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At first it was the destination which allured. Rainbow Haven had a heady ring on a moving-box-card-board sign. But dwarfed between asphalt and sky, clouds only a fingertip away, perspective shifts.

Looking more like Merry Pranksters than hitch-hikers, the three-some began their journey. "Think we'll get a ride?", she asks, shifting the pack on her back. He looks at the stream of traffic rushing past in hostile indifference and shrugs, "Think we'll get a miracle?"

They walk past men shoving each other outside the liquor store, voices drowning in industrial screams. Sun melting away in convention, they shed inhibition—dance, sing, philosophize, self-actualize—and ignore the sight of welfare mothers pushing dirty strollers.

"Do your feet hurt?", the quiet one asks. They nod in unison. Silhouettes against the light they trudge forward, single file, losing themselves in solitary thought.

At times, fear—a drifting, shapeless envelope—overwhelms and they stop, rubbing their soles and adjusting their dreams. They wonder at the signs along the road (some meaningless) and feel lost.

They ask for direction. A gas station attendant, "Robert" labelling his heart, draws them a map. "Just hold it in front of you", he suggests. But direction is personal and soon they have wandered off the path, onto the edge of the city. Advertisements making the mundane exotic ("We have BANANAS!!!) belie the searing endlessness of the road ahead.

"No, no, no", he is shaking his

head. They exchange worried glances. "Rainbow Heaven", his accented pronunciation soothes, "is this way. I will take you." In the back of the cab they make a new friend. They trade biographies. "I'm taking philosophy... then forestry. I want to know if when a tree falls in the forest anybody hears it.", the suntanned boy proffers. They smile and watch the green rush past.

Dropped at the right highway the girl says, "I'm going to write a poem about this." They resume their long trek. Accent floating in the wind, a voice shouts behind them, "My name is Dean, Dean!"

Now they are in the country, breathing in wildflower perfume and cushioning tired limbs on soft shoulders.

They scavenge, picking up treas-

ures tossed by steel-imprisoned souls, utterly oblivious.

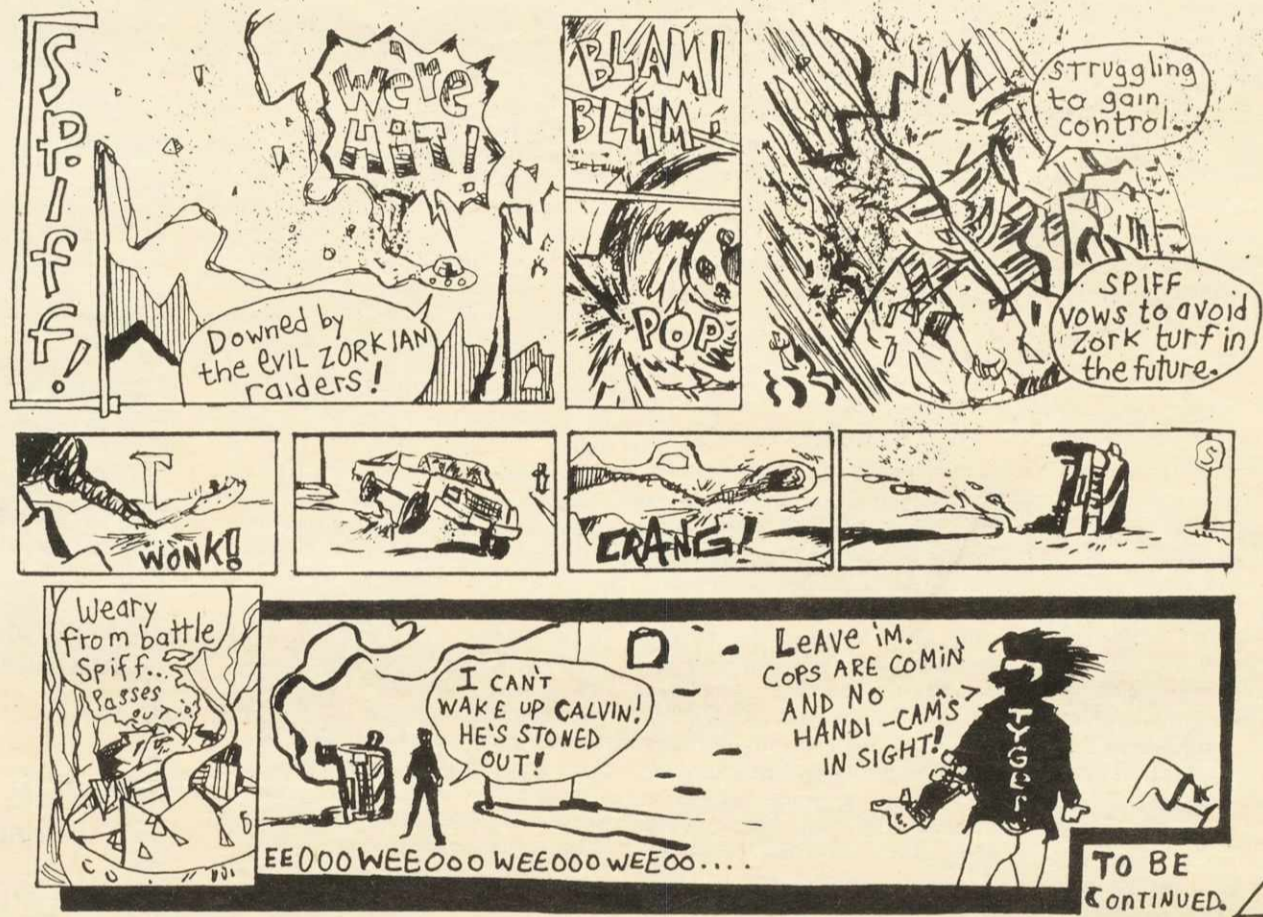
Sand feels orgasmic against bared skin. Mist lends fantasy to the view of their final resting point ahead.

