

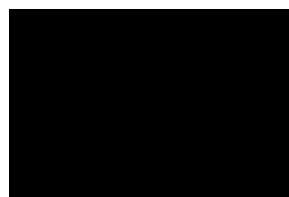
I STALKED MARTHA STEWART!

by

Vernon Frazer

I STALKED MARTHA STEWART!

To protect him from reprisal, the protagonist has requested that his face be concealed. The electronic distortion of his authorial voice offers further protection---at the expense of the narrator's authenticity.



It was indifference at first sight.

The perfect Westport housewife/hostess who Has It All was explaining how she Does It All on a network news magazine: serving the seven-course meal selecting the proper vintage vine placing doilies on *precisely* the correct location on the sofa's arm and discussing issues of the day and literature from the classics to the contemporary avant-garde.

"It's not easy being Martha Stewart," she told the interviewer. "But it is appropriate."

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Spinoff: Would you describe *this* as appropriate?

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THE MEGABOOK\$ MONTHLY MURMURER

Perverved Poet Sticks Dirty Thing in Perfect Hostess

Why did he do it?

That's what we'd like to know. Inside the covers of each of the books comprising our display of Martha Stewart's new bestseller, *Own the World Through Good Taste*, public relations coordinator Norexia Pruinn found a poem riddled with obscene, pornographic

and other objectionable material that violates our Family Values policy written by the disturbed and disgruntled Avery Blank, a failed poet known for his outspoken rudeness.

We can assure all our Megabook\$ customers ---and Martha Stewart---that we will take steps to insure this never happens again.

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Blank: What that **BLEEP!**ing newsletter said? *Hell no!*

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"WHAT DO YOU MEAN, I HAVE 'THE MOST LIKELY MOTIVE?'" I had barely paid attention to the seven-foot book pyramid her poster beside it looming large as the legendary Sasquatch.

"You've got a short fuse and you can't handle rejection." Ron's not your literature-loving bookstore manager thick glasses herringbone tweed jacket rumpled khaki slacks and Reeboks. The lug's cropped hair and monogrammed red polo shirt more nearly tags him as a sports bar's night manager.

"**ANYBODY WHO'S FALSELY ACCUSED WOULD GET PISSED OFF!**"

"There you go again." His smirk resembles a bartender's Yes-to-Anything grin.

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Spinoff: I mean the way you responded to the situation. Perhaps a more reasoned approach, instead of shouting and storming out of the store...

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Convicted without trial! My under-breath muttering obscene pornographic and other objectionable material steams letters that float on the February chill. I've made my share of enemies but none I can think of who'd do something as degrading as this to me. With one possible exception:

(Megabook\$. Aisles crowded with customers, Christmas decorations and displays. Customer Service Desk. BLANK stands on the customer's side, NOREXIA PRUINN, an Assistant Manager in her late forties, on the employee's side.)

PRUINN

They're not selling enough to justify giving you a reading.

BLANK

If I gave a reading, people might come and buy them. So far, you've sold four copies. You've only sold one Michael McClure and one Kenneth Patchen, and I bought those.

PRUINN

We know our target audience very well.

BLANK

I thought Megabook\$ was *supposed* to support the work of local writers.

NOREXIA PRUINN

We do. Our carrying your work here at all is an expression of our corporation's Good Will.

BLANK

More like an expression of your Power Trip, I'd say.

PRUINN

You don't need to worry about reading here. I'm giving back your books.

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Spinoff: After all, you did write to Megabuck\$ Corporate Headquarters to complain about her.

Blank: Did they save the crumpled-up letter as evidence? Did they record the way they laughed when they read it?

Spinoff: She did resign her position not long afterward.

Blank: Maybe she did it before she left.

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Ron threw out the evidence the bastard every note handwritten bright yellow paper embroidered border hardly my style. I'm a regular customer he should have contacted me to tell me what happened instead of blaming me common courtesy dammit.

□ □ □

Spinoff: So, you don't admit to your contribution to this...chain of events?

Blank: Even you---*You're* presuming my guilt. In America, you're supposed to be presumed innocent. You're supposed to confront your accuser. This *is* America. Isn't it?

Spinoff: For some, it's more America than for others.

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In *my* America I'm convicted in Megabook\$ Kangaroo Court. I might as well commit

the crime that fits the punishment. Before I can violate Martha Stewart's displays I have to stalk them. Violating doesn't come naturally to me. Neither does stalking. Trish Ingenue my curvy co-worker cute buns great legs Big Hair small voice sits near the water cooler. Instead of eight paper cones of water a day I drink twenty-three. Gawking at her isn't stalking. And following people to their homes restaurants movies supermarkets watching them with binoculars all the other activities associated with stalking aren't me. Yet.

