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June 11, 2003

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Puget Sound's Newspaper of the Poor and Homeless • Volume 10, No. 12

# Seriously Sherman

How did he get passed off poet talks  
and what, terror, tradition, and what's so  
great about America anyway?

Inside: Public Schools in Crisis • Seniors Fight Reagan  
of the Devil • Challenge to Compton • Remembering

PHOTO OF SHERMAN ALEXIE, BY ROB CASEY.

Interview by Timothy Harris

**A**ward-winning author Sherman Alexie has never been one to sit still for long. Over the past decade, this 36-year-old Coeur d'Alene Indian from Spokane has established himself as a major literary voice through his poetry, novels, short stories, and movies. His new book of short stories, *Ten Little Indians*, will be released by Grove/Atlantic in June. It contains "What You Pawn I will Redeem," a story recently published in *The New Yorker* that features a *Real Change* vendor as the central character. Alexie is currently working on two biographies, one on guitar-phenomenon Jimi Hendrix, and the other on his own grandfather, a highly decorated World War II veteran.

Alexie is a passionate, funny, politically committed personality who challenges the certitudes of both right and left, arriving at a politics that transcends easy definition. In this interview, Sherman discusses his own success, politics and identity, and tells us why, after everything, America is still a great country.

**Real Change:** First of all, I'd like your opinion on something that comes up a lot these days. George Bush: Do you think he's as dumb as he looks?

**Sherman Alexie:** I don't think he's dumb. I think he has probably slightly above-average intelligence. But that's hardly a qualification for President of the United States and the Most Powerful

Man in the World. I think compared to the average middle-manager, the average CPA, the average lawyer, Dubya fits in well, but compared to Clinton or 90 percent of the men and women in the Senate, Dubya is far less intelligent.

In the words of his own former chief speechwriter, David Frum, Dubya is "uncurious." So it's not so much a matter of his intelligence as

his intellectual ambition.

**RC:** What do you think got him where he is?

**Alexie:** (Laughs) Luck. The other day I was arguing with somebody, one of my gym friends and a conservative, and he was talking about Dubya's accomplishment. And I said, "He hasn't really done that much. I mean, if your father's President of the United States, and you become President of the United States, you haven't really done much. To match my father all I would have had to do is have spotty blue-collar employment for 40 years. So he didn't rise above his father. He didn't become a priest, or a poet. He didn't branch out into anything new or exciting. He's daddy's son."

**RC:** He went into the family business.

**Alexie:** Yeah, exactly. They just needed a figurehead. I mean, there are conservative politicians I respect and admire, even if I don't agree with their politics necessarily. And then there are those conservative politicians, and liberals too, who completely exist as figureheads, as symbols. Reagan was a sym-

bol. A powerful symbol, but he had nothing to do with his policies. Part of it was due to his Alzheimer's, I'm sure, but he never served on boards. He never was the intellectual they call to speak on this or that policy. It's the same thing with Dubya. After he's done, it's eight and done, and he'll exist merely as a symbol.

**RC:** You've said that recent events have made you suspicious of tradition, and that you are trying to let go of "the idea of being right." What are some of the questions that the American response to September 11th has raised for you?

**Alexie:** The idea of responding as a tribe. Immediately, that day, I was suspicious when the word heroes started popping up. That made the victims into symbols and not human beings.

I do a comedy bit about it: don't you think that, out of all the people who died, there was at least one major asshole? At least one major asshole? Don't you think, of all the people who died, there's one whose kids are quietly celebrating? Don't you think there's at

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## CANDIDATES Continued from Page 5

everyone is going to forget about my past," says Manning. "But I've picked myself up, gotten the help I've needed, and moved forward. I'm against all criminal activity and domestic abuse is high on that list. [The Brame case] says that no one is above the law. Whether you're a police officer or Joe Blow on the street, you have to be held accountable for your actions."

