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ABOUT:

Fine Print is a humor zine designed for offline consumption in a bite-sized PDF (less than two megabytes).

For more, visit petermrichardson.com/fine-print.

WHEN IS SOMEONE GOING TO TELL MORGAN FREEMAN TO GIVE IT UP AND GET A REAL JOB?

Let me say something publicly that we've all been thinking privately to ourselves: Morgan Freeman is a two-bit hack, with absolutely no business in Hollywood.

Morgan Freeman lacks charisma, depth, and charm. His presence is anything but commanding. His voice is unappealing. His relational chemistry with his fellow actors falls flat. So why does the man continue, when his career is so clearly destined for mediocrity at best?

Don't get me wrong, everybody should follow their dreams, Morgan Freeman included. But it's also important to know when to cut your losses and quit. Morgan Freeman gave it the old college try, but it just hasn't worked out. He needs to find a real job and move on with his life, whatever small amount of time he has left.

Here's a case in point: I recently watched the nineteen-nineties film *The Shawshank Redemption*, and was surprised to see Morgan Freeman's name listed in the end credits. *Strange*, I thought, *I don't remember seeing him in the film*. It turns out that he played a major role, but I didn't even notice him onscreen. His character (whom IMDB lists *Red*) totally slipped my attention. Morgan Freeman's stage presence was so lacking that I completely missed his performance for one hundred forty-two minutes straight. And that's typical for Morgan Freeman.

When a man has been at it for as many years as Morgan Freeman and has only received Lifetime Achievement Awards from twenty-two institutions (at the time of this writing), shouldn't that be a sign that it's just not working out?

What if Morgan Freeman received another Academy Award? Another Golden Globe? Another Emmy? Would that make a difference at this point? Unfortunately not – Morgan Freeman is too far gone to make a serious career of acting.

A word to Mr. Freeman: get out with whatever dignity you still have. Take a job as a janitor, a grocer, a Juilliard Masterclass: Distinguished Instructor of Theatre, anything you can get, really. We just want you to be happy doing something you're actually cut out to do. Put down the script, the makeup, the Oscar Award for Best Performance, the multi-million dollar contracts, and make something of yourself for once. ▲

I'M CONFUSED & ANGERED BY TODAY'S YOUNG PEOPLE

Here comes a whole pack of the little bastards. One's surfing a wheelchair in a hospital gown, and at least three others are wearing leashes. Typical. Seems like there are more and more teenagers than ever, out on the streets harassing passersby and snorting Flonase like candy.

They like to drink hairspray lifted from the bodega then run sprints in the loading bay behind the supermarket. You can hear them before you actually see them because they take their little goddamned birdcages everywhere; completely stuffed with parakeets.

Don't they get blisters from wearing their shoes on the wrong feet? I'd hate to be a podiatrist, or a Nissan salesman, for that matter – every one of these juveniles seems to have an Xterra nowadays. They get them retrofit with cassette decks so they can listen to old, warped Bon Jovi tapes. It's a conceptual art experience that's really *in* with the teens this season.

Once, I was walking down the street when one read the label on my butcher-shop bag. The next thing I know, I'm hearing, *Hey, meat eater! 'Bok bok bok,' you chicken-chompin' bitch!* Turns out they're vegetarians or vegans or whatever.

So I say, *Leave me alone! I'll call the cops!* The hoodlum spit at me, hopped on his unicycle, and sped around the corner. At least five different hats flew off his head in the process.

Just because they all signed up for four years in the Army ironically doesn't mean I have to thank every one of them for their service. They're still in high school!

Call me old-fashioned, but I don't understand this generation, what with all their slang. They get *fiddle-tongue* after smoking *choo-choo powder* (ground up allergy pills), so they *hop platonic* till their *taxi bleeds*.

They've got other lingo, too. To greet each other, they say, *You drinkin' hopscotch?* and the reply is always the same: *Tryna quit*. The boys are either *knapsacks* or *busters*, but the girls are too busy bottling up car exhaust to care.

My heart goes out to the parents, who have to cart these children around to their competitive square-dancing tournaments and pay for their computer repair seminars. But, the kids are too busy live-streaming their attempts at the *beehive-in-a-bag* challenge over CB radio to even show up at home for dinner.

Today's rebellious teens cut class to work shifts in their co-owned community gardens, and they don't even sell their produce at the market. These ingrates keep it all for themselves. We've all seen their towering salads and gluttonous crudités.

I know it's cliché to say it, but these kids listen to static noise generators. I once heard one say, *Did you hear the new white noise machine I bought? It's like a sensory deprivation chamber, but just for your ears.*

If children are our future, then I hope to God that these kids mellow out by their twenties. Seems like a fat chance – but hey, my parents thought my generation was weird, too, so maybe I shouldn't be so concerned. ▲

FOUR OR FIVE POEMS

F
I
N
E

They call him

the Vegan Matador

because he likes harming animals

but not eating them.

P
R
I
N
T

My superpower?

I'm dangerously sarcastic.

But that's cool that you have
laser nostrils or whatever.

It's going to take more
than that twinkle in your eye
to get us out of this mess.

Podcasts are a liberal plot
to indoctrinate the public
with murder mysteries
and TED talks.

My ultimate goal:

earn the epithet

“new money.”