Next morning I call in sick switch on Martha Stewart's 10:00 A.M. TV show retreat to my kitchen inch down the hall stealthy steps toward her pristine tones. *Shhhh! Don't let her hear you!* Inch around the corner into the living room skulk beside the nineteen-inch screen. *Don't let her see you!* The corners of my eyes catch her gliding across the screen while tossing esoteric information about Japanese culture and cuisine as offhandedly as a native. Now! Here she is...coming back. What smooth lines she has so sexy their balance and proportion subtle not blatant. Perfect taste, even in sex appeal! My eye muscles strain from bulging. I turn away naked with shame.

To overcome my stalker's character flaw I tape her show every morning. Every evening I inch toward her voice lurk in the hall sneak peaks at the screen from around the corner. But it's not working. How can I communicate the stalker's oblique threat of defilement to a figure inside a TV screen who's taped at the time of the broadcast as well as the replay?

To play the part I've got to look the part. But what does a stalker *look* like? My best guess: *a flasher!* My already rumpled raincoat gets a raindance on my cat-haired rug. My fedora too. I pile my permapress shirts and pants on the dirty floor. Forget these trendy wire-rim glasses back to Bill Burroughs black-rims prescription twenty years outdated. No

more daily shaving cultivate Stalker Stubble. Martha Stewart look out!

Instead Trish Ingenue looks out. Because my stalker's lenses require me to focus directly on her instead of merely flicking my lustful gaze she files sexual harassment charges against me. My supervisor orders me not to stand near the cooler with the twenty-five males who continue their liquid diet programs. He counsels me on on my rumpled gear even though the Company Dress Code allows tanktops and jeans.

**HAVE YOU CONSIDERED
SELF-ABASEMENT AS A MEANS
TO ACHIEVING GREATER UNDERSTANDING
OF THE SPIRITUAL FORCES
WITHIN YOU?**

Stalk Appropriately for Successful Efforts

For some men, stalking women has great personal appeal. While most women don't share their view, there are ways to make the act more palatable. For example, many women who are stalked come from the middle and upper classes of society. In their milieu, the shabbily dressed, unshaven stalker is definitely not *de rigueur*.

If you wish to stalk the women of Westport and other Fairfield County towns, you should be meticulous in your grooming. Rumpled raincoats will attract negative attention to yourself.

If you want any attention drawn to your stalking, it should be the kind of attention that won't generate 911 calls. Hats should be well-maintained and free of lint and other

substances that detract from their appearance. Facial hair should be neatly trimmed, preferably with a beard trimmer from a major appliance corporation. Clean-shaven is preferable, however, according to Tamara Waters, Executive Director of Suburban Women Indulging in Naughty Games (SWING).

According to Waters, a handsome, well-groomed stalker is more likely to pursue his wish with less risk of detainment or arrest. In rare instances, a visually pleasing stalker might gain the opportunity to establish a cordial and even close relationship with his intended victim.

Martha Stewart's Saturday newspaper column has something for everyone. Even for would-be stalkers. Even more for the retail world: with a little guidance from *Martha Stewart's Appropriate Living Monthly Magazine* I trade my rumpled black raincoat for a beige Seattle Drizzle trench coat (\$369.95 add an additional 20% with Status Coupon). A hundred dollar Stetson fedora replaces the discount hat I trampled beyond repair. Designer spectacles (\$495.95 for frame lenses optional) restore my sight. A Trimatron 2000 Beard Styler (\$129.95 Factory Rebate Excluded) for my stubble and I'm ready to stalk Martha Stewart style.

Monday just before leaving work I pass the water cooler for the first time since my reprimand. Trish swivels in her chair flashes a double-beacon of glittering pearl and stunning thigh. If I'm not careful I'm out of a job.

"You're so much more handsome this way," Trish says her voice cuddly. "Clean, well-groomed...Your new Stetson even makes you look a little like Humphrey Bogart."

"I owe it all to a Very Special Woman."

"Martha Stewart?"

"How did you guess?"

Trish shows me a copy of Martha Stewart's advice to stalkers. "That was my sister she mentioned," flashing a SWING membership card.

"I didn't know you were a member."

"It's not something I admit...except to special people."

"I'm, uh...flattered."

"If you'd like to meet me for a drink at the Mirrored Ceiling Motel's Lobby Lounge,

I'll bring her Sunday Advertising Supplement with me. We can look it over together."

