

STITCH-WORK

**The Sick Jaundiced Underbelly of the Heartland
(A Censored Version)**

by

Icky Y. Ater





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ISBN 1-59682-123-X

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Published by Fultus Corporation

Corporate Web Site: <http://www.fultus.com>

Fultus eLibrary: <http://elibrary.fultus.com>

Online Book Superstore: <http://store.fultus.com>

Writer Web Site <http://writers.fultus.com/ater/>



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This book is dedicated to the memory of
Stephanie Angela Holly.

And thank you Nikki because you're a smart
independent beautiful punk rock lady.

Definitively you are the most amazing
person I've ever meet. Give me a call. My
numbers the same.

Additionally I'd like too thank William S.
Burrows for giving his blessing of my work.

Concluding though, as Marilyn Manson so
eloquently said

"I am your shit. You should be ashamed at
what you have eaten."

Oh yeah, if there's any X's out there
reading this; you know who you are.

I hope you rot in hell, bitches.

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Chapter One

Today is the first day...

The book you are about to read contains events and people based on real people and real occurrences. However, names, places, and events have been rearranged, or slightly altered. This has been done for dramatic effect, to bridge storylines, or to protect the reputations of certain individuals. I assure you that 75% Of the elements contained within this book have a basis in reality.

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Bored, bored, bored, bored, bored, maybe another cigarette, one more can't hurt. Looks like another dull night in Dallas; I remember when Being in Deep Ellum was fun. Why did I even come to July Alley; tired of these people; dollar drinks aren't worth this misery. If I hear another music snob argument between the sad kid in black, and the one with a pink mohawk I'm gonna throw up. FUCK THIS DRINK I'M LEAVEING!

"Hey" a crackled feminine voice speaks to me out of nowhere. I hadn't noticed the pretty pale girl next to me sporting slut red lipstick.

"Oh, what?" How could I have missed her she's wearing a barbed choke chain; hope she didn't see me mouthing my thoughts.

"What are you thinking about." she says it like a demand while holding the end of her choke chain in one hand; twisting the tips of her shoulder length black hair in the other.

Nothing" I mumble Trying to avoid being caught in another pointless thirty-minute conversation, I'd rather just leave.

"HEY!" she barks "Did you hear me, what's your name?"

Shit I wasn't paying attention "Oh, I'm Jacob, uh listen I gotta go; sorry, uh, what's you're name?"

She tilted her head flashing an enigmatic smile "Kristi, Kristi with a K."

Impressed I replied "Never heard anybody say there name like that before. Nobody except James bond say's there name like that."

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"When I say it like that people don't forget." Kristi says with confidence already knowing what a good answer it is.

"Yeah, see you around." I attempt to flash a smile back at her; I probably look like a smitten goof-ball.

I get up with an uncomfortable feeling in my hands. I don't know what to do with them so I'll shove them in the pockets of my dirty loose fitting jeans. Exiting the bars threshold I see Mark sitting outside in the bar's porch area fenced off by a rod iron Cage. Not really a friend; just one of those people you see everywhere you go.

"Hey Mark, I'm gonna see what else is going on, wanna go?"

"No, I'm staying, see you around" He returns to his conversation with a somber looking girl. She's so plain like wallpaper, he should try his luck inside.

I say "late" at him with my back already turned as I cross the street.

Stepping with my uncomfortable stride I walk through the crowds leaving a party at Club Clearveiw, and down Wally alley to next street over. Loud house music grabs my attention, too my left I see the source; it's a long line of people hidden at the end of hall street. Approaching the line I see normal people in it, but almost half of the line is weird assortment of people. First I pass a nice looking couple then a double amputee with metal piston's for legs and feet. Next a transvestite, and what looks like a pimp in a wheel chair. Nearing the front more normals then a girl half of her face sweet and plain; the other side looks melted

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her eye blank and dead. She's turning toward me; I better look away; try not to look rude.

