WOULD FOLLOW MORIN UNTIL CHRISTINE'S REAL KILLER WAS FOUND.

Outside the prison, enough people knew something was wrong—the facts just didn't line up—that a citizens' group had formed to protest Morin's conviction. Morin hired new lawyers, James Lockyer and Joanne McLean. In February of 1993, they successfully filed for appeal, and Morin was granted bail. By that point, he'd spent two and a half years in courtrooms and nearly 18 months in six different facilities.

Morin's appeal was scheduled to begin in January of 1995. As Lockyer and his team pored over the previous trials' twists and turns, they became aware of significant breakthroughs in DNA typing which allowed testing on samples that were previously too deteriorated to be reliable. The Crown, so

convinced Morin was the killer, proposed they test again. For Lockyer, the risk, of course, was that the DNA evidence would prove that Morin was the killer. Morin practically begged his team to proceed. Days before the trial was set to begin, there was news, and it was seismic: the semen on Christine's underwear was not Guy Paul Morin's. Three days later, he was free. All charges were dropped, his record wiped. The moment was a decade in the making, yet he knew better than to celebrate too joyously: in the public eye, suspicion would follow him until Christine's real killer was found.

CALVIN HOOVER WAS ALWAYS a drinker, but when he heard the news that Morin had been cleared, he became a constant presence at local pubs, usually telling Heather and the kids that he was headed out to work. It was alarming enough for Hoover that Morin had been exonerated, but the fact that it was achieved through DNA testing must have terrified him. Now the police, armed with the weapons of science, were surely inching closer by the day.

In the years after he killed Christine Jessop, Hoover was haunted by so many demons that at least some kind of cosmic retribution was spooled out in a life riddled with sleepless nights, tortured thoughts, depressive episodes and panic attacks. In 2014, he attempted what the police deemed "suicide by motor vehicle," but he survived.



At a news conference on October 15, 2020, Toronto Police Chief James Ramer sits next to a screen displaying photos of Hoover.

STEVE SMITH JOINED the Toronto police in 1996 and embarked on a low-profile career of solving robberies. In 2019, wanting to help the families of missing loved ones, Smith transferred to cold cases. He was especially interested in the new field of genetic testing techniques, which had helped detectives in California identify the Golden State Killer. He decided to focus his efforts on the province's most high-profile cold case: Christine Jessop. He submitted the DNA from Jessop's underwear to Othram, a Texas-based genetic testing start-up, which generated a profile and uploaded it to a database called GEDmatch. The results would be expressed in terms of centimorgans, the unit by which familial proximity is measured. Siblings, for instance, might

share 1,200 centimorgans. From there, it would be a quick one-two to find the culprit.

But the results were disastrous. They showed only two matches, and they bore 50 centimorgans each, which meant probably third cousins at best. The connection between those cousins and the killer was so distant that building a common family tree would involve roughly 33,000 names.

Smith ran the DNA through a second database called Family Tree, which returned an additional three matches, but again, nothing closer than a distant cousin. If there was a glimmer of good fortune, it was that two of the matches were on the killer's maternal side, and three were on the paternal. It was hardly a breakthrough, but it was

enough progress that they could shrink the family tree to about 400 names.

Working with a group that included an in-house genealogist, Smith consulted burial records, birth records, town registers, social media and more. Over the course of eight months, they fleshed out a tree all the way up to a man named Henry Hoover Jr. He had been born in 1804 in Lennox, Ont., near Belleville. The discovery was a milestone, but a daunting amount of work remained to populate the tree to determine which of Hoover's great-great-grandsons had killed Christine Jessop.

Soon, they had arrived at two possible families. Smith and his team investigated members of both surreptitiously. Eventually, they narrowed their scope to a single person: Calvin Hoover.

Today, the Toronto police use a file management system called Power Case that allows them to electronically search all files from a major case. Smith punched in Hoover's various addresses over the years into the system. To his surprise, he got a hit. One of Hoover's former Scarborough addresses, a townhouse by the Toronto Zoo, was in one of the police notebooks. Hoover, Smith learned, was a Jessop family friend who'd been listed as a close contact at the time of the abduction. He'd had regular access to the Jessop home and, as Heather Hoover's interview notes suggested, was probably aware that Christine would be alone on October 3, 1984. Finally, Smith had his answer.

THERE WOULD BE NO justice for Christine Jessop. Back in the summer of 2015, Hoover lived outside of Port Hope with one of his sons. He was a sad, anxious, isolated man. When his son went out to a wedding, Hoover opened a bottle of red wine, stepped into the garage, sealed the door with tape, placed headphones over his ears and flipped on the generator. With carbon monoxide spewing into the room, he sat down in a lawn chair and waited for life to drain from his body.

NEVER, IN ALL THE YEARS THAT HAD PASSED, HAD BOB OR JANET JESSOP SUSPECTED HOOVER.

When Smith learned Hoover was dead, he tracked down two vials of blood that had been kept at the coroner's office after the autopsy. Testing by a forensic biologist concluded that Hoover could not be excluded as a candidate, which meant one of two things: either he was the source of the DNA profile and was the killer, or the profile originated from someone who just happened to have the same DNA profile. The forensic expert told him the first scenario was three trillion times more likely than the second. It was incontrovertible: the murder of

Christine Jessop had been solved, 36 years after the fact, aided by science, time, persistence and a little luck.


Smith delivered the news in person to Janet Jessop. Never, in all the years that had passed, had Bob or Janet Jessop suspected Hoover. Like everyone who knew the man, they are left with more questions than answers.

IN THE SUMMER OF 2021, I met Guy Paul Morin at his childhood home in Queensville. He was unrecognizable for an instant, with a short salt-and-pepper beard and a full head of white hair. But the bold features remained, the strong brow, the neat part.

In 1997, Guy Paul Morin and his parents accepted a settlement from the province of \$1.2 million. He would have been entitled to more if he'd pursued a trial, but he'd had enough of courtrooms. Instead, he took a course in piano technology and found work that suited him: repairing pianos, some of them priceless. He tunes each string by ear, a task that requires someone who knows music intimately and has the patience and focus to tighten each string just so. After being in the glare of

the media for more than 10 years, his good name destroyed, a job where he can be alone suits him just fine.

Guy Paul had never visited Christine's grave, through the cedars at the back of his mom's backyard. We walked into the cemetery, the birds quietly chirping, the passing cars barely audible. Before we realized it, her headstone lay before us, and we both fell silent. Etched in pink stone, just above an engraving of Freckles, was a short tribute: "In loving memory of Christine Marion, dear daughter of Robert and Janet Jessop, sister of Kenneth."

What was there to say? In the public consciousness, the names Guy Paul Morin and Christine Jessop are forever linked. According to the many lies people believed over the years, his was the last face she ever saw. But the truth is he barely knew her. And here they were, two names bound in infamy, together at last. Finally, Guy Paul piped up, as courteous and kind as the day Shep and Fitz knocked on his door. "Rest in peace there, little girl," he said, and we left. 

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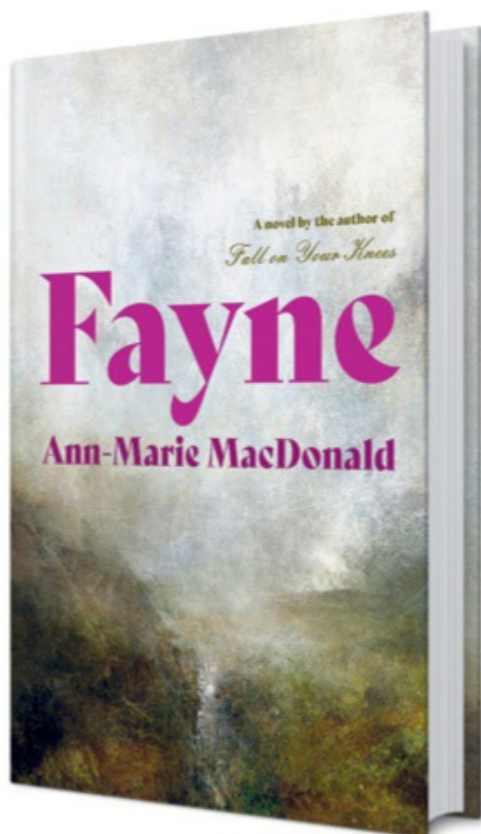
Optimist Club

Nothing can be done without hope and confidence.

HELEN KELLER

We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope.

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.



*Ann-Marie MacDonald
returns with a
Gothic spellbinder*

BY Emily Landau

SOME WRITERS RELIABLY churn out new books every year. Then there's Ann-Marie MacDonald, one of Canada's greatest (and most elusive) novelists, best known for her breakout novel, the Oprah-stamped *Fall on Your Knees*, about several generations of a family on Cape Breton. MacDonald likes to disappear from the literary landscape for a decade or longer, but she always returns with something epic and original. Her latest, *Fayne*, has a couple of things in common with her past works: it arrives after a (comparatively swift) eight-year hiatus and, at more than 700 pages, is as heavy and unwieldy as a cinder block. Otherwise, it's unlike any other book that she's written—in the best possible way.