It's not coincidental that Manning's running against Compton, who has been chair of the Council's Public Safety Committee for the past four years. On Compton's watch, programs such as the crime prevention unit, which helped people start block watches and deal with crime in their neighborhood, and the gang unit, started by former mayor Norm Rice in the early '90s when the city had gang problems, have been disbanded. The city has halved the number of Community Services Officers who deal with families, juvenile runaways, and women who have been victims of domestic disputes.

If Compton had been more of an advocate, Manning says, some of those programs could have been saved. "I'd like to redefine how we look at public safety. It's not just police officers and firefighters," he says. "It's an investment in people, families, and human services. We cut our public safety budget, we cut essential services that could keep people from falling through the cracks."

If Manning were the Council's Public Safety chair, he would be a former Seattle cop overseeing the Seattle Police Department — a unique position. That might raise a few eyebrows of those looking for more police accountability.

But "I think police officers want more police accountability too," says Manning, who served as president of the Black Law Enforcement Association and was board director for the Seattle Police Guild. "For every officer

who's out there misusing his authority or doing something wrong, there are 700-800 who are doing it right.

"Racial profiling occurs, but I don't think as much in Seattle as it does in big cities like Los Angeles, New York. Having policemen write out reports on the race of every person they stop" — another City Council plan — "is just more paperwork."

Since leaving the City Council, Manning has worked for Windermere Real Estate and volunteers at a food bank near his home in Rainier Valley. While volunteering at the food bank, he sees people coming in who have just recently lost their jobs and never thought they would come to a food bank. "The biggest problem Seattle faces right now is the lousy business climate," says Manning. "We're losing so many businesses right now because we're not a business-friendly city. Especially small businesses" — they're the heart and soul of our community."

**By the numbers:** As of last Friday, the Manning campaign had listed only two contributors: Eugene Oliver, \$300 and Blake Gayle Johnson \$50. A spokesman from the Ethics Commission told Real Change that they were expecting more contributions from Manning, but first-time candidates who are working with the electronic filing system for the first time are given more leeway in filing.

### Ángel Bolaños

The first thing Ángel Bolaños brings up when we ask why he's running for City Council is the drinking water. The city's water supply is "not as clean as it could be," he says; he wants Seattle Public Utilities to switch from chlorine to less toxic chemicals to purify the water. Chlorine "is a very dangerous chemical," prone to tampering from potential terrorists.

It's a weird way to start off an interview, but it turns out that Bolaños' campaign isn't constituted on a single-minded zeal for a clean drinking glass.



PHOTO OF ÁNGEL BOLAÑOS, BY ADAM HOLDORF.

He's had real-world experience in working for poor people, setting up CASA Latina, the non-profit agency that helps Latino workers find jobs and improve their English. He has counseled single mothers who've left abusive husbands and searched for work for welfare recipients. "They are forced to find jobs that pay \$7 or \$8 an hour," he says. "I know how hard that is."

Thus, a central plank in his campaign platform is a city-wide living wage. Yes, that's city-wide — not just for the employees of the City of Seattle, or those of the businesses that the city contracts with, but for all of the some 2 million of the people who work in the city.

Bolaños is taking his campaign to the streets in what seasoned political advisors would probably call a blind walk. He's not just cherry-picking the regular voters out of the county elections record; he's walking door-to-door through entire neighborhoods, standing at peoples' thresholds and saying, Let me tell you why I'm running for City Council.

Who knows? It might even be a winning strategy. In 2001, Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels gained a narrow edge over

his opponent by tapping into immigrants in precincts with traditionally low voting turnout.

Reflecting his work experience, Bolaños is a strong supporter of human services to the poor; he says unambiguously that, if the state of Washington cuts financial assistance to very-low-income people (as is being discussed in Olympia now), the city should come up with enough money to replace it. "Why repave the streets? Why not reprioritize?" The state Legislature's angst over the economy has been too channeled into meeting Boeing's demands, he says; officials are capitulating to narrow economic interests. "We must create a systematic way of diversifying the economy," he says.

