

SEQUITUR RECORDINGS
TRI-STAN CD
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TRI-STAN Text

The fuzzy Hensonian epiclete Ovid the Obtuse, syndicated chronicler of trans-human entertainment exchange in low-cost organs across the land, mythologizes the origins of the ghostly double that always shadows human figures on UHF broadcast bands thus:

There moved & shook, Before Cable, a wise & clever programming executive named Agon M. Nar. This Agon M. Nar was revered throughout medieval California's fluorescent basin for the clever wisdom & cojones with which he presided over Recombinant Programming for the Telephemus Studios division of Tri-Stan Entertainment Unltd. Agon M. Nar's programming *arche* was the metastasis of originality. He could shuffle & recombine proven entertainment formulae that allowed the muse of Familiarity to appear cross-dressed as Innovation. Agon M. Nar was also a devoted family man. & so it came to pass that, as his *Brady Bunch* & *All in the Family* flourished & begat *Family Ties* & *Diff'rent Strokes* & *Gimme a Break* & *Who's the Boss?*, from whose brows, hydra-like, sprang *Webster* & *Mr. Belvedere* & *Growing Pains* & *Married...With Children* & *Life Goes On* & the mythic *Cosby*, all with ads infinitum, Agon M. Nar in private family life did beget three semi-independent vehicles, daughters, maidens, Leigh & Coleptic & Sisse, who did then grow & thrive like kudzu among the fluorescent basin's palms & malls & beaches & temples.

So favored was Agon M. Nar by company CEOs Stanley, Stanley & Stanley, as well as by Stasis, God of Passive Reception himself, & too so blest with savvy, that by the time his three lovely maidens – whom he now saw & adored every third weekend – had undergone their first Surgical Enhancements, Agon M. Nar had actually vanquished the esurient, heavy-hitting & high-profile Reggie Ecko of Venice as Recombinant Head of all Tri-Stan, R. Ecko of V. falling then gently back to the basin's pastel earth, deposed & just royally pissed, under a parachute's aegis of golden silk.

& Agon M. Nar administered Tri-Stan Entertainment's affairs wisely & cleverly indeed; &, as is recorded, recombinations of rip-offs of spin-offs of pale imitations came to dominate & soothe the formerly chaotic MHz, Before Cable.

& while recombination as *ethos* metastasized, soothed, & remunerated across the pink-orange landscape of medieval CA, Agon M. Nar's unattested daughters blossomed into nymphetitude. Ever far-sighted, Agon M. Nar wisely provided for monthly tribute to the fluorescent basin's God of Surgical Enhancement, who, well pleased at such tribute, fashioned Agon M. Nar's daughters into nymphets far, far lovelier than the stony vicissitudes of Nature would have provided solo. Anyway, Leigh & Coleptic Nar eventually blossomed into USC cheerleaders, post-vestal attendants at the Saturday temple of the padded gods Ra & Sisboomba; on their subsequent careers Ovid the Obtuse is mute.

But it was Agon M. Nar's youngest daughter, his Baby, his Love-Dumpling, his Little Princess – viz. Sisse, the Nar family's lone aspiring thespian, haunter of casting

calls for commercials & day-time serials – who did become the Enhancement *technician*'s favorite & Personal Project; & after much non-HMO tribute, plus rituals & procedures so grisly as to compel lyric restraint, the eventually nearly 100%-Enhanced Sisse Nar so like totally surpassed her acrobatic sisters & all the fluorescent basin's other maidens that she seemed, according to *Varietae*, '...a very goddess consorting with mortals.'

& she consorted a *lot*. For as word of her trans-human charms spread throughout the basins & ranges & interior wastes of medieval CA, bronzed men with cleft chins & rigid hair from as far away as the Land of Huge Red Pines journeyed in loud & extraordinarily phallic chariots to gaze upon Sisse Nar's spandextral form with wonder & glandular excitement, & to consort. Stasis, God of Passive Reception, himself personally gazed down upon & admired Ms. Sisse Nar, & from his home-entertainment module kept distant video tabs on the riveting maiden at all times.

