

# DRINK TANK



So, those of you on my Facebook know the big news - the Lovely & Talented Linda aren't together anymore. I'm not going to go into it, but mostly it was me flipping out about the state of my life. I'm turning 40, it happens. It happened when I was 30 (and thankfully, I wasn't doing the Drink Tank at that time because it would have gotten dark) and it's happening again.

I will say this - Linda's a wonderful woman, it was painful, it was my doing, and it's gotten a little messy.

I'm also in the midst of a major fit of insomnia. That's never easy, and it happens to me a lot more than I had a streak of 48 hours without any real sleep, two thirty minute naps was all, and I'm not feeling right yet. I am down about 25 pounds, which is better than I've managed in about 10 years. The problem with my losing weight is simple: I feel so much worse when I exercise than when I'm a hideous fucking CHUD.

Literally, I hate it when people talk about how good running makes them feel or that a good workout is what'll cure my insomnia. It doesn't. It makes it far far worse because I feel so bad after. It starts mentally, usually right after I'm done. I'll feel twitchy, and angry, and sad, and depressed, and anxious. That's the worst, and if I keep doing it, like I did around 2001 when I was trying to drop twenty pounds, I'll get seriously depressed.

Physically, it starts out OK, but then things start to fall apart.

I get pains in areas where I didn't work out. Everything makes me exhausted, and I also can't sleep. That last try lasted about 2 months and I stopped lifting and biking and I felt so much better almost instantly. It's a terrible cycle, no? I know that it's good for me, but what role does me enjoying my life play in my personal health aspects? Picasso lived to be 90 and smoked like a chimney, ate what he liked, drink like Hemingway on a self-destructive cycle, and slept anywhere from 2 to 12 hours a day. The guy was an animal from everything I've heard. I'm not on that path, but I do know that there's benefit to living a life you love.

And I think I am, at least right now?

Maybe it's that I need to play more games. THAT doesn't depress me at all, or make me anxious (though it does increase my injury rate) and I like doing it. Part of that might be the competition, which is fun, and part of it might be I don't see it as exercise. I kinda wish I could find a semi-regular group to try Sumo with! There, I think I'd do very well indeed!

And I'm going gluten-free, which might be kinda difficult, but I am gonna try as hard as possible.

We'll see how it goes...

Oh, and I've been writing poetry. I'm including one of my 7 poems in this here issue.

You're warned...

This issue's cover is from the wonderful Mason Starkey, while that image right there is a photo by Vanessa Applegate! I love teapots!



# Radar - A Poem

by Chris Garcia

When I was a kid  
and the dew was fresh on the feet  
of those little gnomes in Gramma's garden  
we'd walk out onto the lawn  
and Pops would throw my tennis ball  
so Radar could run after and bring it back  
covered in slobber like any family dog would

I hated Radar

Despite recognising the good dog qualities  
and all that he stood for  
like The March of Dimes  
and kindness to children and the elderly  
it all just made me wish  
for his complete destruction

He would head butt you in the knees  
gently as art glass  
And he'd make sure you could pet him  
then lick your hand  
if you wanted him to

And you always wanted him to

With me  
alone  
he was mean and angry in the same way  
A pipe-smoking 50s father  
would snap his newspaper  
at the sound of kid shennanigans

As he'd lay across my lap  
and I'd pet him tail to head  
the way he hated it  
Radar would look vacantly away  
towards the green wall my mother always said  
we should have repainted last year

Radar would wait outside the glass sliding doors  
smelling of mud and unforgivable rollings  
and expect you to clean him off out there





with the good hose around back  
and after he'd shake off the moisture  
so he'd enter dry  
and leave no trace or pawprint  
in the house

Radar and I would walk together  
that quiet distaste passing between us  
like British sitcoms  
we'd head towards Briarwood Park  
where I'd tie him to the small oak  
and he'd quietly settle down  
as I climbed to the top of the slide  
and waited  
just to avoid the tension between us

Pops would take him on car rides  
and make him sit in the backseat  
and I'd be in the front  
noticing every time my dad  
would look at him in the rear-view mirror

I'd come home from school  
bouncing and beaming until I saw him  
right there at the door  
his tail wagging  
but those eyes completely uncaring  
about the effort I put into the macaroni sunrise  
I made in Mrs. Jennet's