Why go after Compton? Because, Bolaños says, he's too cozy with the Seattle Police Guild and not aggressive enough against racial profiling. The city plan to install video cameras in all patrol cars never seems to have got off the ground, he notes. "Money was allocated; things were said — but what happened with that?" Even if the video cameras had been installed, Bolaños would prefer greater measures for police accountability. "Continuous, rigorous" training for all SPD officers, regardless of race, is the way to "create mechanisms for officers to be aware of racism and violence."

And Bolaños sees the up-skirt photography ban, one of Compton's most publicized efforts, as a bunch of hoo-ha. "I don't believe that by having this, you make a woman any safer."

Why should poor people bother to vote for Bolaños? "I am an immigrant, and I know what it's like when people come after you."

**By the numbers:** Raised \$6,631 as of May 20. Employers of biggest contributors include Plymouth Housing Group and United Brotherhood of Carpenters Local 131 (\$650 each). ■

A profile of candidate Susan Harmon's campaign will appear in our June 12 issue.

## ALEXIE Continued from Page 1

least one murderer in the bunch who got away with it? A rapist, a child abuser, or a pedophile? But instead, they were immediate icons, and that's dangerous.

We canonized them immediately, just as asshole terrorists are canonized by their tribes. Nobody's responding individually or asking "Why did this happen and what can we do to prevent it from happening again?" Instead it was "What can my country do? What can my tribe do? How can I defend it?"

War is all about the idea of tribes and defending your country, so I've been trying to let go of the idea of basing my politics on the good of a small group. I've become less and less Indian-centric as the years have gone on. After September 11th, I barely talk about it. I talk about poor people; I talk about disadvantaged people, and that sort of covers everything I need to cover. It becomes not about race, region, or

country, but about a particular group of people sharing the same circumstances. I talk about the universal condition of the poor, and thinking and talking about it that way helps eliminate the negativity of tribalism. That's been my response: to see people by their power or lack thereof, rather than the color of their skin.

**RC:** It's the double-edged sword of identity politics.

**Alexie:** Yeah. Exactly. That's why liberals are losing elections. We've gone over to that completely. We're marching for ourselves, and no one's really extending. We're not basing our policies on also changing the lives of people who don't agree with us.

**RC:** Your last book of short stories, *The Toughest Indian in the World*, was mostly about professionally successful urban Indians, which makes sense since it's pretty much what you've become; you've taken on that frame of

reference. You're one of those rare people who've been able to transcend the limitations of their class, and I'm wondering how that feels for you: if you've become comfortable with who you are now, or if you still feel like a visitor?

**Alexie:** Well, I'm happy. What did Mae West say: "I've been rich and poor. Rich is better." My own variation on that is, "Money doesn't solve all your problems, but it solves most of them, and gives you a fighting chance at the rest." Anybody who says poverty is ennobling is full of shit. It's debilitating and demoralizing and destructive. So, regardless of my emotional feelings, my self-esteem and etcetera, the fact that I have money and comfort is only a plus.

On the emotional side, there's a lot of guilt. You grow up poor and then get this kind of power and privilege, and of course you're going to feel guilty. There were kids I grew up with who were ambitious and intelligent, and for various reasons, most often not of their

own design, didn't have the kind of success I did, so I think about that. I see them when I go home to the rez, and they have admiration and rage and hatred and love for me. So, I'm skilled, and I'm lucky. And sometimes I feel much more lucky than skilled. Some mornings I wake up thinking I don't deserve it. Other mornings I wake up and think, "Yes, I do."

I wouldn't be doing what I do if I wasn't already half-crazy anyway. The thought of being half-crazy and successful makes me crazier, I think. Personality-wise, with my particular handbag of disorders, I'm not much different from a lot of people on the street. I'm just well enough to manage.