It's right around here that Ovid the O. tone-shifts to Lament. For alas, the God Stasis's immortal S.O., the basin's Queen Goddess, Codependae, was seriously ill pleased that Stasis spent more quality time admiring Sisse Nar's camcorded image than he spent even bothering to deny his infatuation with the much-Enhanced maiden to Codep. over the Olympian couple's oat-intensive breakfast. Stasis's denial was Codependae's ambrosia, & she found its absence inappropriate & irksome in the extremus, & plus then when she came out of the sauna & found the Reception-God on his cellular pricing swan-costume rentals – well, this was understandably impossible to detach from; & Codependae vowed retaliation against this mortal & undulant strumpet before her entire Support Group.

It soon came to pass that Codependae & Co., after much interface, settled on a vengeance vehicle. This was the Telephemically dethroned, parachuted, & highly vengeance-oriented Reggie Ecko of Venice, who'd suffered a massive self-esteem-displacement & had sold his house & tank of pedigreed carp & moved into a freebase fleabag in an infamous Venetian residency hotel known along the boardwalk as The Temple of Very Short Prayers, & was now spending all his time & contract settlement hitting the alkaloid pipe & drinking Crown Royal right out of the velvet bag & throwing darts at 8 X 10s of Agon M. Nar & watching incredibly massive amounts of late-night syndicated television, gnashing his increasingly discolored teeth &, like, totally embittered. A covertly active strategy went into effect. While the demiurge Erythema began to appear to Reggie Ecko in the mortal guise of Robert Vaughan hosting *Hair Loss Update* every night from 4 to 5 A.M. on Channel 13, & to work on him, Codependae herself began work on the heart, mind, & cojones of Agon M. Nar, insinuating herself into his 4-5 A.M. REM-stage as the Cerberian image of Tri-Stan's three CEO Stanleys. Under Codependae's direction their images began to kibbitz at Nar's psyche, & to Foretell.

O verily must Tri-Stan get its foot in the door of Cable's ground floor while there is still time, sings the three-headed siren. The three-headed siren Foretells, the best of both possible worlds: no Sermonette, no Indian crying at litter, no anthem or flags or sign-off at the Close of the Broadcast Day, no Close of the Broadcast Day at all: instead, a 24-hr low-overhead loop of something so very archaic as to appear forward-looking, & not on any 'cable' but on & in the very air.

The Ultimate Rerun, 100% echo: myth, classic & Classical myth: rich, ambiguous, archetypal, cosmological, polyvalent, susceptible of never-ending renewal, ever fresh. A whole new kind of ritual narrative – the sit-trag.

ENDYMION PYRAMUS PHAETON MARPESSA EURYDICE LINUS THOR ESHU
POLLUX THISBE BAAL EUROPA NIEBELUNGEN PSYCHE DEMETER
ASMODEUS ENDYMION WALKÜRE PYRAMUS ETCETERA.

Awakening thus in fugues & paroxysms, Agon M. Nar did thereupon consult mediated Oracles, offer leveraged tribute to images of Nielsen & Stasis, & sacrifice two whole humidors of Davidoff 9” Deluxes upon the offering-pyre of Emme, Winged Goddess of Victory. There was much market research.

& so it came to pass that, on the same week Sisse Nar’s nose was Enhanced into eternal aquilinity, Nar & Tri-Stan’s much-ballyhooed *Satyr-Nymph Network* was born & licensed for analog broadcast. In brief, S-NN comprised an ingeniously simple 24-hr low-overhead loop of mythopoeia mined at 10¢/1\$ from the loded stockrooms of the BBC’s toga’d & grape-leafy mythophilic period 1961-7 & targeted at that uneasily neoclassical demographic class that already consumed reruns without even chewing.

This lonely & insomniac audience found the invariant sameness of S-NN’s circuit of British b/w mythic skits – serial legends of e.g. Endymion & Pyramus & Phaeton & Baal & Marpessa & surreally cockney Niebelungs – good: reliable, familiar, hypnotic, & delicious as the taste of their own mouths. For Agon M. Nar, this appetite for repetitive echo spelled divine inspiration – in the words of statistical microecon, *autogenerative Demand*.

Alas, we no longer get to say ‘alas’ with a straight face, but ‘alas’ used, according to legend, to be what you said in great stoic sorrow over tragedies ineluctable, over the blackly implacable *telos* of Nature’s flawed unfolding. So *alas*: it was both naturally & tragically ineluctable that one Sisse Nar, aspiring thespian, would audition & screen-test & survive two call-backs for & yes finally land a starring role in the very first ever original S-NN/Tri-Stan mythic reproduction. This was a recombinant update of *Endymion*, one of the most popular of the stagy old BBC sandal-fests. The reproduction, *Beach Blanket Endymion*, not only came in under its shoestring budget, but its prime-time debut nearly threatened the slot-supremacy of NBC’s *roughly eighty*, a *thirtysomething* knockoff about flappers & hepcats struggling to find both themselves & sustained continence in a modern nursing-care context.

& both Focus Groups & mail confirmed it: Ms. Sisse Nar was a phenom. It was, yes, nonpositive that she could not act, & that her unEnhanceable voice was like nails on a slate. But these flaws were not fatal. For Sisse Nar’s title role, opposite the contemporary logos-legend Vanna of the White Hands as the lunar Selene in this somewhat Sapphic redux of a well-known minimyth, called only for catatonia. Sisse turned out to be a natural. Forever asleep on Mt. Latmus’s rather incongruous beach, she had only to lie there, cross-dressed, Enhanced, & immortally desirable; her antinatural beauty was enough. She was poetry in stasis.

Long-jaded viewers were rapt, Vanna’s show stolen, critics indulgent, & sponsors all but manic. Stasis even taped the thing, up at home. Sisse Nar got a *Guide* cover & a *Varietae* profile. She became, as *B.B.E.* ran like clockwork every 23 hrs., a high-RF light

in the small-screen firmament, albeit somewhat typecast: for Tri-Stan's F.G.-respondents did attest with one voice that they loved Sissee *for*, not despite, her eerie enactment of the vegetative state. Her morphean passivity touched a chivalric nerve, apparently. A market for large-r Romance. Classic-minded viewers yearned for a maiden comatose, gloriously unconscious – for who is yet more remote & unattainable & thus desirable than the oblivious?

Whatever the source of Sissee's unconscious allure, the industry found it good, & thus recombinable. An 'original' S-NN reshuffling of the Norse myth of Siegfried, with Sissee as a narcoleptic Brynhild, was rushed into reproduction. Dyspeptic men in worsted blends journeyed far by air to feel both Nars out re merchandising tie-ins, for the Official Sissee Nar Doll – gloriously devoid of all function – seemed a Natural. Safe to say that even the wise, clever, worldly & levelheaded Agon M. Nar was extremely well pleased.

Alas, too well pleased. For prominent among the rapt red-eyed faithful who tuned in to watch Sissee as Endymion lie there desirably couchant as Selene ministered Sapphically to h/her over & over & over in the weeest of broadcast hours was the vexed & malevolent Reggie Ecko of Venice, late of Tri-Stan & Recombinant eparchy, more recently of obscurity & the B. Ford Clinic, & even more recently of the Erythemic Robert Vaughan's sibilant & Iagian late-night campaign. Erythema's visitations had gotten progressively more effective: after many liters & quarter-ounces & very short prayers over glass pipe & flame, diplomatic relations between R. Ecko and reality had pretty much broken down. & it so happened to be on the early morning of his pharmacological sanity's tether's frayed & final end, alas, that Ecko first laid eyes on Sissee Nar's androsupine performance in S-NN's *Beach Blanket Endymion*, the self-same hour of which saw also Nature & Codependae, cross-dressed & adhesively whiskered, now insinuate themselves into his cloacal room as respectively a Domino's deliveryman & an assertive associate of a certain chemical creditor known only as 'Javier J.'...& as the littoral *Endymion* so gloriously failed to unfold they began to work on his psyche in earnest – as too, oblivious, did Sissee Nar, there on the Trinitron's screen.