"HAA, O'my God"

Comes from a short Hispanic guy checking IDs at the door well dressed in gutter sheik clothing. Fuck I'm caught, just keep walking, pretend nothing was said. The other door person is a tall hairless thing almost alien. Totally androgynous with chalky white skin; it's wearing skin tight neon pink lingerie. I step toward them nonchalantly attempting to walk away past the velvet ropes at the front door. Stepping just past the door; the short door guy screams.

"Show us your cock, and we'll let you in for free!"

My curiosity peak's "Let me get this straight. you'll comp me if I let see you my dick." His voice now becomes soft and supportive like a doctor "Just pull it out for a second don't worry, I'm an artist. I just want see it for a moment. Then you can go in; its nothing weird." Worst case scenario I do this, and he doesn't let me in, and I'm humiliated. Have too admit this place is interesting, fuck it I'll try it. I sigh letting out an unenthusiastic "OK". I turn slightly away positioning my zipper and boxers so I can do it were less people will see, and can cover up as quickly as possible. I pull it out carefully making sure the door staff sees; so won't be asked to repeat the process. I hear a muffled "OK" from the two of them. I Stick it back in hurrying as if ashamed. As if I was cattle in a slaughter house a plastic wrist band gets manhandled onto me. "Go in."

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impatiently the door person stares "FUCK TODAY!" he leans forward pushing me past the large steel double doors. In a whirlwind a series of people shove me down the multicolored hallway until I reach the inside.

The front of the building didn't show the awesome scope of its insides. It's a huge square industrial warehouse with a second floor balcony circling all four massive walls. An assortment of smells assault me; horrific when combined with the sea of humans. Body heat made the foggy air moist, and the walls sweat. Lane like crowds forced me along with them sweeping me into chaos against my will. Eventually they push me down a corridor like room; shaped in a semi-circle with purple velvet couches that line the walls. With only a dull red glow I see the couches are filled with people drooling, vomiting, staring vacantly, and some grope each other in a wet grotesque fashion. The sweaty masses force me to the end of the corridor; where there's a bar to one side of a large unisex bathroom. Entering my shoes slip and make smacking sounds against a brown chunky ooze covering the entire floor. All around me I see money being exchanged for drugs. Spotting a way off the human conveyor belt I step into a corner against the bar. A bar in the bathroom this can't be sanitary.

I see the bartender for the first time; Oh, my god what the fuck. Its dressed elaborately as a large fairy Possessing blue rubber skin while wearing a slightly lighter blue hard plastic toga. With masculine features I assume its a he, and he almost reminds me of a living toy.

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"When in Rome" I mumble under my breath.
Locking eyes with the bartender I say
"Whisky sour."

He replies in a high squeaky voice "Whisky
sour."

I confirm by giving him a Nod.

Immediately he turns to make my drink slapping
his wings against the sides of the tiny bar.

A trumpet can be heard blowing to the rear
of me. I look to the sound investigating; as a
waffle flies through the room going over my
head. Coming into my sight is the source of it
all. It's a towering transvestite in pants and
shoes that make him appear to have cloven
hoofed goats legs, with a trumpet. He sits in a
indifferent regal fashion crossing his furry
goat legs, dispensing chaos as he deems fit.
His face emotionless atop a lazy boy balanced
above a table covered in waffles. I turn back
to the bar wanting a much needed drink. The
blue fairy's gone replaced by a screeching bug-
eyed woman bound in a leather tutu demanding
five dollars. I hand her six, and turn to
leave the corridor in a hasty way, this place
is fucking weird. Walking away I can't help but
be intrusive as I eavesdrop on an absurdity so
blaring it pierces the music, and chatter of
the club. They're behind me, and I don't dare
look; wanting not to associate their the
voices with their faces.

"Theirs just too much gay here, these mother
fucking fags get on my last flaming nerve."

"Haa, How can you say that shit. You know
your one of my favorite people; just because
you're the only black gay homophobic racist
I know, as mush as I find it repulsive; it's

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irony incarnate coming from your mouth. Besides aren't you supposed too be spinning records now."