MacDonald has said that the idea for *Fayne* came to her in a flash: first, she imagined a windswept landscape. Then she drew a picture of the panorama, adding a person in late-19th-century clothing. In the novel that emerged, the scene became the site of Fayne, an ancient, crumbling estate on 12,000 acres of rugged moorland. The figure became Charlotte Bell, a precocious pre-teen who lives on the estate with her father, Lord Henry Bell. Charlotte hearkens back to the tomboyish

child intellectuals of 19th- and early 20th-century literature, like Anne Shirley or Jo March, with an eidetic memory, an endless reserve of spunk and a fondness for Greek and Latin tomes. What's more, Charlotte is plagued with a so-called "Condition" that renders her "morbidly susceptible to germs." As a result, she sees no one other than her father and her loyal nursemaid, Knox. Her mother, Mae, and her older brother, Charles, are dead, memorialized in an imposing oil painting that hangs on the landing of the home's main staircase.

CHARLOTTE IS PLAGUED BY MYSTERIES ABOUT HERSELF AND HER DESOLATE HOME

Because Charlotte's mysterious condition keeps her isolated, her father hires a young male tutor to teach her about the modern sciences—evolution, paleontology, chemistry—and questions about her past and true identity begin to emerge. The book's length gives MacDonald the freedom to develop her characters, who pop into three dimensions via candid letters and flashbacks. Through these digressions, we meet several fascinating figures that have been tragically

stunted by gender expectations, including the vivacious, long-dead Mae, an American heiress tormented by the grief of multiple miscarriages, and Charlotte's prickly aunt Clarissa, a brilliant spinster in black silks whose sex thwarted her academic pursuits.

At its core, *Fayne* is an old-fashioned Gothic novel complete with an estate in disrepair, a desolate setting and a young protagonist plagued by mysteries about herself and her home. Even said protagonist's name—Charlotte Bell—pays homage to Gothic great Charlotte Brontë and the male pen name she used, Currer Bell. *Fayne* straddles the borderlands of England and Scotland and, according to Knox, of the human world and the world of faerie. Charlotte is also a character on the borders, in her case between childhood and maturity.

Gothic novels use the haunted house as a double for the haunted body, and MacDonald adopts this convention with a wink and a twist. In *Fayne*, the house mirrors not just the complexities of womanhood, but also of queerness. As the novel progresses, and her father pushes her toward traditional femininity in the form of corsets and petticoats, Charlotte begins to question the story of her family and her so-called "Condition," uncovering thorny dynastic secrets and a liberating truth about herself. *Fayne* is a big investment—of time, of focus, of wrist strength—but the twists are worth the page count. **R**

BRAINTEASERS



IN-TILE-IGENCE Test

Easy Which one of these four tiles could not be used to cover a floor if you had an infinite supply of them? Flipping them over is allowed.



One Too Many Cooks

Easy You're about to share a Friendsgiving meal with five of your nearest and dearest. Each friend made a different side. The problem? Larry is a terrible cook, so you don't want to sample his dish. Based on the following clues, can you figure out who made what—and which item to leave off your own plate?



Friends

- DIVYA
- EMILIO
- JASMINE
- LARRY
- YUTA

Dishes

- MASHED POTATOES
- CORNBREAD
- MAC AND CHEESE
- GRAVY
- GREEN BEAN CASSEROLE

Clues

- Yuta did not make a dish with a vegetable or grain in its name.
- Emilio made a side with only one word in its name.
- Divya made the mac and cheese.
- Jasmine did not make the green bean casserole.

IN-TILE-IGENCE TEST BY DARREN RIGBY; ONE TOO MANY COOKS BY EMILY GOODMAN; (TURKEY ILLUSTRATION) ISTOCK.COM/MARKO BABII



BY Beth Shillibeer

1. Sheryl Crow, Sting and Gene Simmons all had what job before becoming celebrities?

2. A group of music experts and computer scientists finally completed Beethoven's unfinished 10th symphony using what tool?

