

PSECRET PSOCIETY PSHORT PSTORIES

vol. I (2010-15) by mike bozart (agent 33)

[[[]]] ... *from the inside virtual flap* ...

Here within are four dozen short stories – one is actually a novelette – that run the gamut from the marginally meta-real to the sometimes surreal to the oddly ordinary. Most clock in around 1,500 words.

The two primary characters in these tales of extricated intrigue are Agents 32 and 33 of a nebulous entity known as psecret psociety (yes, with silent p's). Agent 33 is the author (Parkaar) and Agent 32 is the author's wife (Monique).

So, if you find yourself needing to have some interesting (or at least different) reading material to fill those thirteen-to-seventeen-minute gaps in your day, this may very well be your ticket to slide ... into knowhere. [*sic*]



**PSECRET
PSOCIETY
PSHORT
PSTORIES**

Vol. I (2010-15)

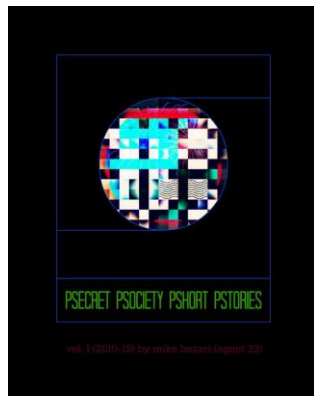
by Mike Bozart

4-H Edition

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And now for some somber legalese ...

First and foremost, this collection of short stories is a volume of fiction, and is not a factual account of any slice of the space-time continuum on Earth or anywhere else. Names, characters, places, events, incidents, and situations are either the product of the author's warped imagination or are used in a purely and wholly fictitious fashion. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, or their otherworldly spirits, or any locales or proprietary objects, is entirely, and without exception, coincidental.



cover art by M. van Tryke

*This collection of tales
is dedicated to those
of you who pause
to gratuitously ponder
on the accumulated dust
on the shoe molding
on cold-floor mornings
while the faucet*

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Table of Contents

Cover

Inside virtual flap

Title page

Disclaimer

Dedication

Foreword

Preface

Acknowledgments

Epigraph

About the Author

1. spelling rewl

2. The Edwards Branch Tunnel Legend

3. Galax- Galaxy

4. SFO | | SOFA

5. Plasma & Wigwood

6. Availing Asheville

7. Agent 107: A Final Report

8. Disconnected in DC

9. Greensboro Gaffe

- [10. NoDa Soda](#)
- [11. Boone There ~ Fun That](#)
- [12. Siquijor Seduction Zone](#)
- [13. Psatori](#)
- [14. Wrightsville Beached](#)
- [15. His Name was Ted Maize](#)
- [16. A Tour to the Tower](#)
- [17. Caught Wild in Cotswold](#)
- [18. That Old Ball Game](#)
- [19. Water Hammer](#)
- [20. A Search for Sidle on N](#)
- [21. Zoo Are You?](#)
- [22. Overheard & Overhead](#)
- [23. Carolina Beached](#)
- [24. Windmill with a View](#)
- [25. Ok, Roll the Dice](#)
- [26. The Right Triangle](#)
- [27. Mysterieu Returns](#)
- [28. Bangkok in Salisbury](#)
- [29. Airported to Knowhere](#)
- [30. Lucky Strikes](#)

- [31. LFC in CLT](#)
- [32. The Bulge](#)
- [33. One October Day](#)
- [34. Fall of the Yellow Jackets](#)
- [35. One Day in November](#)
- [36. Rooftop Horror](#)
- [37. The Balcony](#)
- [38. Found Note](#)
- [39. A Trek to Zeke's Island](#)
- [40. Vermont Street](#)
- [41. Beanstreets](#)
- [42. Bottled](#)
- [43. Portland Portent](#)
- [44. Kron by Night \(novelette\)](#)
- [45. Le Noir de Lenoir](#)
- [46. Raleigh by Railway](#)
- [47. December Delirium](#)
- [Bonus: Gold, the short story](#)
- [Graphics dump: the front covers](#)

Foreword

So, now it's a collection of somewhat strange, curiously pedestrian, and often inside-outed short stories. Yes, a lot of recursion looping around in these scripts. Well, if nothing else, they got my mind off of my painful roids [*sic*] for a while.

I went ahead and printed them out. Yes, all four dozen. They are all over the desk. Some are on the coffee table, doubling as coasters. The coffee mug stain on the cover image is like a brown corona. A perfect concentric ring. Oh, and some are still in the bathroom. Perfect reads while on the crapper.

It's not O. Henry by any stretch. There are some sparse stretches. Vacant terrain ... for mental meandering?

Yes, I could see the 'For Let' signs (recalling my British vacation), but just wondered where the previous tenants were now. And that wasn't getting me any closer to a paid lunch. Furthermore, I can't afford any more expensive time off. This should give you a hint of what's in store.