"Mikey's got it, I needed some coke and shots. Besides What can I say, I know my people, most blacks are thieving niggers, and gays are bitchy little fashion queers without a thought in they're head, except for cock. Aren't you supposed too be getting ready for the show!"

"I'm ready now. I just injected a cocktail of harsh chemicals, and I'm ready too go."

"Well lets head up, you fucking junkie."

"Ya, I love you to. Haa."

Entering the main expanse of the building; I can see everything now that most of the fog has cleared. I notice something new; a shower to one side of the dance floor. Inside a gorgeous brunette bathed naked slowly touching her breasts; she arouses me in a instant. On the far side I see a waterfall inside adults play splashing in the pool of water at the bottom. The middle of the dance floor has a giant box with a heart shaped hot tub next to it. Boxes descend in size spiraling away from the tallest center box near the hot tub. Every side of every box is a different color; the last box in the spiral is a run-way made of strobeing red neon lights.

The sights of this place Fill me with anticipation, I have too see more. I go sprinting up the staircase, Bet I'll have a good view from the balcony. Stepping onto the balcony's landing I feel the goose-bump's rise on my skin. In front of me my breath turns into a cloud of steam from the cold air, it must be

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sixty degrees up here. Up here it's very dark there's only the light from dance floor out past the balcony. Squinting my eyes to adjust I walk with trepidation trying not to stumble. There's only two guys up here; one naked with syringes shoved through every inch of his skin. The other has closed safety pins making patterns in his face. I want to ask them if it hurts, but they've probably been asked that by too many jackass's already. I know so many people with piercings that hate that question.

Going too the balcony's edge I Lean against the metal railing, while my head starts to pound from large industrial air conditioners blowing down only a foot from my head. I watch a hedonistic mass move to the sounds of the house music below me. A series of horizontal laser grids recombinant while an assortment of lights move and change in perfect synchronousity with the music. Against the beats of the music there's a deep voice "*The first ones free.*" BOOM, BOOM, BOOM "*No scratch no snatch.*" It all seems too make the dark become bright and alive. Tasting my drink it overpowers the muscles in my face making me gag; Immediately I light a cigarette in reflex to the spasm.

What the fuck is this place the rules of reality don't apply here. Nothing makes sense I feel like I'm in Alice in wonderland, or some shit. Like I've wandered into the last roman party a purgatory where enjoyment is the only concern. How can it be that this place exists; why haven't I heard of it; why hasn't everyone heard of it. Thinking back their wasn't even a sign outside the building; nothing indicating a name anywhere. How could this secret been kept

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from all of us. I must appear to everyone else like an idiot gocking wide-eyed not dancing, or even speaking. I've literally only said three sentences since arriving here in fucking wonderland.

To my left the balcony turns into a bridge that leads to a curtained hole in the front wall of the building. Just standing here; might as well check it out. Following the black bridge to the small entrance; there's a plaque next to the entrance, it reads "1 ½". I pass into a dark cave of a room highlighted by red lights as smoke drifts in and out of the red beams. Watery pipes and wiring are exposed in the ceiling running through everything like a bad idea come too life. Booth's line the edges filled with people that look like their having conversations that no one has a right to listen in on. A earthy hippie looking guy wearing a brown corduroy suit is giving massages on one of those weird folding massage chairs. He's in a lighted alcove to the right corner; while a group of rave kids wait lining up in a small hallway. Their eyes rolled up in their heads from all the ecstasy they've taken; they probably can't wait to get touched.