**RC:** But you must be fairly driven. It seems like you always have six projects going. You're insanely busy.

**Alexie:** Yeah, but I have to be. I'm obsessive — it's the obsessive-compulsive

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## ALEXIE Continued from Page 8

disorder (*laughs*). If I'm not writing a book, I'm taking a shower. I'm washing my hands if I'm not writing a poem, so I try to write the poem. The impulse is to wash my hands, but I use that energy to write a poem.

**RC:** You're working on a *Hendrix biography*. Do you feel any particular connection to Jimi?

**Alexie:** Well, being from the Northwest, and into the music, but my big connection was my sister who died when I was 14 and was a huge fan of his music and the psychedelic rock of that era. She got pregnant at Altamont and was hanging around Berkeley. She was an Indian Hippie, big time. I really admired and envied the life she was living at that time.

Looking back, it was random and chaotic and emotionally devastating, but back then it seemed romantic, so I'm writing the biography with two eyes. There's the romantic side — and, I don't want to sound like a neon, but I also talk about the destruction it caused, not only for the individual, but also for the culture and

the country. I'm a liberal with a healthy respect for self-discipline. I believe self-discipline is directly connected to self-esteem. We've heard all the liberal, artistic takes on Hendrix. I want to do the liberal Dale Carnegie take on him.

**RC:** When you wrote the screenplay for *Smoke Signals*, your strategy was to create a very accessible film that would resonate with mainstream audiences. The Business of Fancydancing, really, was anything but. It's much more thematically ambitious; it's much more challenging. It was kind of an art house film.

**Alexie:** It was so arty the art houses didn't want it.

**RC:** So, what led you there?

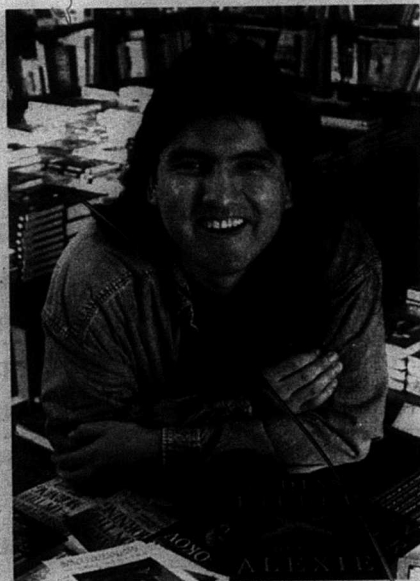
**Alexie:** Rebellion. As much as I like *Smoke Signals* — I love it in some ways, and I certainly love what it's done for my career — it's not really consistent with my art. And maybe some part of it is poverty guilt.

**RC:** So, "Now that I've done something successful, I need to do something that will be completely marginal and flop?"

**Alexie:** Yeah, exactly (*laughs*). To prove that I don't belong. *Fancydancing* was this really mentally ill blast of insecurity. I mean, that's what my wife said.

**RC:** I find my wife is usually right.

**Alexie:** Yeah, I know. She said, "Make *Smoke Signals* again. People love it. It's a good movie." And I might. But it seemed important to me to make a statement about who I am and what I do and my ambition. I think it's really interesting, and I think it's really flawed in many ways, but I also think it has something to say. So I like to think of it as this noble experiment, and a sign of things to come. This is where I'm going. This is what I want to do. It's an economic failure, but in the end we only spent a couple hundred thousand dollars, which is



SHERMAN ALEXIE WITH HIS "BINGE" BOOK, *INDIAN KILLER*, WHICH IS CURRENTLY BEING TURNED INTO A MOVIE. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE SHERMAN ALEXIE WEBSITE, [WWW.FALLSAPART.COM](http://WWW.FALLSAPART.COM).