I went from

Sioux chef

to sous chef

to Sue's chef

to sue chefs. ▲

THIRTY FUN FACTS FOR KIDS

- There's a man in London who can solve a Rubik's Cube in just under two hours.
- Dolphins are the only fish that can't breathe above water.
- Towels were invented by Henry Ford because he got tired of seeing everyone air-drying in public.
- Edgar Allen Poe's middle name was *Allen*.
- Conspiracy theories are a secret plot to distract the public from what's really going on.
- When kids aren't around, old people pretend to be cats and dogs with each other.
- Hip-Hop Dance Grandmaster George W. Bush retired from dancing in 1999 to run for President of the United States.
- The food *meat* is made from cooked animal flesh.
- Don't fall asleep! That's exactly what your parents want.
- Pants were discovered in ancient China, and they've covered our cold, ugly legs ever since.
- Seeing the color purple makes insects want to die.
- Adults are right about everything.

- Today in 1850, turtles emerged from the caves under Mt. Gaia as the world's newest animal.
- Smiling is good for you. It keeps people from thinking that you're a humorless, ungrateful snob.
- Did you know you can watch movies and TV anytime, even without a VCR? It's called *online streaming*, and everybody loves it.
- Once, at the beach, I saw a seagull eat a whole plate of baked beans.
- Everybody who says that they're *colorblind* is faking.
- In the time of dinosaurs, your parents were still considered young.
- If you're being chased by a bear, remember to lure it into an elaborate trap before it tears you to bits.
- The shopkeepers of Toronto have an old saying that roughly translates, *Hey, you need to pay for that!*
- Playing the piano is easy—just express that which burns in your heart through the gift of song.
- If Sigmund Freud taught us anything, it's that blueberries can be used as eyeshadow if you're surviving in the wild.
- Baseball is a *sport*, i.e., *pointless activity*.
- Penguins are fancy waiters that serve walruses their supper.
- The three rules of a professional handshake are: make eye contact, have a firm grip, and kiss squarely on the lips.

- Straws are for suckers.
- Inside every fire hydrant is a gnome. Learn his code-word, and he'll give you a drink of water!
- If you want to be cool, you have to be vain and depressed with expensive sunglasses.
- If you see someone that no one else can see, do not listen to them. I learned that the hard way.
- In the morning, adults drink hot bean juice with milk. It's called *coffee*, and it's the yuckiest, grossest, worst drink ever! ▲

IT'SN'T

INTRODUCING THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE'S FIRST DOUBLE CONTRACTION

I don't have time to communicate with long-form *ises* and *nots*. If I'm jumping into my Lyft and tweetin' my most recent #ShowerThoughts, I can't be bothered to spell that shit out. My mind is a cascading waterfall of ideas, and if I try to slow down to say, *it is not time for your stories right now, Malcom*, then we're all squandering my potential.

Contractions help, and Lord knows they've saved my ass more than once. Sometimes I drop the *g* at the end of *ing* because it's not only faster, but also pretty cool. But these solutions aren't good enough. Standards of English communication are nothing more than a burden on my otherwise boundless potential, and I'm tired of it. So, from now on, I'm making my own way. So get on board or shut up, Malcom, because shit's about to get fuckin' real.

It'sn't is my newest brainchild. A streamlined double-contraction, triple-word evolution in the English language, the likes of which no one has ever seen. How often do I have to say *it is not*, or *it's not*, or *it isn't*? Then there's the extra decision fatigue from figuring out which option I'm gonna drop on the general public. In the words of Kendrick Lamar, *I'm mad, but I ain't stressed*. I overcome obstacles, no matter

how great. I'll admit it: it's pretty brave of me to live my best life, and *it'sn't* may be my boldest move yet.

MY OTHER INNOVATIONS

Don't even think of talking to me unless you're hip to every language-streamlining innovation that might just come out of my mouth when I'm schoolin' you on some woke shit. Here are just a few of my creations:

A collection of other double contractions:

- Now'sn't
- Why'dn't
- I'dn't
- Who'sn't

On-brand abbreviations:

- DWDDW (pronounced *dee double u-double dee dubs*) for *Dat Wasn't Designed Dat Way*
- LMLML for *Let Me Live My Life*
- LULUL for *I'll Let You Live Your Life*

Personally-coined catchphrases:

- **Poop'n'snoop:** when you're getting nosey and poking around in someone else's bathroom
- **Skill-bility:** when everybody needs to back up and let me run shit like I do

- **Kill-billies:** today's violent, hyper-conservative, Appalachian-livin' bastards

My signature hand-gesture:

The classic shaka with middle-finger up, which means *hang loose and go fuck yourself*.

CONCLUSION

If I'm being candid, it was just a matter of time before I cracked the *it'sn't* code. I've been ballin' since day one, everybody knows it. But I'm a generous and humble person, because I share my wealth of knowledge with all you ignorant pieces of garbage. If it weren't for innovators like me, Alfred Einstein, Elaine Musk (from Tesla), and Harry Potter ... shit, it'd still be the dark ages in this bitch. ▲

EIGHT WAYS TO GET ACROSS TOWN

1: Here's what you're gonna want to do: hop on Eastman until you hit Twelve, and that's when you pop onto Banfield. From there it's just Ninety-second, Causeway, West Valley, Two-hundred-fourteenth, then Sixth past Arbor Heights, and follow the arterial turns till you get there.

2: Naw, don't listen to Chuck. That's not the most direct route, anyway, because you can take Fairlane clear out to Ivy Grove, and then cut back on the Thirteen and peel off at the Harbor Boulevard exit. