

## SAY WHAT?

# 'Blues is the purest thing in this life, better than love, good wine or Bugs Bunny cartoons'

One of my childhood idols, the great streetcorner blues singer Blind Mellow Chitlin, once told me that Life, even in its most complex form, is basically like a Church's two-piece chicken dinner: no matter how good it smells, it never tastes like you want it, and once it's over, you have to make a break for the can. I never figured out just what Blind Mellow Chitlin meant, but he was about as old as dirt and drunk half the time, so it didn't really matter.

Blind Mellow Chitlin would sit out in front of my middle school and strum his guitar. One day all us kids got up a collection so he could buy some strings. Then we realized that the reason he didn't have any strings in the first place was because he couldn't play worth a damn. But he could play a mean sousaphone. Let me tell you, blues sousaphone is not pleasant.

One day during recess I got knocked out of dodgeball early, so instead of hanging around to watch the rest of the game, I went over to the streetcorner and talked to old Blind Mellow Chitlin.

"Mr. Chitlin?" I asked him. "Why do you play blues sousaphone instead of the harmonica?"

"Murflbrogdaarodg," he answered. Now, most of you might think this is nonsense, but old Blind Mellow Chitlin had no teeth and his lips were always swollen from playing his sousaphone, so it required some simple translation. Basically, he said "Pleased

**JOHN BLAND**  
*less filling*

to have a bit of perfect sunshine."

Once you figure out what he said exactly, then you had to find the hidden meaning in it. To make a long story short, he really was saying, "Because I don't have one." Talking to Blind Mellow Chitlin was a little like talking to girls, which is probably why I'm so successful at it.

Then old Blind Mellow Chitlin launched into a sousaphone version of "Crawling King Snake" and I decided to go back to the dodgeball game while I could still hear.

But I think the one thing Blind Mellow Chitlin said to me that had the greatest impact on my life happened when I got in trouble for putting Krazy Glue in Tammy Fulcher's training bra. A harmless prank, really, but you know how teachers overreact. Instead of going to Mr. Yarborough's office, I walked out the door and sat beside old Blind Mellow Chitlin, and when I caught a whiff of him I realized no punishment Mr. Yarborough could dish out could match this.

Then he said, softly, as if speaking from heaven itself, "Flingbarkwannaroginbak," which meant "Never sit in your food," and in final translation, "Blues is the purest thing in this life, better than love, good wine or Bugs Bunny cartoons." At least

that's what I translated.

The reason I've been thinking about Blind Mellow Chitlin is because lately I've been feeling like an old, half-drunk, blind, toothless, smelly, depressed streetcorner blues singer. I don't know, maybe it's just gas.

"Blues is the purest thing in this life." Sounds about right. We all get the blues, some more than others. It comes in a variety of shapes and sizes, but usually in the form of the opposite sex. Like that great blues standard "My Baby Done Left Me:"

*My baby done left me,  
She up and walk out de do',  
Yeah my baby done left me,  
Don't know what fo'.*

... and so on. In this heartfelt song, we see the singer's pain, his agony, his really bad grammar. We feel for him. We, too, want to go down to Fast Fare, get a bottle of Night Train and sing along with him, lamenting our own misfortunes, our shortcomings as humans, our own lack of love and caring. Or maybe we just want to get sloshed on cheap wine.

So I've started singing the blues. Tuesday night I got a bottle of Thunderbird, grabbed my guitar, sat out on my front stoop and started wailing. I was wailing because I can only play the opening riff to "Secret Agent Man" on the guitar, and it doesn't exactly have that bluesy oomph I need.

Then I stopped wailing and started

singing. The great thing about blues is the fact that anybody can sing it, even me, and I have the singing ability of a convenience store. I started composing my own songs, like this one called "Ice Cream Shop:"

*Know what I'm sayin' baby,  
Know what I'm sayin' baby,  
Goin' down to the ice cream shop,  
Try to get in on some real good —*

... then I stopped because I couldn't think of anything that rhymed with "shop" except "hop," which didn't fit into what I was singing about, which was, of course, the destruction of Brazilian rainforests.

At this point the neighbors called the cops, who tried to make me quit singing because I was creating a disturbance, but I refused because I felt it was my inalienable right as a human being to sing the blues.

"Do you have a license, sir?" the first officer asked me.

"For what?"

"Singing the blues."

"You don't need a license," I retorted. "It's in the Constitution, Amendment number thirty or something like that! Look it up!"

"I'm sorry, son, but we're going to have to take you in for violating Section 301 of the criminal code — Disturbing the peace by singing the blues without a license."

"But I don't need a license!" I protested.

"Are you going to come quietly, or are we going to have to use force?"

"But I don't need—," I protested once more as the billy club came down on my forehead.

After my roommates bailed me out of jail (four days later), I decided it was time to do something about this. Therefore, at the bottom of this page you will see a special cutout (with apologies to Doug Marlette): a permit, a license, authorized by old Blind Mellow Chitlin himself. It states that you have the right to sing the blues whenever, wherever, however you wish, whether you're in a state of bliss or a state of depression, but not when you're in the state of Utah.

And no matter where or how far you go in life, take along these words of wisdom from old Blind Mellow Chitlin:

"Potzrebie furshlugginer."



## Joe Bob's oversexed aunt, 89, is after your wallet

One of my favorite great aunts, Vera Glasscock, on the Bardwell side of the East Texas Briggses, just got a job working in the Men's Billfold Department of J.C. Penney's in Fort Worth, and I've been put in charge of watching her so she doesn't embarrass the family.

Vera is the only 89-year-old woman with a full-frontal photograph in the Texas Connection swingers magazine.

You see, the Texas Connection editorial staff calls me up. "Please, Joe Bob," they say. "We're getting letters from the animal-rights people. They think it's a picture of a suffering animal being used for medical research."

And so I tried to talk to Vera once or twice, but she said, "They advertise free photos for unattached female swingers, and by God I'm unattached, and by God I'm female, and by God I'm a swinger."

"Well, could you at least tone down the copy a little bit? Take out the stuff about the garden hoses? It makes people think you're a tropical plant."

**JOE BOB BRIGGS**  
*at the drive-in*

You can't reason with the women. She's the most sexually active 89-year-old on the planet. And so now she not only gets a job, she gets one where she's been trying to get a job her whole life — J.C. Penney's Men's Billfold Department — and she did it for one reason. She's gonna snag one of those guys before he knows what hit him. And she gets to see what's in his billfold first.

So I drove out to Fort Worth to try to talk to her. But when I got there it was already too late. She had some of the finer cowhide models out of their plasticine-covered billfold gift boxes, and what do you think she was doing with em? She was removing the photo of Vic Damone, and she was replacing it with her picture, the one from the Texas Connection Magazine!

Right at that moment, a well-

dressed, gray-haired gentleman ambled up to the sales counter and said, "Excuse me, but I'm looking for something in lizard."

"Natural lizard or imitation lizard?" Vera said.

"I'm looking for a lizard that ... er ..." He hesitated. "It has to do with a photograph..."

"You looking for the Lizard Lady, honey?"

"You mean it's you! I want seven more pictures, and I want you to have dinner with me. Sorry, I didn't recognize you with your clothes on."

"It's all right, hon, happens all the time."

And speaking of actors who refuse to go away, Patrick Macnee is back again in *Masque of the Red Death* — not the *real Masque of the Red Death* with Vincent Price, made by Drive-In King Roger Corman in 1964, but a new *Masque of the Red Death* made by Roger Corman. Roger decided, "Hey, everybody's forgotten by now, 25 years, that's long enough, right?" Always remember, they don't call him the King of Exploitation for nothing.

The original Edgar Allan Poe movies starring Vincent Price are great, but when they made this one, they did something a little different. They not only wanted to portray the red death, they wanted to use dead actors, for enhanced reality. It's a pretty amazing feat, all of them talking like they're dead, and the director, Larry Brand, made everything real dark so that you can't quite see anything, so after a while you go "Nothing happened in this scene — oh! I get it! They're dead!"

Adrian Paul is Prince Prospero, wandering around his castle like a doorstop on quaaludes, saying stuff like "Now it is death that serves man!" Clare Hoad is the village virgin brought in by Prospero's army to entertain the horny troops. Tracy Reiner (Rob's daughter) is Prospero's sister and wife he has to keep in line with a hot poker. And Patrick Macnee is the Red Death, galloping through the countryside in a scarlet cape. Put them all together and you've got ... a real snoozer. Not even much torture or pillaging. Sure, there's a

little hot boiling oil on the peasants, some skull crushing on the rack, some stomach carving. But it just doesn't have the old Vincent Price evil in it.

Seven breasts. Forty dead bodies. Three pathetic zombies. Dungeon aardvarking. Skull cracking. Throat slashing. Bloody head spiking. Peasant boiling. Hot-poker head branding. Pitiful orgy. Gratuitous minuet dancing, the kind they teach in third grade. Drive-In Academy Award nominations for Patrick Macnee, as Machiavel, for saying "So shall death exact his charge against man"; Jeff Osterhage, as Claudio, for saying "God no longer acts in creation — he simply watches"; and Adrian Paul, for the movie's truest moment, when he says "We've brought this upon ourselves — we've called death to us."

One and a half stars. Joe Bob says check it out.

Editors' note: If you are saying to yourself, "Wow, a movie even Joe Bob hated. I gotta take a look!" then you should go to the Plaza tonight and see it with all the other sickos in this town. But you better hurry. It leaves Friday.