

# Eye on Editorials

## PAIR OF PENNIES

### "In The Waiting Room"

By **daniel j. taylor** - *Lion's Eye Editorial Editor* - djt5036@psu

On Monday the 22nd, for reasons not particularly significant to this column, I sat in the lobby of a Philadelphian surgeon's office. The place was packed to near-capacity, swelling the waiting time to a lengthy hour, even though the flow of patients moved quickly. I plopped down to slay the time with a short story assigned by my ENG 435 professor, Dr. Sorkin.

As I said, the room was crowded and there was lots of chatter. A patient and his mother, to my left, rambled on about the Health Care Bill, but didn't seem to really know much about it. For a few minutes my eyes blazed across the text in my lap without storing any of the information, as I half-unconsciously, half-curiously eavesdropped on their conversation. I didn't (and still don't) know much about the Health Care Bill and figured it may be beneficial to try and pick up a few tidbits, being as how it is likely the most significant social legislation passed during my lifetime.

Soon enough, my ears were treating their conversation in the same manner that my eyes were treating my short story, and I'm certain I came close to thinking nothing at all before being jerked aware of my own absent-mindedness. "Time to knock this thing out," I thought to myself as I bit off a hunk of a very good, very salty, sixty-cent soft pretzel. My attention dropped back onto the life of Zora Neale Hurston's *Missie May* and I obeyed my weak conscience, reading as I knew I should.

Upon reaching the end of the story (a rather happy ending, I would say), my eyes and ears once more began to dance around the room, absorbing bits of general discussion—"how 'bout this weather," "did you fill out a [March Madness] bracket," etc. Honestly, nothing interesting was happening.

I felt as though my gaze must not center, however, because before me sat a woman upon which I did not want to set my sights. It wasn't that she was awkward, deformed, or ugly, and in fact she was almost beautiful. She sat back, underneath a small blanket and visibly chilled. She remained quite still with the exception of her toes, which occasionally wiggled underneath her fuzzy, bright blue socks. She must have been over eighty and her wheelchair was large, capable of reclining, and placed directly in

front of me.

It's odd how I handle situations such as these. When I see an openly gay couple, a homeless man on the street, a lone black teenager in an otherwise white crowd, or a woman who needs a wheelchair, I almost always do the same thing—I look away. It's not because I am uncomfortable, disgusted, or scared. In fact, it's almost the opposite. Whenever a minority or outcast enters the scene and I have a suspicion that they feel uncomfortable or that they expect to get stared at, I try to look the opposite way, to accommodate them and help them avoid such feelings. In practice it feels like the right thing to do, although in print it seems childish, but anyway, that's where I was at with my friend, the elderly woman.

She was clearly lucid, not having the lacquer of a far off mind upon her eyes, and once or twice I smiled to myself as her toes curled and fought against the constraints of her large sock.

Twenty minutes must have passed this way before a nameless nurse swooped around the back of the woman's chair, preparing to cart her off to some other place where I would no longer be in view of her. At that moment I noticed that the chair was not electric, and that no one in the room seemed to care that the woman was about to be removed. I wondered by what means she had arrived at the office, and realized that she was alone.

To the nurse's chagrin, the woman moved her head for the first time and said, quite plainly, "I am afraid. I am afraid to go in there alone." The nurse quickly responded saying something we all could've predicted: "you're in good hands," "we'll take care of you," "everything'll be ok." Any of those are what she could've said, and are no different from what she did say. The woman eyes, which pleaded for a friend, looked hard at the nurse and replied, "My family lives very far away and I am afraid."

The nurse began to wheel her away.

I realize now that I should have gone with her, but I didn't.

I hope she doesn't have to go through that again. I hope she doesn't have to sit alone in that room again in six months, or a year, but she will. I hope she has someone next time, and if not, well, then I hope she died on the table.

## Belligerent Spectator: "Disarming The Jealousy Complex"

By **Caitlin Olszewski**  
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Lately people everywhere are going green. However, they are not buying reusable shopping bags or recycling, they are bitterly biting their nails with envy and scowling with infinite jealousy. Jealousy is everywhere, and regardless of who you are, everyone experiences it to different extents at various points in their lives. Your girlfriend's ex-boyfriend, a peer getting a higher grade, or a promotion given to an undeserving co-worker can bring out the envious snake in everyone. After all, it is only human.

Envy and jealousy in small doses are the driving forces behind motivation and hard work.

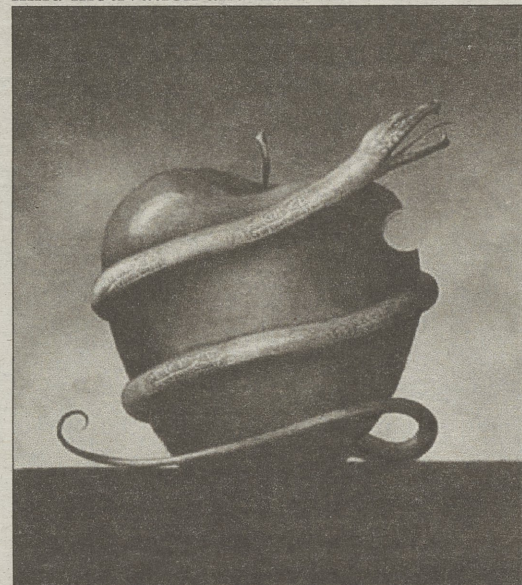


Image courtesy heektopia.ning.com

A common virtue in the workplace, envy causes many promotions and leads to competition at the price of co-worker disputes. Jealousy and envy can rapidly consume the mind and very quickly create a horrible environment full of bad vibes and negativity. The horrible actions that are a result of intense jealousy break social bonds and cause distance between oneself and the rest of humanity.

Alas, people have been overdosing on motivational envy and have been going mean for green. It is one thing to let jealousy internally drive you to better yourself and surpass the person you are jealous of. It is an entirely different aspect to blatantly insult someone and try to

diminish their confidence so they become just as miserable as you. In other words, jealousy is very unattractive and sadly very prominent in the college world. I recently stumbled across several articles in *Psychology Today* discussing the meaning behind jealousy and the driving force behind being consumed by envy. The article defines the two relative words as: "Envy is the bile on which we choke when we want something that belongs to someone else. (Its cousin jealousy is the toxic sensation that someone might take from us what we already possess, notably the affections of an important person.)" Bile? Toxic? Negative words to describe an awful, ugly trait that no one should possess.

I could touch base on the jealousy complex regarding relationships, but frankly that is so boring. Relationship jealousy only boils down to insecurity and craving the reassurances of, "Baby, I love you. I promise." It is completely unnecessary and people need to grow spines with some confidence on the side.

I know some of you may be thinking, "This is the same stuff they preached to us in middle school. Bullies and mean people are apparently acting out because they are just jealous. I'm not buying this crap." To be honest, back in the day I didn't either. Now with the wisdom of age, keen observational skills, and self-actualization, I have a pretty good understanding of jealousy and envy. It's easy to spot when people act out upon jealousy and it becomes even easier to rise above it.

In our age it's especially hard to deal with the trials and tribulations of growing up and self-realization. If you are unsure of yourself, gain some assertive confidence! Don't be a jealous, arrogant jerk. Jealousy diminishes social skills to the point of non-existence. Don't make pathetic and empty attempts to gain self-worth by belittling others. You'll make yourself feel better and people probably wouldn't dislike you as much.

## The Lion's Eye



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