Squeezing past them I go down the tiny hall curving to the right. It empties into a small room bearing a resemblance to an opium den; while cartoon network plays on a large T.V. It must be sound proofed here, I can't hear the outside music. Now all I hear is a hybrid of dark electronic and industrial music playing. I'll stop here to enjoy the cartoons; awkwardly squatting down, I leaning into a corner spot. If I don't strike up a conversation at least I'll watch cartoons and feel like a part of the

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group for a moment. A thin thing in all black sits in the corner opposite me crumpled up resembling an insect near the TV screen. Looking at me he speaks like a speed freak yelling and talking as quick as he can "Hey this is Henry." Pointing to a short heavy set rave kid with an unusually square head. "Wanna hear how to solve the worlds problems." I feel a smile creep across my face as I say "Sure." with cynical joy wondering what crap is about to pour out of his mouth.

"You know that painting from the fifties with the cop in the twenty-four hour diner drinking coffee You know how the diner has floor to ceiling windows well anyway's If their were 24 hour donut shops with windows like that cops could wait there for there friends and we would make friends with them too their happier and stop hassling people for no reason making them friendlier and everybody's happier so everyone in the world is happier politicians feel the joy that flows through society so theirs no more war and world peace ensues. The 24 hour donut shop with glass front is the key to the world's problems."

Henry looks at me saying "That's great stuff right; see this recorder it lets me record shit like this, and put it all in a book."

"Are you recording now."

"Yeah."

"So in the book, you'll copy conversations down verbatim; if there interesting that is?"

"Yeah in the book at this moment the reader will be reading what's being said right now;

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they'll know about the recorder, and read every word of our conversation!"

"So if I wanted to speak directly to the reader now is the time?" My word's come out in a third person way like words in a book.

"Yeah; tell the people reading right now what you have to say."

"Well Uhhh, I don't really have anything to say right now; ask me some other time; I guess I'm just here."

I lean back against the orange wall signaling that I'm done speaking with my disembodied audience. Looking back at the television the cartoons have cut too a shaky camcorder image of one of the down stairs bar. I don't know if what I'm seeing is real or faked, but it cut's at me with it's perversity, and wrongness. On the screen I watch as a poodle has coat hanger abortion pulling out dog fetus after dog fetus in a mess of mucus and blood. At this spot a woman sitting near me yells out at the screen "Ya, it's a woman's choice what she does with her body. Keep, abortion legal!" Then on screen the bartender pours Bacardi 101 on the poodle, and it's offspring; Then taking in a shot breathes a plume of fire using a flaming book of matches too light a gasoline like explosion on the bar. Concluding with a transvestite in black panties and high heels picking up and caressing the crispy fried poodle as the screen returns too cartoons.

Disgusted, a Salvador Dali look alike with the surrealistic mustache and drab suit walks in saving me from the terrible things on screen. Coming in from a small doorway on the

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other side of the room. He leans down he looking frantic as I wait for the words too roll out of his mouth that I know are coming.

Looking at me he says "Go back out its last call, and the story is in the beginning, you have to go back out for the story arch."

What is this bullshit, I don't wanna move; saying with sarcasm "So I leave now. Do I go right back out? to the balcony? or someplace else?"

Dali answers pleased "No the balcony is fabulous, go and see."

Whatever, might as well, don't really want to talk to them anyways, and now I feel like I might be obligated to speak with them. You never know this might be one of those moments when if I follow were events lead me something impressive will happen. I stand up saying "fuck it." Hitting the short ceiling with my head; dirty liquid and dust fall into my hair from the exposed pipes in the ceiling. "I was going anyway's." Justifying leaving to the group, I turn giving a wave, and saying "Bye guy's." Rubbing out the gray wet material as best I can hoping there's nothing embarrassing stuck in it. Hopefully nobody notices with my ragged emo haircut. Making my way through the curving passage, the makeshift massage parlor, and then returning to the balcony to lean against the railing once again. This time I finish my drink without the shock of that first bitter taste. Lighting up a cigarette, I look for what Dali said I'm suppose to see.

All my vision sees is the shadow's of people directly across the building on the opposing balcony. A lamp turns on exposing the residents of this caged area; it's a technical booth

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containing the DJ, a clown, and a hideous drag queen. It looks like NASA headquarters as the drag queen hunches over a myriad of controls lighting up her face. The clown waves his arms around yelling about something, then leaping up and down, and finally repeating the process. The DJ changes the record causing activity to erupt as the music and lights change the crowd fills every available space. The clown begins jumping down the spiral staircase under the booth hidden in a steel graded cage; opening the gate he enters the floor.