## Beautiful Losers

*Ten Little Indians*  
By Sherman Alexie  
Grove Press, June 2003  
288 pages, \$24

Review by Timothy Harris

Sherman Alexie says he doesn't think much of humanity, but he's wrong — not about humanity of course (we're every bit as bad as he says and worse) — but about what he thinks. *Ten Little Indians*, Alexie's latest book of short stories, depicts our species as flawed at best, but also capable of monumental efforts toward decency. This, easily his most hopeful work to date, has moved past the darkness and divided identities of his last collection, *The Toughest Indian in the World*, to embrace a more mature vision that is generous and unifying, beautiful and kind.

Many of these new stories are concerned with the small struggles of everyday domestic life and the epic proportions these can assume. In "Do You Know Where I Am," a lovely meditation on how hard it can be for even above-average people to live with passable integrity, the main character reveals a long-held ambition to "learn magic and open a 24-hour supermarket that sold resurrection and redemption." This could be described as the idea that underlies this entire collection.

With *Ten Little Indians*, comparisons to Raymond Carver, another Northwest writer who excelled at short stories and poetry, become inevitable. Carver's vignettes focused nearly exclusively on the White working class. His

characters, it seemed, all lived in Everett, drove 10-year-old cars, and smoked too much. Yet his stories are full of the beauty of the everyday hero — the two-bit loser who's doing the best he or she can to live with dignity in an absurd and god-forsaken world.

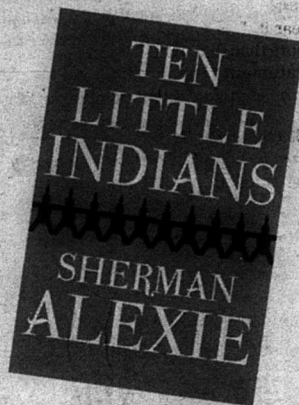
Alexie seems to pick up where Carver left off, but with greater range and a hopefulness that seems almost, well, Catholic. Along with the original sin is the possibility of daily redemption and final resurrection. And the politics are more interesting. Sprinkled among the wreckage of the everyday are the persistent weeds of race, gender, and class, pushing up between the cracks and returning year after year to

choke the marigolds and forget-me-nots.

Yet the message never overwhelms the art. Even the most explicitly political stories, like "Can I Get a Witness," which begins with a terrorist bombing in Pioneer Square and delves into the events and aftermath of September 11th, never veer from their human context. This tale of an unhappy woman and her hapless rescuer owes much more to Sappho than Chomsky. Abstractions have no place here. These stories live down near the gut and groin, far from the airier regions up above. This is a place we all know, where nobody is allowed to claim innocence.

None of which is to say that this work suffers from a surplus of seriousness. Underneath all the pain, the betrayal, the struggling for redemption, is the irrepressible urge to laugh. Grief, silly White people, self-delusion, and

death, apparently, are all ultimately pretty damn funny. So go on. Have a laugh on us. ■



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Greg Nickels, Mayor

a lot of money but it's not a lot of money for a movie. And we're gradually making it back. By the time the video and DVD play out, we will break even.

**RC:** Do you still have plans to do a movie around Indian Killer?

**Alexie:** Evan Adams, who was in *Smoke Signals* and *Fancydancing*, is writing and directing that. I gave it over to him. I just sort of lost the fire for it. So it's his project. I don't even know what they're doing. I stepped away completely.

**RC:** I read somewhere that Indian Killer is the book you've written that you still feel like you haven't come to terms with.

**Alexie:** Yeah, I don't know where it came from. I remember writing it. I was so angry. My career was really blasting off then, so there was that sort of heady rush and people's questions, and the responsibility of being an artist and a spokesperson for my race. And I just lost it. It was a huge binge.

**RC:** It was on overstock at University Bookstore so I sent copies to relatives, and I think it freaked them out. They didn't know what to make of it.

**Alexie:** Nobody does. Nobody will go near it. I mean, my poetry books sold more than that. I think it was a sort of a statement. *Indian Killer* was my *Fancydancing* at that point in my life.

**RC:** One critic has compared you to Latino writer Richard Rodriguez, saying you both have "a profound inter-

est in looking at ugly things." Do you think that's true?