Now there's an offer I can't refuse. Unless I want to lose my job. I shake my head sadly set a grin that masks my real regret. "I'm sorry, Trish. I've got other plans."

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Dear Mr. Blank:

As you have already been counseled, this organization has adopted a Zero Tolerance policy toward sexual harassment in the workplace, and you were duly counseled with regard to this organization's policy. A second complaint of sexual harassment has been filed by the individual concerning whom you have received counseling by me. In keeping with company policy, you are, therefore, automatically terminated.

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Spinoff: Being denied your day in court, so to speak, justified your extreme conduct?

Blank: To rephrase Barry Goldwater, extremism in the offense of criminality is no vice.

□ □ □

Buck\$Mart land of the chain-smoking Spandex Babes henna-haired overweight snapping gum and double negatives. I cruise the aisle of Martha Stewart's Silver Lining bedsheets and comforters straining to imagine my victim curled on a sample graciously inviting me to share the ecstatic intimacies of 250-thread count fitted bedsheets in five different colors but all I can picture is some babe wit' a name like Shoiley usin' lotsa double negatives: "You don't do not'n' to me on dese clean cheets!" Hardly the type to roll sensuously in Martha Stewart Everyday Colors interior flat paint satin semi-gloss or high-

gloss towel herself tie-dyed for the nitty-gritty using Egyptian bath towels "in the tradition of the Pharaoh's concubines in the historic period portrayed so artfully in Norman Mailer's *Ancient Evenings*" as Martha might say so adeptly adding a dash of culture to enhance the erotic moment. Buck\$Mart is a meat-and-potatoes place: no-frills products for no-frills women.

But where are the Stepford Factory's wives the clicks of Juicy Fruit gum the heads of cheap-dyed hair rollers thick as baseball bats the cellulitic sway of black spandexed butts blocking my path down the aisle of NEW! PRINTED KITCHEN COORDINATES 20% OFF! Maybe Martha's bringing Buck\$Mart upscale. Not some factory frump the first black spandex firm thighs cute buns swinging their tight pendulum arc into the aisle ahead of me an upscale housewife no doubt curving movements look familiar the hair a little less so. From the back it's Martha Stewart's straw-blond do: simple but suitable for all occasions from black-tie to bedroom just the way Martha's looked in the bathrobe shot on the Buck\$Mart flyer's cover. It couldn't be Martha...Could it? No, not *here*. But why not? Maybe she's here to introduce her product line. If I could just get a look at her. (I am her stalker after all.) Let me inch just a little---"Oof! Excuse me!"

"Why don't you look where you're going!" The straw-blond hair whirls. The face whips toward me.

□ □ □

CELEBRITY STALKER UPDATE

Was it accident or design?

If it's accident, it wouldn't be Martha Stewart.

This explains our celebrated celebrity's
nouveau-notorious stalker's arrest Tuesday

night.

In a most inappropriate scenario, celebrity stalker Avery Blank, in training for harassing our celebrity housewife-hostess, stalked Trish Ingenue, his virginal former co-worker, down the aisles carrying the Martha Stewart product line. Finding her alone while the area's

service representative was assisting other customers, he began his lewd assault.

Ingenue ran for cover to the safety of the nearby Mirrored Ceiling Motel, where Blank followed her and attempted to force her to perform an act that was at least as inappropriate as it was unconsummated.

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THAT'S A LIE! I WAS DOING FINE UNTIL I JOKINGLY CALLED HER "MARTHA, MY DEAR." THEN SHE GOT ALL JEALOUS AND SAID SHE WASN'T MARTHA AND SHE WAS TOO YOUNG TO BE A BEATLES SONG ON THE OLDIES STATION THAT OLD FARTS LIKE ME LISTEN TO. I TRIED TO EXPLAIN WHY I WAS DOING WHAT I WAS DOING. DO YOU THINK ANYBODY WOULD LISTEN! TRISH WOULDN'T LISTEN. THE COPS WOULDN'T LISTEN. AND THE NIGHT COURT JUDGE WOULDN'T LISTEN.

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Spinoff: To your warped way of thinking, then, one denial justifies another. And another. And another.

Blank: That's hardly the case, but I *could* match you denial for denial.

□ □ □

Megabook\$ Information Desk. RON leans forward, his face set in the bartender's solicitous pose. Overhead a six-foot TV screen broadcasts a college basketball game. The latest copy of Celebrity Stalker Update lies on the circular station.)

BLANK

Ron, that wasn't me. I'm telling you, that... was...not...me.

RON

Of course it wasn't. But if it wasn't, then who was it?

BLANK

Somebody else.

RON

If it was somebody else, I wish it had been me. That was some fox in the photo. I like Big Hair. (*His knuckles rap the Celebrity Stalker Update.*)

BLANK

I wish you'd stop carrying that paper in this store.

RON

I wish I could oblige you, pal. But Megabuck\$ Central controls the inventory. I tell ya though, that little paper rings up five times as much as John Grisham, any day of the week.

BLANK

If this store had given me a reading, none of this...this *surreal nightmare* would have happened----would *be* happening.

RON

Show me your stuff can sell like *Celebrity Stalker Update* and you can read here anytime.

BLANK

That's not what I write, and you know it.

RON

Maybe you should be writing that. You seem to be living it pretty well. Write what you know, they always say.

**SEE THE DIVINE LIGHT IN YOUR SPARE TIME!
PRACTICE SELF-ABASEMENT IN YOUR BASEMENT!
Starter Kits Available ● Only \$29.95
(Whips not included)**

(*Megabook\$ information desk.*)

BLANK

So, Ron. Was the poem like that?

RON

Well, I gotta say, this is pretty obscene, pornographic and objectionable.

BLANK

Thank you...I guess. Was the poem you threw away like that?

RON

Pretty close. Except...

BLANK

Yeah...

RON

Your poem's a lot better written. If you're writing what you know, I'd have to say you're way sicker than the person who wrote the other one. If you can do that to Martha Stewart, I'd hate to see what you could do to a little kid. This is a family bookstore. Maybe you shouldn't come here anymore.

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THE MARTHA STEWART STALKER UPDATE

Perverted Stalker-Poet Adds Another Poem Per Verse

When you're hot, you're hot.

Avery Blank is so hot he needs a lifetime of cold showers. The poetaster celebrity stalker has produced yet another gem of depravity and no longer sees the need to cover it in secrecy. His latest work, while an improvement over the original, retains its vulgarity. Blank takes an

"If you've got it, flaunt it" attitude toward his perversion. After sexually harassing a former co-worker and a discount store's Martha Stewart aisle, our failed literary aspirant now finds himself out of a job and unwelcome in his favorite recreational spot---outside of Martha Stewart, that is.

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Spinoff: You seem intent on outdoing me denial for denial.

Blank: I'm intent on giving you the facts.

□ □ □

MARTHA STEWART BUYS OUT WALT DISNEY *Cordial Takeover Called Fun for the Whole Family*

Westport's a pretty town not as glamorous as its reputation rundown houses on the Saugatuck roads leading to downtown's upscale shops newly-shingled fronts refurbished railroad station. Cars crawl bumper-to-bumper stretch a mile ahead of me to the zebra-striped RAILROAD CROSSING gate. Sidewalks overflow like Commercial Street Provincetown mid-July. A real Family Values scene: husbands wives kids all holding hands free hands holding balloons one side Martha's face the other an air-brushed piece of rare dinnerware bobbing back and forth in the gentle breeze ruffles the storefront awnings. Funny the way my whimsical retaliation to a crime I didn't commit has become a spiritual quest stranger than anything my writer's imagination could have conceived. My stalking has taken on the intensity of Captain Ahab's quest by which I do not mean to suggest that Martha Stewart is a big white whale. Even if she were a whale I'm sure she'd be somewhat petite by species standards. But the increasing dimension of my pursuit is making my dick a little moby. How many men pursue something this intently without a sexual dimension surfacing?

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the source of the universe, conjoin at the mind-body nexus with a natural plug-in. Feel its power pulsate through you and yours through it as you merge in the throbbing ecstasy of Ultimate Being. Seize this rare opportunity now.

DIAL 1-900-4MARTHA*

(* \$49.95 per minute)

The line of cars one-by-ones through the gate till I'm admiring the little guardhouse rustic cedar shingles pine interior behind the uniformed gatekeeper asks for ten dollars.

"Ten dollars! What *for*?"

Admission."

"To Westport?"

"No." Grinning the appropriate amount of charm he points to the banner of Martha Stewart Everyday Living bedsheets reading

Welcome to Martha World

across Main Street. He explains Ms. Stewart recently purchased additional property partly to ensure her privacy partly to allow her and her guests to enjoy the subtle pleasures of Long Island Sound from the vantage point of Westport Beach recently renamed Martha Stewart's Vineyard.

"In other words, she's taken over *the entire town*?"

“Only for the purpose of providing a socially appropriate occasion for all guests.” MarthaWorld doesn’t include the Westport Housing Authority’s trailer parks but he can assure me of my safety should I take a wrong turn and find myself there because negotiations for purchasing and remodeling the trailers to create a Designer Ghetto are in process as he speaks.

I park my Escort wagon in a humbling sea of Mercedes BMWs and Volvos not to mention the occasional Rolls Royce. My blush fades once I leave my conspicuous vehicle for the anonymity of the streets where more women than not seem to resemble the celebrated hostess.

The beach seems to be a fluffing sea of blonde Martha hair-dos the occasional rebellious string bikini preening among the more discreet one-piece suits. Near every set of product line beach towels sits a porcelain washtub flower designs vintage wine designer beer and soft drinks softening the snow-blinding radiance of crushed ice not to mention a buffet of gazpacho oversized sandwiches grilled chicken salad bar and a large plastic bag to prevent littering. The carefully manicured sand keeps the incoming waves from marring the shoreline’s definition.

Something inside me some frightening new feeling *really* wants to violate this bliss approaching the perfection that produces sedation violate the tasteful comfort that transforms even the skimpiest bikinis into look-but-don’t touch mannequins. MarthaWorld rings the ding-dong happiness of Disney World: too pat too perfect too unreal.

What’s wrong with me?

[] [] []

Spinoff: Your facts sound a lot more like fantasies. Bizarre ones, at that.

Blank: Believe me, I wish I was making all this up. This quest has torn my life apart.

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CELEBRITY STALKER SEEKS SELF-ABNEGATION

Does he or doesn't he?

Martha Stewart stalker Avery Blank now claims a spiritual urge fuels his deranged pursuit of America's hostess with the mostest. In a rare interview, the reclusive creep stated that his pursuit of Martha Stewart has assumed a spiritual dimension.

We don't buy it.

Our reporters contacted Rimpoche Rob Stewart, Westport's "Gutter Guru," who eliminated litter and the homeless from the MarthaWorld section of the Stewart family's newest property acquisition.

"If he's still trying to hit bottom, he's not there yet," Stewart said.

Avery, baby, you've got a ways to go.

MARTHA STEWART BUYS VICTORIA'S SECRET

Renamed Martha Stewart Loving in Intimate Takeover

The newest edition of *Celebrity Stalker Update* adds insult to injury on the counter of Tony's Adult Video a place I frequented till Martha's subtle yet obvious grace captured my imagination. A part of me feels driven to delve into the the sex industry's debased retail outlets again. Why? Martha Stewart displaying herself beyond a G Rating would be distasteful especially in public.

"Long time no see, pal." Tony's palm runs over the back of his balding scalp then offers a shake.

"I've been involved in other, more, uh, spiritual pursuits." Finger by finger I transfer

his hair goo from my palm to my hanky.

Tony understands. We bared our souls many midnights in college me anguishing over my urge to write he over his future in film. Each of us has succeeded in some truly small way.

"I know about you and her, Avery. Word's out on the street."

"Word's out on your counter." My fist stamps the *Celebrity Stalker* pile.

"What can I tell ya? It sells."

Tony grumbles about \$mutWorld the new porn megachain's bought out his other three stores. He and his competitors squawk about corporate control over matters of personal intimacy a First Amendment issue goddamit. Despite this last vestige of independence \$mutWorld owns his distributor. "I can't carry *any* of the stuff I used to."

He nods toward the magazine rack. The cover of the latest *Playboy* boasts "Martha Stewart Up-Close and *VERY* Personal." *Penthouse* features her as *Pet Owner of the Year*. Martha Stewart wearing black fishnet stockings with a Victoria's Secret tag is obviously *Hustler's* tacky cover touch. It's also the clue that the photo's a fake; Martha Stewart would *never* leave a tag on her clothing.

"This is getting downright surreal, Tony."

"More like weird."

He leads me to the next aisle: Martha Stewart inflatable love dolls \$29.95 to \$9,999.99. The higher the price the more accurate the replica, the higher the price the more lifelike the add-ons. The most expensive electronic vagina attachment features genuine human pubic hair either black or blonde (\$69.99 extra). Even if our standard of decor could grow both her good taste and discretion would prevent her from selling either.

And the heavy breathing mini-sampler: "C'mon, Tony. Can you picture her huffing and puffing like one of these?"

"No, but I can picture *you*. Any second now."

"Come on, Tony. You know this isn't my speed."

"Too high end? I know you'll go for this one." He picks up a Barbie-size Martha doll. "Look. You lift her head up and down like she's listening to you and nodding politely, and it fills up. Got its own air pump."

"I've worked at this stalking game too hard to settle for crash test dummies."

"Then, follow me."

Adjacent to the rear entrance a new wing extends five times the size of Tony's original store: MARTHA STEWART'S BOUTIQUE EROTIQUE.

"Tony, this is *beyond* weird."

"It's an arrangement I had to make with \$mutWorld to keep this one store."

"What goes on in there?"

"Follow me."

The interior resembles a 1920's New Orleans French Quarter brothel. A Fats Waller replica wears a derby smokes a cigar plays an upright piano. At least twenty Martha replicas entertain potential johns with inviting but not salacious grins. One rolls her eyes at me shies behind a face-fan (\$199.95) from the Geisha Collectibles sub-line.

"Good evening, Tony," says the Martha who carries herself most like a madam. "Would you care to introduce me to your friend?"

We exchange pleasantries. "I'm familiar with your work," she says.

"It's refreshing to meet someone who's familiar with my writing."

"Oh, you *write*?" Her fingers flutter then flatten against her chest. "I meant to say, I'm familiar with your stalking." Her grin erases her blush. "Are you interested in something more...*personal*...than that?"

I could be."

But not at her prices. Grinning politely she says, "If I can be of further assistance to you, please don't hesitate to ask."

Tony leads me into a back alley filled with Martha Stewart street hookers hot pants miniskirts all made up like survivors of a batter explosion on Martha's morning show. One mini looks me up and down boldly. Eyebrows raised I turn to Tony .

"She's not just any street hooker," he explains. "She shoots up with Needles by Burroughs."

"Maybe we should go back inside."

The Madam reconsiders my price. "Come to think of it, I might have someone for you."

Out comes a physically precocious fifth grade Martha pigtails and knee socks.

"I may be a stalker, but I'm not a child molester."

"Why, Mr. Blank! Nobody would accuse you of such a thing. She is, however, the only person you can visit without a charge."

The girl tugs at my hand.

"No. I'm not going. I don't molest children!"

"Nobody said you did."

Another tug.

"I'M NOT GOING."

"Please, Mr. Blank. You're causing a disturbance."

The minute we enter the girl's room lined with Martha Stewart dolls of the Barbie and Cabbage Patch varieties police sirens fill the air with a screeching red. I'd better, uh—

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MARTHA STEWART STALKER MOLESTS CHILD

Everyone has their limit and here at *Celebrity Stalker Update*, we've reached ours.

Last night, police apprehended Avery Blank, the notorious Martha Stewart stalker, just as he was about to make indecent advances on a minor female at a Martha Stewart look-alike fund-raiser at Tony's New Orleans French Quarter Cabaret.

Police apprehended Blank while making a visit to donate funds for Stewart's favorite charity and charged him with attempted risk of injury to a minor.

"No matter what you write, I was caught with my pants up," Blank told this reporter.

Sure, Avery. Just make sure you keep them up when you're near *my* kids.

STEWART SUES STALKER'S FRIEND

Citing gross misrepresentation and defamation and unauthorized additions to her product line, celebrity housewife and entrepreneur Martha Stewart filed suit against Tony Casanostra, the owner of Tony's Adult Video and host of the fund-raiser run amok at which police arrested celebrity stalker Avery Blank

STALKER'S FRIEND SUES STALKER

"He was my friend, but he's gone too far this time. He's gonna cost me my life savings," said Tony Casanostra.

As a result of stalker Avery Blank's sordid sortie into underage sex, Stewart has filed suit against Casanostra for marketing a bogus and pornographic product line under her name. The

CELEBRITY STALKER REACHES BASEMENT OF SELF-ABASEMENT

How low can you go? an oldies tune used to ask.

After Vietnam, Watergate and Monicagate, we finally know. It took Avery Blanks to show America the bottom. Blanks, the self-appointed Martha Stewart Stalker, not only attempted to

molest an underage girl, he attempted, by virtue of his arrested effort, to molest the past, the very history, of America's most celebrated hostess.

It just goes to show: you don't need Ralph to reach a new Nadir.

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Spinoff: Now that you've reached bottom, is there anything you would like to tell our readership?

Blank: There are a lot of things I'd like to tell, but nothing you'd believe. It just won't stop.

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That was no kid it was Trish Ingenue moonlighting as a Martha Stewart Milk Maiden. I watched her from my cell as she left the police station. I'd know those buns those legs anywhere the Big Hair too she pulled off the Martha Wig before getting into her car. It's a set-up! The whole thing! I've had it! I refuse to leave the house. I stalk one end of the basement to the other pulling my hair howling the cackle of the truly insane. Upstairs the newspapers pile my porch like a blizzard piles snow the accumulating mail crawls from my mail slot through my living room toward the kitchen---TOWARD THE BASEMENT STAIRS! *OMIGOD!*---like a giant paper amoeba YOU BETTER NOT COME ANY CLOSER YOU BASTARD I'VE GOT A LAWN MOWER DOWN HERE I'VE GOT AN ICE CHOPPER A WEED TRIMMER A BUSH WHACKER YOU UGLY CRAWLY a pile of mail I'm avoiding I mean wouldn't you all the bad press I'm getting court appearance notices suits filed against me all piling to create that massive paper ooze THAT SWELLING PAPER OOZE THAT'S TRYING TO DESTROY ME BUT YOU'LL NEVER GET ME I'M GOING TO BAR THE BASEMENT DOOR PLUG THE SPACE BENEATH IT SO YOU CAN'T OOZE THROUGH AND DOWN THE STEPS LIKE A SLINKY COME TO LIFE I WON'T LET YOU GET ME YOU'VE ALREADY GOTTEN ME CONVICTED ME WITHOUT TRIAL BUT I'LL TELL YOU THIS YOU CREEPY CRAWLY BASTARD

YOU'LL NEVER GET ME ALIIIIIIIIIIIIIVE

□ □ □

Individuals who seek enlightenment through self-abasement must achieve a degree of acceptance of their condition before they can truly be said to have reached bottom.

□ □ □

(Interior. Attorney's office. Walls decorated with a moose's head and autographed photos of sports celebrities. AVERY BLANK and MARTHA STEWART sit next to each other in black leather armchairs opposite the attorney's massive oak desk.)

BLANK

I guess I've finally hit bottom. Your advice really hit home.

STEWART

Why, thank you. At the time I considered it merely another statement combining insight with social grace.

BLANK

It certainly embodied both. It made me realize that, innocent as my decision to stalk your product line—and ultimately, you---really was, I've developed an attraction to you. Your beauty, grace and knowledge make a heady mix, to say the least. It makes the ultimate goal of violating you seem so...*exquisite*.

STEWART

When a combination of beauty, grace and knowledge threaten to overwhelm you during an attempt to reach an out-of court settlement, you should always remind yourself that attempting a seduction in this situation is not appropriate, with the exception of the more remote South Pacific cultures.

BLANK

Your perceptiveness amazes me.

STEWART

Just as your ability to self-destruct amazes *me*.

BLANK

I'm surprised you would choose a person with this decor to represent you.

STEWART

In resolving legal disputes, results, generally speaking, are more important than decor.

(A door opens and closes behind them. Footsteps thud past them. Rounding the corner of STEWART's chair, RON comes into view.)

BLANK

What are *you* doing here?

RON

Representing Mrs. Stewart. Hi, Martha.

BLANK

When did *you* become an attorney?

RON

In night school. I just passed the Bar Exams. Only took me four tries. *(Grins proudly.)*

BLANK

I would have expected Martha Stewart to have a high-priced, high-powered Manhattan attorney who rode the Westport commuter train every day.

RON

Give me a few months.

STEWART

For best results, fresh enthusiasm frequently surpasses jaded experience.

RON

My associate shares those very same qualities. Here she is.

(NOREXIA PRUINN enters, wearing a gray business suit. BLANK gasps.)

RON

Now, let's get down to business. Mrs. Stewart, what do you want to do with this sicko? Should we throw the book at him? Or a whole store of them?

BLANK

I thought this was supposed to be an *out-of-court* settlement.

STEWART

If we can reach a mutually satisfactory agreement.

PRUINN

Such as committing yourself for life to an institute for the criminally insane. I'll have our secretary bring in the papers. Cousin Trish, would you come here, please?

(As TRISH enters, BLANKS sags in his seat.)

□ □ □

Spinoff: So, now you're telling me this whole things was rigged from the start.

Blank: And that *none* of this has *anything* to do with Martha Stewart or Martha Stewart Living.

□ □ □

The moment after you think you've hit bottom, you discover a level below it.

□ □ □

GRAND RE-OPENING
Martha Stewart's
MEGABOOK\$ \$PORT\$ BAR AND HOUSEWARE\$

(Interior. BLANK is dressed to resemble a male counterpart to Martha Stewart. In a half-circle of chairs in front of him sit a hundred Martha Stewart

clones.)