And Mom would put things  
on the edge of the kitchen table  
cookies and meatloafs  
and even whole uncarved turkeys  
Radar would ignore them  
until Mom would reach over and drop him a piece  
which he'd take away like Tesco's  
to eat outside  
while I watched him  
standing at the side window

Radar  
damn him  
passed at the age of twenty  
he ate something  
hopefully bitter  
then barely made it back to our porch  
before he vomited  
and died the death I always hoped he'd suffer  
for being a far better son than I ever was



# Review - The Girl from Missouri by Adrienne Foster

Pros: The chemistry between Harlow and Tone, some good humor

Cons: Sexism and racism were the dark side of the 1930s; this movie demonstrates both

The Bottom Line: For anyone who can overlook the archaic social mores and behavior, this relic of romantic comedy is enjoyable and amusing in a historical context.

Plot Details: This opinion reveals minor details about the movie's plot.

It's puzzling why fans of old movies complain about the loss of innocence they once had. When people consider the subtext of the dialogue, some old ones can be rather racy. *The Girl from Missouri* has plenty of scenes that are sexual by motivation, but because they're tastefully handled, this movie is forgiven. People who are particularly sensitive to sexist or racist interaction will definitely find this vehicle offensive, but if one can accept that this is what life was like during the 1930s, then it's enjoyable in a historical context.

Edie Chapman (Jean Harlow) is a showgirl who determines she won't fall prey to the hard life her mother had endured and will marry a guy with money. She runs away from home under the cover of nighttime with her chum, Kitty Lennihan (Patsy Kelly). Luck is with Chapman when she meets a despondent millionaire who proposes to her as soon as they meet, but then he commits suicide as soon as she leaves the room. Her quest then takes her to T.R. Paige (Lionel Barrymore), who quickly rebuffs her. Undeterred, she follows him to Palm Beach, where she meets his son, Tom (Franchot Tone). Tom has no reticence accepting her attentions, but doesn't fully understand what she is offering. Chapman works hard to make him realize that she's a virgin and intends to stay that way until she is married.

The storyline of this 1934 movie pivots on its sexism. Chapman insists the best future she can invest in is not a career, but marriage. In order to secure a good marriage, her virtue must remain intact, even though no such expectations are made of her groom. However, this gives Harlow one of the most amusing scenes she ever participated in; Chapman and Tom's outing in the night club is absolutely delightful. The impulse he acts on to turn her into a kept woman is hilarious. The chemistry between Harlow and Tone is wonderful, possibly even better than what she had with Clark Gable. Harlow's uncanny ability to "make love to the camera" definitely comes through in some of their love scenes.

Kelly shines as Harlow's gal pal. Her humorous timing works incredibly well throughout the story. Lennihan lacks the compunctions Chapman has about virtue, but expresses it with good humor and enough charm to make it easy to understand why Chapman enjoys her





company.

When Chapman calls out “Boy!” the sobering reality of depression-era society sinks in, but that’s the worst of it. Considering the climate of the U.S., with all of its racist lynchings at the time, this infraction is “small” enough to keep the viewer from wanting to pop the disc out the machine and break it.\* Seeing it also serves an example to later generations of how obnoxiously those of African descent were treated. (It’s mighty easy to forget what our forebears fought for.)

How Chapman maintains such a large, pretty wardrobe (designed by Adrian) and travels so much when she’s supposed to be economically challenged is another detail that defies logic, but movies made during this period were more about glamor than anything else.

It’s amazing how the studio scriptwriters, Anita Loos and John Emerson in this case, took ideas from the stars’ personal backgrounds to create their characters. Harlow was from Kansas City, Missouri, herself. Although marriage and kids had always appealed to her more than a career, other scripts she worked from, specifically *Bombshell* and *Reckless*, borrowed the uglier details from her own short life. Fortunately for her, this picture wasn’t as callous as the others.

The script lacks cohesiveness, despite the fun that is derived from it. For instance, the sudden mention of the fellow Lennihan left behind comes out of the blue after quite some time into the story. The goal Chapman sets for herself at the beginning is lost without any inner conflict or crisis point to show her changing mind.

When all is said, *The Girl from Missouri* is a good specimen of a 1930s romantic comedy. Harlow and Tone make a good team and it’s sure-fire entertainment for anyone who can overlook the archaic social mores and behavior.

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\*Consider the 1939 movie, *Gone with the Wind*. After several decades it seems Ashley Wilkes still escapes censure for his insinuated involvement in the Klu Klux Klan.