Malignly serenaded by Vaughan, Domino's, & Latin creditor, plus of course no stranger to obsession since his corporate displacement & Lucifer-like fall into what had started as mere recreation, R. Ecko of Venice was ripe for metamorphosis into that most dread of the fluorescent basin's BC monsters: the lunatic stalker-type fan. What little psyche did remain to him was in a twinkling consumed & possessed by the image of what he saw lying there passive on Latmus before him. He began to live all & only for the reappearance of *Beach Blanket Endymion* every morning at 4-5 PT, at the same time that he began to see the cathode screen itself as the dimensional barrier that prevented his 3-D union with Sissee Nar's much-Enhanced 2-D image. He kept breaking his Sony in rages & then running out to buy another. Your standard lunatic love-hate thing. He wrote creepy unpunctuated letters to S-NN & Tri-Stan (red crayon), made supplicating/belligerent calls. Plus he began keeping the rambling clinical diary expected of your classic stalker-type fan. Reggie wrote that he'd hear, watching, Sissee sing, hear a waxproof C# threnody as her buxom shepherd lay moon-caressed in the fulgence of a cathode pulse. More bedazzlement – he *knew* her part to be silent but *felt* her unmoving ventriloquent lips to be moving in song, for R.E. of the Temple of V.S.P. alone; & only because he wanted it so.

Reggie Ecko records singing phlogistic duets with the comatose TV image, & with that flaccid figure, reaching the sorts of unimaginable passion-heights one reaches only with dolls & dreams – dreams of the unattainably-dead-in-life. Malignant divinities or no, Ecko's was a flameout of the most classically Romantic sort. & so Ecko freebased heart-bursting amounts of product & composed creepy Crayola poems & communed with C. & Co. & through their assuasions bought wholly into this whole trite & trendy medieval CA codependent-inner-child-dysfunctionality deal, this men-who-love-too-much-not-wisely-type thanaphiliacal thing where he believed not only that the passive 2-D Sisse Nar was the timeless & ideal object of his deepest longings but that this love was by nature unconsummable in the merciless daylight of 3-D reality.

...Ovid's point finally being that Ecko of Venice & the T.V.S.P. decides that he can 'attain' Sisse Nar only in the unionized melt that is death's good night. Both Robert Vaughan & the high-alto sirens affirm this decision as meet & good.

Alas, it's child's play for the natively Venetian Reggie Ecko – who's now pawned his Trinitron & bought an AK-47 from an auto-weapon stand right on Dockweiler Beach in Playa del Rey – to find out exactly where the unlisted Sisse lives...

& so Reggie Ecko, adorned in finest Alfani & light-denying glasses, & suffering mightily from coke-bugs & general desiderative frenzy, journeys forthwith to Sisse's off-violet beach house &, after checking all the windows' drawn shades & repeatedly shaking the sand out of his loafers & ringing the Cyndi Lauper door chime, booms the door & bursts the pathetically naive safety-chain, & Sisse's in there innocently passing the time with Walkman & a Buns of Steel aerobics tape; &, as best forensic authorities could later determine, Ecko – crashing in & seeing Sisse Nar not only upright & awake but in what looked for all the world like vigorous purposive motion – for a brief too-human moment hesitated to open up & actually fire, & Sisse had a moment's chance to run for her life & escape the fatal stalker-type tribute, except apparently she'd happened to catch a doubled glimpse of herself in the mirrored sunglasses Ecko wore to protect his rheumy Romantic retinae from the horrific light of the 3-D day, & Sisse was apparently just, like totally transfixed by her own human image, literally frozen by what's got to have been the revelation of her Enhanced & trans-human charms in the first mirror of any sort she had ever gazed into, & apparently she was standing there so utterly static & passive & affectless with shock that Ecko's heart retumesced with doomed unendurable ur-Romantic C#-aria-type love once more, flooding his ravaged CNS so utterly that he suddenly came to/departed from himself again & ventilated Sisse Nar, liberally, then somehow shot himself not once but three times in the head.