3. What Thanksgiving centrepiece was once worshipped as a god in Mayan culture?

4. What is the only land mammal native to New Zealand?

5. Known as the Trembling Giant, what is the oldest and largest known organism on earth, covering over 100 acres?

6. What kind of measuring device might make use of sand, shadows, candles and hands?

7. *The Exorcist* was the first horror film to be nominated for Best Picture at the Oscars, but which was the first to win?

8. After a nine-year career as leader of roughly 80,000 men, Ching Shih retired from what occupation in 1810?

9. Which two countries have a smaller land area than New York City's Central Park?

10. The Greek national anthem is based on which 158-verse poem by Dionysios Solomos?

11. With English, Tok Pisin and Hiri Motu as official languages, what Oceanic country is the most linguistically diverse in the world?

12. Some children use coloured buckets when trick-or-treating to signify particular needs. What does a teal bucket indicate?

13. What does the imaginary Wallace Line, located in the Indonesian Archipelago, separate?

14. Match, Team and Twilight are races in what sport?



15. Which famous magician, who died on October 31, 1926, was born Erik Weisz?

Answers: 1. Teacher. 2. Artificial intelligence. 3. Turkey. 4. Bats. 5. The Pando Aspen clone in Utah. 6. A clock. 7. *The Silence of the Lambs*. 8. Piracy. 9. Vatican City and Monaco. 10. "Hymn to Liberty." 11. Papua New Guinea. 12. Food allergies. 13. Asian and Australasian fauna. 14. Sailing. 15. Harry Houdini.

WORD POWER

As nights lengthen and a chill sets in,
the time is ripe to share scary stories.
Create a spooky atmosphere with these
words—if you dare!

BY Samantha Rideout

1. grimoire—

A: cup made from a skull.

B: book of magic spells.

C: haunted wardrobe.

2. curdle—

A: turn mouldy. **B:** bleed.

C: separate into lumps.

3. ephialtes—

A: madness. **B:** nightmare. **C:** clairvoyance.

4. Samhain—

A: pagan festival that evolved into Halloween.

B: mischievous entity that inhabits dolls. **C:** formal gathering of witches.

5. dullahan—

A: type of demon found in the Bible. **B:** vampire

leader. **C:** headless horseman of Irish folklore.

6. shroud—

A: mummy's coffin.

B: burial cloth. **C:** seemingly bottomless pit.

7. baleful—

A: unnaturally pale.

B: terrified and inconsolable. **C:** threatening evil.

8. dirge—

A: mournful song.

B: dagger used in rituals. **C:** werewolf in a human state.

9. harbinger—

A: decorative tombstone statue. **B:** obsessive horror-movie fan.

C: something that signals a future event.

10. phantasm—

A: illusion or ghost.

B: malicious spirit.

C: misguided wish.

11. eldritch—

A: weird and frightening.

B: ancient. **C:** in disrepair.

12. caliginous—

A: dark and misty.

B: zombified.

C: causing spine tingles.

13. astral—

A: fated. **B:** of a supposed non-physical realm of existence. **C:** taking place at nighttime.

14. triskaidekaphobia—

fear of **A:** curses.

B: the number 13.

C: coincidences.

15. revenant—

A: witch's pet black cat.

B: eerie sense of déjà vu.

C: person returned from the dead.

WORD POWER ANSWERS

1. grimoire—B: book of magic spells; as, The dusty *grimoire* contained an incantation for revealing any unseen spirits in the room.

2. curdle—C: separate into lumps; as, Jamille interviewed village elders in the hopes of collecting some blood-*curdling* local ghost stories.

3. ephialtes—B: nightmare; as, Although Fadil's eyes were open, he was in the grips of an *ephialtes*.

4. Samhain—A: pagan festival that evolved into Halloween; as, Ancient Celts believed otherworldly beings could pass into this dimension during *Samhain*.

5. dullahan—C: headless horseman of Irish folklore; as, Legend has it that if the *dullahan* pauses his ride near a house, somebody there will die.

6. shroud—B: burial cloth; as, The figure wore a *shroud* and had no skin on its legs.

7. baleful—C: threatening evil; as, The vampire's *baleful* eyes settled on the neck of her next victim.

8. dirge—A: mournful song; as, A *dirge* sounded from the organ, but there was no player in sight.

9. harbinger—C: something that signals a future event; as, Some consider sightings of the Mothman—a large, winged, red-eyed creature—to be *harbingers* of disaster.

10. phantasm—A: illusion or ghost; as, A *phantasm* appeared on the waves when the fog took the shape of a sailing ship.

11. eldritch—A: weird and frightening; as, It was impossible to pinpoint the source of the *eldritch* cackling heard throughout the house.

12. caliginous—A: dark and misty; as, On that

caliginous evening, it was easy for Marlo to lose his way in the woods.

13. astral—B: of a supposed non-physical realm of existence; as, The clairvoyant said she would create a bridge between the seance participants and the *astral* plane.

14. triskaidekaphobia—fear of: **B:** the number 13; as, Kia's *triskaidekaphobia* had her on edge on the 13th of each month.

15. revenant—C: person returned from the dead; as, The *revenant* looked like a regular man except for his unblinking eyes.

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

FROM PAGE 104

H	A	B	S		J	U	S	T	I	N
A	B	L	E		A	N	Y	O	N	E
S	H	A	W	N	M	E	N	D	E	S
T	O	R	S	O				C	O	R
O	R	E			H	O	N	E	S	T
				S	O	L	I	D		
	M	C	E	W	E	N		O	H	O
B	A	H	T				J	U	N	O
A	L	E	S	S	I	A	C	A	R	A
B	I	E	B	E	R			L	I	N
Y	A	K	Y	A	K			A	R	E

BRAINTEASERS ANSWERS

FROM PAGE 98

IN-TILE-IGENCE Test

The purple "N" shape.

One Too Many Cooks

Yuta made the gravy. Emilio made the cornbread. Divya made the mac and cheese. Jasmine made the mashed potatoes. Larry made the green bean casserole, so that is the dish you'll want to avoid.

Number Maze

The correct sequence of moves is: down 2, right 5, left 1, down 2, left 2, up 3, down 4, right 3.

2	5	3	3	3	1
4	2	4	4	4	5
5	2	4	4	2	1
2	1	3	1	4	3
5	2	3	2	2	4
4	2	3	5	4	★

Cryptogram: Scary Stuff

THE COBWEBS AND DUST IN THE HOUSE ARE NOW HALLOWEEN DECORATIONS.



BY Jeff Widderich

		5			9	7		
8	1						3	5
4					6		9	
			3					
	9	8				1	7	
					2			
	8		4					1
9	5						4	8
		4	6			9		

To Solve This Puzzle

Put a number from 1 to 9 in each empty square so that:

- ◆ every horizontal row and vertical column contains all nine numbers (1-9) without repeating any of them;
- ◆ each of the outlined 3 x 3 boxes has all nine numbers, none repeated.

SOLUTION

7	5	9	8	2	9	4	3	1
8	4	8	2	3	7	1	6	5
1	6	3	4	9	5	2	8	7
9	8	6	4	1	9	7	3	5
3	7	3	8	1	4	2	9	6
2	9	3	8	1	4	2	9	6
4	7	3	1	5	6	8	9	2
5	3	6	4	7	2	4	1	8
1	4	7	1	4	3	9	8	2



Top of the Pops

BY Derek Bowman

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9	10
11					12					
13					14					
15								16		
17					18	19	20			
			21							
	22	23						24	25	26
27						28	29			
30					31	32				
33								34		
35								36		

ACROSS

- 1 Rivals of the Leafs
- 5 *With 33-Across, singer with a Tim Hortons deal
- 11 Competent
- 12 Nobody specific
- 13 *He voices Lyle in *Lyle, Lyle Crocodile*
- 15 Sculpted middle
- 16 Major guitar maker

- 17 Mineral deposit
- 18 Plain-spoken
- 21 Like a rock
- 22 Mike or Dawn of curling
- 24 "What have we here?"
- 27 Thai currency
- 28 Awards granted in recent years to the clues with asterisks

- 30 *"Scars to Your Beautiful" singer-songwriter
- 33 See 5-Across
- 34 Join in a network
- 35 Blah blah
- 36 Field of expertise

DOWN

- 1 Simply must
- 2 Really detest
- 3 Trumpet sound
- 4 Works with a needle
- 5 Copier concern
- 6 *Encore ___ fois*
- 7 Coordinated
- 8 Tasks
- 9 Chemically non-reactive
- 10 Hatchling's home
- 14 "No way ___!"
- 19 Grand ___ Opry
- 20 Quiet assassin
- 21 Puts aside for later
- 22 Sasha Obama's sister
- 23 Rosy part of the face
- 24 Broadcasting
- 25 Singer Lena or Marilyn
- 26 Japanese port city
- 27 "___ Shark" (kids' tune)
- 29 Sch. near Beverly Hills
- 31 Beaufort or Bering
- 32 Rub the wrong way

For answers, turn to PAGE 102

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