**Alexie:** (Laughs) Whoa! Who said that?

**RC:** I dunno. It's on your website.

**Alexie:** Is it? I don't even look.

**RC:** It's in a long review from some London paper. I think it was *The Guardian*.

**Alexie:** Wow! It's probably true. No one ever praises, you know, the lyric beauty. No one ever says, "We need someone to write about a tree! Call Sherman Alexie!" Yeah, I would agree with that. Hopefully I find some beauty inside the ugly stuff. Not very often. Generally I'm a pessimist. Generally I'm cynical and disillusioned. So...

**RC:** You know, there's something really fascinating about a train wreck.

**Alexie:** Yeah, and I guess that's what I do. I watch the human train wreck. I always think it's funny when people accuse me of being a liberal romantic, or a liberal dreamer. That's hardly true. I think human beings are by and large despicable. And I think the world is by and large an awful place. So my liberalism is certainly not based in romanticism. I don't think anything we do is going to change a damn thing.

**RC:** So that leads me directly to my next question.

**Alexie:** Uh huh?

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**Thursday, May 8, 1:45 p.m., 1500 block Boren Avenue.** Officers were on routine patrol along Boren. Just east of the 1500 block is a small park with several benches. The suspect, a White male aged 43, was sitting on a bench with an open can of Steel Reserve malt liquor in his hand. He was contacted for liquor violation, and a routine check of his name was run through the computer. He was found to have an outstanding warrant and was taken into custody, and booked into King County Jail.

**Thursday, May 8, 8:07 p.m., Kobe Park.** The suspect was contacted by police for having a fire in a city park. A routine name check came back with an Auburn Police Department warrant. The warrant was verified, and Auburn police officers arrived and took the suspect into custody.

**Thursday, May 8, 11:35 p.m., S. Washington Street.** Officers saw the suspect, a 45-year-old Black male transient, trespassing in Occidental Park after the posted closing time of 11:30 p.m. They contacted the suspect, and discovered an outstanding warrant. This was verified, and he was booked into King County Jail.

**Friday, May 9, 4:45 p.m. 16th Ave E., Group Health.** Group Health security officer called 911 to report that the suspect, a 40-year-old Black male transient who had been previously trespassed from the Group Health campus, had returned. The suspect was loitering in the

courtyard. He was detained and identified. Officers also verified the previous trespass admonishment provided by the security officer. The security officer requested the suspect be arrested, and he was. He was booked into King County Jail for trespass. The officer also noted that the man appeared to be mentally impaired, and was unsure if he had understood the trespass warnings, either in the past or currently. The officer thought it highly likely that the subject would return to the Group Health campus as soon as he could.

**Friday, May 9, 12:38 a.m., Freeway Park.** The suspect, a 46-year-old Black male transient, was contacted for trespassing in Freeway Park after hours. His Department of Corrections officer was contacted, and he was found to be in violation of his parole terms. The DOC officer directed the police to arrest the man, and he was taken into custody. He was booked into King County Jail.

**Saturday, May 10, 2:49 p.m., 8th Ave. and Seneca St.** Officers were dispatched on a report of a Native-American male walking southbound on 8th with a fixed-blade knife in his hand. He was contacted at 9th and Madison. The suspect (a transient male aged 23) was concealing the knife in his hand, but dropped it at the officer's request. The complainant arrived on the scene, and identified the man. He was taken into custody. The suspect stated he was carrying the knife for protection, as he had been threatened earlier and was afraid. He said he had not openly displayed or brandished the knife, and there was no report of him doing so. He was taken to the East Precinct, where his knife was disposed of. He was then released. ■

*Streetwatch is compiled from Seattle Police Department incident reports by Emma Quinn.*

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## ALEXIE Continued from Page 17

**RC:** Can you name three redeeming things about the human race?

**Alexie:** The first thing that pops into my head is the last one minute of any college basketball game. Then, iambic pentameter. Who would have thought you could write like your heart beats? And, uh, antibiotics.