...with the tragicomic irony here being that Ecko's wacko & retrograde Romantic dream of union with Sisse in death turned out to *come true*. For S. Nar & Ecko were recombinantly joined in just precisely the 2-D world he'd Foreseen as their only possible union. For the syndicated vehicles *Donahue!* & *Entertainment Tonight* & its many avatars like *Oprah* & *Geraldo!* & *A Current Affair* & *Inside Edition* & *Unsolved Mysteries* & *Sally Jessy!* & *Solved But Still Really Interesting Mysteries* paid lavish & repetitive tribute to the now-tragic epic of Sisse Nar's cometic rise & Reggie Ecko's fall at the hands of Sisse's father & the father's epiphanic dream & Sisse's paralysis in the mirror of Ecko's lenses & high-caliber ventilation & gruesome death with her Walkman still on & urging the first police on the scene to Flex That Fundament & Ecko's mysterious triballistic suicide & subsequently discovered Crayola diary. & the very most

famous *Varietae* photo of an unconscious Endymionic Sissee & a photo of Reggie Ecko jet-skiing with Ricardo Montalban back when he'd moved & shaken at Tri-Stan's apex – these two images kept getting juxtaposed on-screen & placed side by side behind the commentators' variform heads; & the *Enquirer* even did the job right & spliced the negatives together & claimed they'd been lovers all along, Ecko & Sissee, with a fetish for cross-dressing & water sports...& so fan/lover & star/object really were, in a sort of cynically campy but still contemporarily deep & mythic way, united, melded in death, in 2-D, in tales & on screens.

& then Ovid the O. got the idea to turn the entire affair into this sort of ironically contemporary & self-conscious but still mythically resonant & highly lyrical entertainment-property, a '...high-concept miscegenation-of-Romantic-archetypes-type metamyth,' a kind of hot tub-swingers' incest among Tristan & Narcissus & Echo & Isolde; & in his lapidary soliciting abstract he not only confirmed but did in fact plagiarize Dirk of Fresno's theory that such were Stasis the P. Reception God's grief at the demise of his mortal Flavor-of-the-Month & wrath at the lovesick ex-exec who'd 86'd her that he denied Reggie Ecko's thrice-shot soul the peace of any sort of Underworld visa, that instead Stasis condemned Ecko's ghost to haunt forever those most ultra- of broadcast television's UHF bandwidths, to abide there annoyingly & imperfectly juxtaposed with all figures & imbricately to overlap & mimic their on-screen movements as an irksome visual echo to help remind impressionable mortals that what we're transfixed by is artificial & mediated by imperfect *techne*. (Like we didn't already know. (Plus reception was nearly perfect on Cable by this time anyway.))

& but one final & epexegetic 'alas.' For such proved to be the descantant Ovid's love for reflecting on his own periphrastic theories that he neglected to make any substantive mention of the fact that Sissee Nar had in fact been Skinnerianly raised to fear & avoid & religiously eschew all mirrors, any surface with reflective burnish, her wise & clever but somewhat Behaviourist father fearing that her image's ever-Enhancing beauty would, seen, render her unattractively narcissistic, stoned on self-love; that if A.M.N.'d maybe let his Enhanced Love-Dumpling have one or two quick mithridatitic glimpses of herself in mirrors before at last Ecko of Venice's reflective shades hove into her unprepared view, she'd not have been so transfixed & shocked by an image which actually she alone in all the fluorescent basin saw in truth as *imperfect nay flawed* & inadequately Enhanced & like totally gnarlyly *mortal*, & she might have been able to keep it psychically together enough to run like hell & escape the semiautomatic Wagnerian intentions of the lunatic UHF-ghost-to-be. So Ovid ended up having to stick all this narratively important background in right at the end, pretentiously referring to it as an 'epexegesis,' & the Acquiring Editor of the respected glossy organ he'd solicited was ill pleased, & the organ didn't buy the thing after all, although Ted of Atlanta's cable Hit or Myth Network bought the rights to Ovid's overall concept for one of those "Remembering Sissee'-type tribute-specials that lets you use a whole lot of public-domain footage over & over again under the rubric of Encomium; & even though 'Remembering Sissee' didn't actually ever make it onto the wire, Hit or Myth's Option Payment to Ovid was far from dishonoring, & between that & the respected glossy organ's Kill Fee Ovid the Obtuse ended up making out okay on the whole thing; don't you worry about Ovid.

(From "Tri-Stan: I Sold Sisse Nar to Ecko", reprinted with the permission of the author,
David Foster Wallace)

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