BLANK

Good evening, ladies. My name is Martin Stewart, and I'm your host this evening. In the display case behind me, you'll see the new Martha Stewart line of Tupperware---that is, the new Martha Stewart Storage Ware. Unless you are an experienced hostess---or host---you can't always know how much food you should prepare for your guests, or how much they will consume. To ease the stress of uncertainty in these situations, you'll need appropriate storage for the remaining items. If you don't eat these items, you may donate them to soup kitchens to feed the poor, to buffet restaurants to serve the shrinking middle class, or to the U.S. Department of Agriculture as tax deductions. If you have any questions concerning the disposition of the matter contained in your Martha Stewart Storage Ware, be sure to discuss the matter with your financial adviser.

(Martha Stewart Vigilantes, headed by NOREXIA PRUINN and TRISH INGENUE, appear at the entrance to the store, wearing flowered bedsheets made of 100% linen and Martha Stewart Halloween masks. They carry flaming torches and an effigy of BLANK. The VIGILANTES enter the store chanting:)

LET'S DRAW A BLANK AND QUARTER IT
LET'S DRAW A BLANK AND QUARTER IT

(The VIGILANTES enter, knocking over books, bar stools and housewares as they approach BLANK.)

BLANK

Hey Ron! I thought we settled this matter *out of court*.

RON

We did. Out of court, but within the law. Unfortunately, I can't control what goes on outside the law.

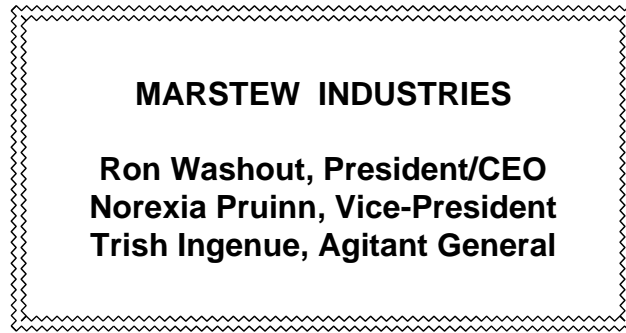
BLANK

What am I supposed to do?

RON

I can't advise you. You don't have me on retainer. But here's my card, in case you decide to.

(Close-up. The card is the same color as the paper the objectionable material found in the Martha Stewart display was written on. It reads:)



(Cut to closeup, BLANK's expression of shock.)

BLANK

You fraudulent *bastard!*

RON

Watch your language. This is a family store.

BLANK

You set me up.

ROGER

I guess you'll know better than to look for a poetry reading here.

BLANK

Then, this has *nothing* to do with Martha Stewart.

RON

I can't say I've ever met the lady. But this is a great way to promote our unauthorized facsimile product line.

BLANK

Then *you* violated Martha Stewart, not me.

RON

Violation is like beauty, Avery. It's in the eye of the beholder. Me, I'm just a hard-working bookstore and sports bar manager who studied corporate law in night school.

BLANK

And what does that make me?

(RON grins. As he opens his mouth, a deep-toned voiceover begins.)

...A FUGITIVE. ACCUSED OF A CRIME HE DIDN'T COMMIT, FORMER POET AVERY BLANK SEEKS REFUGE FROM THOSE OUT TO DESTROY HIM. HE WANDERS FROM TOWN TO TOWN, LIVING UNDER ASSUMED NAMES, SEEKING EVIDENCE TO PROVE HIS INNOCENCE.

(An unwashed, unshaven BLANK walks down a dark, deserted street, face concealed, glancing furtively over his left shoulder.)

WILL BLANK TRY TO INFILTRATE THE VIGILANTES WHO PURSUE HIM?

(BLANK wears the vigilantes' flowered bedsheets and watches his effigy burn amid hoots and hollers.)

WILL BLANK TRY TO CONTACT MARTHA STEWART TO ENLIST HER SUPPORT?

(Cut to MARTHA STEWART, in her living room with a deranged-looking BLANK.)

BLANK

I'm telling you, they're exploiting your product line.

STEWART

I'll have to consult with my attorney. Ron...?

WILL BLANK TRY TO ALERT THE AUTHORITIES TO THE NEFARIOUS MARSTEW CONSPIRACY?

(Interior. Police Station in the Deep South. A CONSTABLE listens patiently.)

CONSTABLE

I'll have to talk to the Sheriff about it. Here he is now.

(RON enters in a Sheriff's outfit.)

**ENLIGHTENMENT IS A GOAL
SELF-ABASEMENT IS AN INFINITE PROCESS
NEVER CONFUSE A PROCESS WITH A GOAL**

(Voiceover.)

AVERY BLANK MADE THAT MISTAKE. DON'T LET IT HAPPEN TO YOU.

THE END