Well, there ya go. I start reading one these short stories and the lines for a short story come out like wine from a leaking oak cask. Maybe that was the desired effect. Maybe this is all encouragement. I think I'll try my hand at this in the near future. I sure have enough notes now to mash up some fine typographic mess.

You know, speaking of wine, it's that time. I sure hope that I didn't drink all of the \$5.99 Merlot last night. But, judging by this hangover, I think I did.

Hey, you could do worse things. We all could. But, let's not.

- Herman S. Goetze, [Taos, New Mexico]

Preface

Short stories. Poems expanded. Novels reduced. Succinct structures that spare the author's blitheful blathering (if we're lucky). Perfectly sized literary vessels for this hectic, not-much-time-to-spare modern world. Pardon me, my cell phone just beeped.

Yes, I love the 1500-meter race. I mean, the 1500-word pace. It's a nice distance. A nice section of the stream.

I really enjoy composing them so that every word fits just right. An economy of tale. Ok, maybe there are a few misshapen clunkers. And, maybe I leave out just one piece of the puzzle and claim that the forever-staring-at-me dog ate it. I just know that you will find it ... and place it into your own teeming morpheme tapestry.

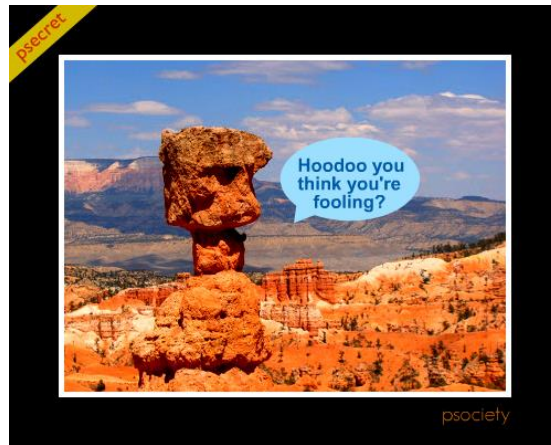
These 48 tales were posted offline and online, independent of each other. Thus, some characters are explained in brackets and parentheses ad nauseam (e.g., Parkaar, my ailing alias). So sorry about that.

The history of the mystery. After writing a series of short stories under the still-obscure psecret psociety flag from 2010 through 2015, I decided to round up these little literations [*sic*] and assemble them chronologically into one Old English sheaf.

I hope you enjoy them, and I surreally hope they spark some dormant neurons in your bean. If so, I'll consider it a successful mission with an anonymous accomplice of the highest order (you). Well, one never knows; but, two ...

Acknowledgments

The author would like to duly recognize and sincerely thank the effectible atoms and the spaces between.



“No one likes an extraneous epigraph.”

– Galerie Parcouer

1. **pselling rewls** (early 2010)

One of the first things that Ernie the electronic earwig (our rancid ringleader) considered doing after creating psecret psociety – the meta-real storybook playground featured on Facebook – in 2010 (after Café 23 metaphorically burned to the unsound ground) was creating our own written language. Crazy idea, I know.

Well, we were still going to type in English; we were just going to alter the spelling of certain words. We knew that some would say it was just a goony gimmick. We anticipated this and sharpened our salient hooks.

First up, the only suggestion that got unanimous approval: lead off all words that begin with an s with a silent p. For example, science would be spelled *pscience* and the word spelling would become hyper-correct as *pspelling*. Psychology would not become *ppsychology*, though. We figured a double silent p would be a bit much, even for our motley mental lot.

I will now enumerate some spelling proposals – in chronological order, just like they had calendar eyes – that failed to get etched in stone. Some got a majority of support, only to be quashed by a lone veto (which any agent could secretly and anonymously submit). In such case, agents were still welcome to use these unapproved and non-promulgated spelling patterns in the name of merry linguistic mayhem. (Agent 14 has proved to be a first-order master at this.)

Well, the proposal that I, Agent 33, promptly submitted to the ear room, as we fondly call Ernie's micro-office, was to spell words ending with or containing ool and ule as ewl. For example, let's use this capricious sentence: Charlene, one cool magical lady with a new smartphone from the changing city, saw the foolish schoolboy eat a crimson toadstool.

When we combine the official silent p rule with the non-official ewl rule we arrive at: Charlene, one cewl magical lady with a new psmartphone from the changing city, psaw the fewlish pschewlboy eat a crimson toadstewl.

Next, there was a radical suggestion to do away with the letter c altogether. Startling, I know. A hard c would be spelled with a k; a soft c, with an s. The hard ch digraph (as in march) would be spelled with a strikethrough of a leading brace: {̄. Über-zany, for sure.