Hollering exuberantly out of half-opened windows, freshmen whizz past in buses going the opposite direction.

"Maybe we're too late", one ponders. "Do we care?", another responds. The three smile. No.

"You walked here?", incredulous faces query. They nod. "It was fun.", they explain inadequately. No one understands.

Rainclouds hover menacingly, clearing the beach. They remain. Sitting in wet sand, raindrops pouring onto their cheeks, enjoying the taste of warm beer on their gritty lips. They are no longer waiting.



Singles not just for 45's anymore

by Bruce Gilchrist

Singles is definitely the kind of movie to go see with that often difficult to define person. That significant other person. Yes, it's just what you've been waiting for - the relationship movie of the 90's. But don't run away, it's actually a pleasant experience.

Singles is the six-year in the making brainchild of writer/producer/director Cameron Crowe (*Fast Times at Ridgmont High*, *Say Anything*). The movie is based on two solid premises - keep it simple and keep it good. Good in this case means funny, and Crowe's script allows for plenty of laughs.

The movie concerns itself with the interconnected lives of five single twentysomethings, three of whom live in the same U-shaped singles apartment building that serves as a halfway house (halfway to marriage or halfway to adulthood?). Linda (Kyra Sedgwick), the flaky material-

istic environmentalist (loves her car too much), keeps on setting herself up to get burned, so when she finally meets a truly nice guy, Steve (Campbell Scott), she's really afraid of getting close, especially because they met in a bar (horrors).

The problem with Steve is that he has two other loves; his work as a dreaming traffic engineer, and his friendship with Janet (Bridget Fonda who draws the biggest laughs). Janet is in love with Cliff (Matt Dillon), the lead singer of a Seattle alternative band. Cliff's band has been advised to dump him, and why not, they're played by the core of Pearl Jam! (This movie is a great chance to gawk at semi-famous Seattlelites by the way.) Janet has also been advised to dump Cliff, but clings to him in a silly, yet romantic fashion, based on an insecurity caused by the fallout of the eighties - that no one else will take her because she does not conform to the body standard. This leaves Debbie (well played by Sheila Kelly), who does conform to the body stand-

ard of the eighties, out in the wilderness hunting down her man, literally.

Across the board, the cast is excellent. It's a bunch of nice, handsome thirty year olds playing a bunch of nice, handsome, and somewhat flaky, twenty-five year olds, and they do it well, and they make us laugh. While the dialogue is contrived, it has been contrived for our pleasure and to point out ourselves to ourselves without offending and without completely forgetting about the real world either. Crowe's construct is a balance, a level meant to satisfy many masters. Crowe succeeds.

Crowe likes to focus on the story of one (or two if interlocking) of his cast and follows around this character until enough has occurred to warrant a change in lead. Thus the movie appears as a serial group of sketches, each with its own title, sort of like a filmed play. Although potentially disruptive, Crowe's dosing of character is extremely effective and prevents the movie from ever bogging

down. It can also be said that it prevents the deeper presentation of the characters (the strength of the underrated *Say Anything*), but the aim of *Singles* is different. What Crowe's saying is more like "take a look at yourselves, it's not the end of the world, most everybody is in this situation and you'll get through it."

There is a ton of laughs in *Singles*, but Crowe makes sure that we know we're laughing at ourselves. He's not afraid to injure his characters, but he's not looking to maim them either. There are occasions when Crowe takes strange left turns, such as Steve's explanation of the meaning of life (at age eight), and an oddball discussion between Janet and her doctor that ventures into strange territory leaving us more than slightly bewildered. It is these unexpected left turns that elevate *Singles*.

While not overly deep, *Singles* is intelligent, witty, and insightful, and it does provide a healthy base to have that deep relationship discussion you've been dreading. Enjoy!

SPIFF!
Life's Allowance
• A STRIP IN 20 PARTS •

Greetings.

Welcome to SPIFF, a story that I've been thinking about for awhile. A sort of revisionist look at the comic strip.

I hope to bend a few barriers of the college strip, namely it is possible to tell a story over a year of college publication. I only ask that you, the reader, be patient. All will be revealed... in time.

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