**RC:** There's a level of honesty in your work that pisses some people off. An example would be "What You Pawn I Will Redeem." In this story, Jackson Squared comes into Real Change and talks his way into 50 free papers, but after an hour he tosses them in the trash because, when it comes right down to it, he'd really rather be drinking. Then he rolls his passed-out friend for his last buck-fifty. It has the ring of truth, but why is this a useful sort of truth-telling?

**Alexie:** Part of that story for me was to be sure that in representing a homeless man, I show all of him. I mean, he's not homeless by accident; it's going to part of who he is to always fuck up. No matter how true and honest his ambitions, his actions are always going to trip him up. So, that was the point there, to be sure I didn't romanticize him. He wasn't some down-trodden oppressed man stumbling through the streets. Here was a guy fully participating in his own destruction.

Homeless people don't need to be romanticized and they don't need to be vilified — there's plenty of both — what they need is to be humanized. And to humanize somebody you show everything. Everything. The best of who they are and the worst of who they are.

Hate happens when we romanticize and vilify. As soon as we humanize people, it's really hard to go to war against them. You start identifying yourself with their strengths and weaknesses.

That story's had such an amazing response because I wrote it in a way that people can identify with this homeless guy. I didn't want to demonize anybody around the homeless guy either. Like the Korean convenience store guy, who could easily be vilified; the cop, the pawnshop owner. To take everybody out of the realm of symbol and make them human beings. All these people in the end are basically decent. I think people are responding to that, especially in this time, where everything is in the language of hate and war. Here was this story that spoke the language of individualization and decency.

**RC:** Last question. What gives you hope?

**Alexie:** (Sighs) It's the little things. First, that my sons are incredibly comfortable. That I live in a country that enables somebody like me to transcend class and race, all those categories, to become, simply, a success. Now it's up to them. There's nothing holding them back. No poverty. No addiction. They're at the same starting line as everybody else. They're not a hundred yards back. And that gives me hope, for them.

Worldwide? Countrywide? Art. Books. Poems. When I get letters from people who disagree with me but say interesting things. I get much more hate mail, but when I get respect mail from someone who disagrees it gives me hope.

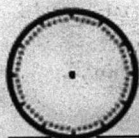
That I could wake up and drive here in 20 minutes to have breakfast with you. In a lot of places in the world you can't do that. I'm so happy I live here. I don't like anti-Americanism. I think right-wing Republicans often refuse to see the bad, but liberals often refuse to see what's great.

Antibiotics. Doctors, nurses. We complain about our healthcare system but look at what SARS and AIDS is doing in the rest of the world. My children's pediatrician. Immunization. That gives me hope.

**RC:** Yeah. Bill Gates is wiping out diarrhea in Africa.

**Alexie:** There you go! Yeah. Bill Gates gives me hope. There's an example of somebody having an awakening. Eddie Vedder impaling Dubya's mask on a mikestand. That gives me hope. I'm happy for Oprah Winfrey. I'm happy for Michael Jordan. I'm happy to see so many people transcend race and class. Richard Rodriguez. He and I can look at ugly things together and get a lot of respect for it.

One of the great things for me is *Real Change*: the interactions I have almost everyday in this city with people selling it. I give them whatever I have in my pocket — whether it's \$10, \$20, or \$50, I'll give them whatever's in my pocket for the newspaper. You sneak up on the vendors, I think; they don't realize they're part of the capitalist system. I mean, if you can stand on a corner and sell *Real Change*, then you can sell anything. You could have any job, because that's a tough gig. It's the interaction: looking at the nametag, then calling people by their name, looking them in the eye. You know: seeing them. That gives me hope. ■



## Timeless Astrology

by R.W. Reid

June 1 - 30

**F**inding a penny on the ground can feel like finding not just money, but luck itself. That's because humans believe ideas are magic. We think we can pick up a penny of pleasure and discard the worn nickel of suffering and somehow change reality by the stories we tell about what we find. Think again. Believing a thought can alter how we feel but not reality itself. Surrender to whatever shows up, within us and without us, can show us the value and use of every coin we find. Then, like Alice, we can go through the looking glass, behind the shiny surface of life, and see what is real. We can see that luck and love is what we are made of — instead of some experience, feeling, or thought that we find — out there, on the street of life. That, an enlightened Gemini native might tell you, is a very good idea, and in fact the only true, useful, and magic idea there is.



**Aries:** As the month begins you feel an urge to sail away — away from the stagnant puddle you picture yourself stranded in. The sirens lure you toward the illusion of safety on shore and your mast is toppling. Prop it up and start climbing, kid. You'll need a crow's nest view wherever you find yourself — on sea or on land.



**Taurus:** Bored with your current emotional raiment, you've been looking for a new outfit in a gloomy closet. Take off those sunglasses and back out of that dark space. You'll see many new stylish garments laid out before you if you turn around. It's hard to dress wisely or see clearly in a small space, without the light of reason or hope.



**Gemini:** I see a small child on a large red tricycle moving with unbridled social volition towards a busy intersection. By all means, don't rush into this whole slowing-down-and-growing-up thing. New toys are great. Just brake slightly and look both ways before you cross the street this time.



**Cancer:** Someone is going to make you an interesting offer and you'll need to think fast. Outlandish schemes that would have seemed ridiculous last month become quite desirable and doable now. Some things really are good enough to be true, even if they do come quickly. Trust your intuition.



**Leo:** You are tempted to be the go-between in a family or group dispute. You see yourself repairing the raveled sleeve of discord with a dose of your usual sunny joie de vivre and unstinting support. Hold that good thought for others for later, while you re-knit your own tattered emotional edges. Nobody likes an untidy philanthropist.



**Virgo:** Finally, your ship has not only come in, but it is docked securely with the cargo of your

choice on the docks, ready to go. Take this opportunity to share the bounty with your fellow crewmembers and it will multiply beyond your dreams into the true security of mutual cooperation and trust.



**Libra:** Finally, in one way, shape, or form, you get asked to the Prom. Please say yes. I promise you it will be different than Fred what's-his-name and that bad champagne experience. This time it's vintage wine, no bad hair — on you or your date — and the satisfaction of a waltz in perfect time, without the hangover. Enjoy!



**Scorpio:** No, not even you, Miz or Miz laser-brain, can change a situation or person by the sheer force of your will. No matter how many lonely hours you spend gazing intently at that tadpole, it will turn into a frog or a prince in its own sweet time. Avert your eyes and the magic will happen all by itself.



**Sagittarius:** You feel the urge to be the judge and jury and perhaps executioner on a case close to your heart and wallet. Gather all the evidence with care. Your security rests in your readiness to cut the remaining strings that bind you to what is no longer serving your growth and make a space for true judgment to be revealed.



**Capricorn:** You start remembering past gestures you've received that were completely undeserved. Suddenly you're the one that brings cookies and the extra bottle of wine to the party. You add an extra dollar to the stingy tip your date left when they went to the bathroom. There's extra love interest building rapidly in your account. Giving back can be healing — so give away.



**Aquarius:** Your inventive mind turns whimsical this month as your eccentric visions collide with others' ideas of good taste and the proper time and place to be as creatively weird as you are currently determined to be. Carry on. They will get used to it and even like it soon. Just give them time to get used to the new hot pink and chartreuse mindset you are ready to manifest.



**Pisces:** You get ready to take arms against a sea of troubles and intrigue out there and find, instead of a pride of lions ready to rip you to shreds, a few scrawny white mice hitting each other with toothpicks and squabbling over stale cheese. The cheese stands alone is good advice for you to take at this moment. Take a tour of your own personal zoo before you leave home. ■

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