Additionally, the soft ch digraph (as in chandelier) would become sh. The ck digraph (as in kick) would be spelled kk. The cl and cr digraphs would become kl and kr, respectively. And, finally, the trigraphs sch and chl would become sk and kl, respectively and respectfully.

When Charlie got wind of this extreme notion, he blew up our cell phones.

Hey agents, please kill this worthless nonsense. I don't want to become {̄arlie or {̄ukk. It's a krap proposal. Dit{̄ it.

I read it twice. All I could think was: *Strange how he went on to use the {̄ in his rant. And, wow, his phone can do*

strikethroughs of text. Charlie must be one of Ernie's pet agents, always getting the best gadgets first.

When we carefully conjoin the official silent p rule with our two non-official spelling rules, our test-case sentence becomes: Psharlene, one kewl magikal lady with a new psmartphone from the {anging psity, psaw the fewlish pskewlboy eat a krimson toadstewl.

Another idea floated by one of our outstanding overseas agents was the reversal of f and ph. Thus, the new *fase* is *phantastic*. *Phiscal* and *fysical* health are of *phoremmost* importance. *Pheeble Foebe pheels phaint phrom flebitis*.

And, when we add this f/ph swap to our increasingly strange sentence, we get: Psharlene, one kewl magikal lady with a new psmartfone phrom the {anging psity, psaw the phewlish pskewlboy eat a krimson toadstewl.

Are we done yet? No whey! (Sorry, this is the cliché of a pun that keeps giving.) Plenty more milk of human kindness as well as from a cow's sorrow. Ok, setting aside the old rites for the newly installed rongs, [sic] yet another idea was offered by a female agent in Yorkshire – one who said that she always hated seeing words end in y, ever since elementary school.

She offered to all of us fine and refined agents an earnest invitation to change all words ending in the sometimes-vowel y to an ie ending; that is, well, the same sound. Hence, we see: *Yesterdaie, lovelie ladie Marie laie quietlie*.

And now, if you combine this latest proposed spelling rule with the previous ones, our quickly-fading-away-from-legible-English sentence becomes: Psharlene, one kewl magikal ladie with a new psmartfone phrom the {anging psitie, psaw the phewlish pskewlboy eat a krimson toadstewl.

But wait, there's more! (Read it in the tone of a late-night TV commercial barker.) Another clever female agent in Kansas wanted each and every lone indefinite article a to be spelled eigh. She stated that if this four-letter combination was good enough for a long a sound in eight, then it was definitely good enough for all indefinite a's in our typography.

And thus, our fabulously forlorn (Have I used that phrase somewhere? Must check valve later.) sentence is now: Psharlene, one kewl magikal ladie with eigh new psmartfone phrom the {anging psitie, psaw the phewlish pskewlboy eat eigh krimson toadstewl.

Fred then wanted a w placed in front of one and once for phonetic reasons. Done. Psharlene, wone kewl magikal ladie with eigh new psmartfone phrom the {anging psitie, psaw the phewlish pskewlboy eat eigh krimson toadstewl.

Penultimately [*sic*] (mercifully, we're almost done), a senior male agent demanded that j replace the letter g when the true sound was that of the letter j. He was tired of j being ripped off by g. It was *trajic* (or better, *trajik*) how long this error had gone on.

With this addition, our demonstrably demented sentence is now: Psharlene, wone kewl majikal ladie with eigh new

psmartfone phrom the {anging psitie, psaw the phewlish
pskewlboy eat eigh krimson toadstewl.

Last, but by no means in the least, a younger female agent
in Vietnam suggested that the word new be replaced with
the animalistic homophone gnu. I asked her what led her to
this particular word-switch idea and she texted back:

It has a silent g and all the cool kids text nu for new on their cell phones.

I'm a bit of an old, stuck-in-my-ruts, plodding goat now, and I
can only guess what's hip these days in youth culture. Thus,
I didn't veto her motion; I forwarded it to Ernie and the other
agents. However, one of them torpedoed it. Not sure who it
was. Maybe it was the extra-odd one who was roller-skating
on thin ice.

Well, anyway, combining the one official cardinal spelling
rule (The silent p in front of words beginning with the letter s.
Remember that one? If you forget that one, I don't even
know if a special variance could get you past the wrought
iron E gates.) with the eight unofficial ones, our highly
hypothetical sentence has finally become: Psharlene, wone
kewl majikal ladie with eigh gnu psmartfone phrom the
{anging psitie, psaw the phewlish pskewlboy eat eigh
krimson toadstewl.

If you now have a headache, my sincerest apologies. If you
just got dizzy and upchucked your lunch, send Ernie the bill.
He's good for it. Maybe. Check's in the mail.

And, what did our electronic earwig ringleader think? Well,
sans sugarcoating, Ernie was furious with this combination

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