A goon squad lead by a large woman with a blonde liberty spikes starts shoving people off the blocks. The clown puts on a oversized blue top hat, and grabs a giant neon striped cane. The neon colors glow as if radioactive only separated by black stripes and long sharp spines down its back edge. The cane curves in all directions becoming thinner and thicker, arching at the top like a hook. Now no ones on blocks except for a shadowy figure on the top the highest center block near the hot tub on the dance floor. The clown begins to walk to the neon run-way as crowd parts for him without hesitation. Once one of his feet step on the run-way immediately a pink spotlight shines down on him. The spotlight follows him seamlessly as he centers himself on the run-way and comes to a stop.

Taking his oversized top hat off with one hand he outstretches his arms in the air; cane in one hand, hat in the other. The clown tosses his hat and cane to the same large woman with yellow liberty spikes. She throws him a purple baseball bat in return; catching it he clutches it to his chest, and jumps over, and over again

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insanely. The normal people just stare; the strange critter like people whisper and laugh amongst themselves. Circus music plays as the clown climbs one large block after another towards the top. Now with only two blocks left till he reaches the largest center one the spotlight on him changes fading from pink to a dark purple. The new color makes it hard to see him as he reaches the top.

I can see the weird ones sneaking away from where the clown is, moving past the edges of the dance floor. They act like they know something the rest of us don't, whispering to each other, while trying to conceal their ear to ear smiles, and maliciously snickering. Better strap myself in for the show I watch the clown come ominously close to the other figure on the block. Both are merely shadows the only way I can tell them apart is that the clown has a baseball bat, "SHIT." Is he going to knock that person into the hot tub at the bottom; this is fucked up, this has to be a joke! For a moment I flashback to the old bugs bunny cartoon were he jumps into a pale of water. But like a car crash or train wreck, my eyes fixate on the clown.

The clown pulls another object from his back, a machete that he waves around. Time stood still extenuated by strobe lighting filling the entire club. In one fluid motion he swings the blade, and bat; one in each hand; the bat strikes the head of the victim first causing it to fly spinning end over end. A continuous circling spray of blood followed the head across the room until it crashes into a wall with an empty "Pugh" sound. Hurdling to the ground; one of those creepy orange midgets

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in overalls from "Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory" leaps catching the ghastly souvenir in mid-air. While the machete has bisected the body causing both halves to tumble into the bubbling hot tub below. The water immediately turns crimson with organs of all types churning in the tubs current. I feel weak as the blood rushes out of my head. Making me become warm and tingly as my field of vision narrows turning fuzzy around the edges. There's laughter and screaming everywhere forcing back the fainting spell causing me to recover my self-control. I have to get out of here, gotta to get out.

Confusion and fear motivates me to bolt down the stairs, and around the dance floor to the front entrance. A man with tattoos on his face and neck stops me and others from leaving through the multicolored front hallway. He pushes back people in the crowd with a look of hatred in his eyes that infuses with the fears already in us. Standing angrily stoic he says "You have to exit through the side door" pointing to the right. I go without question following the direction he's points us too. We reach a short hallway designed like an optical illusion making it appear to go on for forever. In reality its large at the front, and small at the end, and no longer than ten feet. At the end a man in all black sits on a stool with a giant sucker shoved in his mouth. He starts to say something but the first syllable is all he gets out before he tries to repeat it as the group shoves past him attempting to leave. I put my hand to giant steel door keeping it open for my exit till the next one in line takes the door with their hand.

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Running without direction I go left down a alley with barbwire on both side emptying out onto elm street in front of July alley. Back where I had began at; News crews and police crowd the sidewalk in front the bar. I run slowing to a walk as I approach the mess of flashing lights and cameras.

A news man in a suit grabs me by the shoulder saying "Did you witness the murder?"

"YES, yes I did." thrown in front of a camera I find myself in front of the tripodded cameras with red lights indicating their recording.

"What did you see, Sir?" the reporter asks with casual uncaring.

"A clown used a baseball bat and a machete to kill someone the body is in this giant heart shaped hot tub at this club around the corner..."

He reaches to shake my hand strongly griping it throughout the entire disappointed and patronizing statement "OK, sir thank you for your time."

A flunky brings me out of the news pit to the street as a cop pulls me back into the mess. They've already spoke with some of the people from the club. Then it becomes my turn as the cops start at me with his questions.

The officer speaks without any expression "Sir what did you witness."

Eager I start my story "A clown..."

"Stop there, and calm down. We already know about matter down the street, and nothing

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happened there. Our main concern now is what happened here."

The police have to be confused about what's going on "What? What do you think happened here?"

The cop coldly question's me "Did you know a man named Mark black."

Was Mark at that place "Yeah, yeah I know Mark."

"Well he was shot tonight."

"What Mark was SHOT, is he OK." what the fuck is going on, I don't understand anything anymore.

The cop calmly starts speaking "Sir, he was fired upon at point blank range to his face."

"Fuck."

"Did you know him well." he asks unemotionally.

"Not really he was just a acquaintance." I can't believe I said that, it makes me sick, I can't summon up any emotion about him.

"Did you witness the shooting?"

"No I left a while ago." did I miss death by pure luck.

"Well that's all you need to know, go ahead and leave, here's my card. I'm the investigating officer go home, don't worry about anything that's happened tonight. It'll all be taken care of soon." The officer say's looking at me like he wants me to go away.

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He Points across the street directing me to leave; completely thrown off by things I walk away. I step off the curb walking with my head starring at the ground before me on my appointed path. Someone's tapping on my shoulder? Looking up I see the cause of that much needed attention. It's Kristi with a k, I Look at her as she looks at me; she sees the disturbed look in my eyes, and reflects empathy in her eyes back at me.

"What's wrong." Kristi asks as kind as she can in her crackly voice showing what I think is real concern.

Like a schizoid homeless man mumbling, the words fall out my mouth "I'm confused."

"Tell me what happened." speaking with the same real care as before.

"After I left here I went to this weird place and I saw a clown kill someone, then I ran here to the police and they told me I didn't see it, then they told me my friend Mark is dead, I don't understand." I pause looking for her to give me something.

"Ohh sweetie, Their right the clown did this as a joke, Boy did he fuck with your head. See you should've stayed and talked with me." Kristi reacts in an almost condescending way.

I stiffen shocked "What do you mean? It wasn't real?"

"Yeah the clown set it all up as a joke, He told me that..."

Stopping her quickly I ask "Wait do you know him?"

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Kristi says casually. "Oh yeah, me and him have been friends for years now; weird guy, for a while he had a crush on me, but he gave up on that and decided to just be my friend."

Stopping short of what I need to know. I persist "OK, what were saying before? What about tonight?"

Declaring sarcastically without a second thought she says it "Ohh, that's icky, that's his name, set it all up."

"But why would he do that?" I ask attempting to pry more from her.

"Ohh it's hard too explain he thinks it's funny to mess with people; plus it doesn't help with all the drugs he takes. I really think he lost his mind a while ago. Tonight's thing was what he was calling the real joke whatever that means he was talking about muggings and crop circles and fucking giving homeless people knives. Calling it some weird project name I don't know, like I said crazy." She says it looking annoyed with the subject.

I could've died tonight if I had stayed at July alley. Poor Mark, wish I felt more, feel bad. What has been going on, my entire night had been ruined by a fucking cruel joke. What's been going on, I want to know, these things tonight are just weird. I don't get it; Why would someone go to such trouble to fuck with people; She seems uncomfortable with the subject I'll drop it for now, I guess; I have to keep talking to her though.

She Is Sexy.

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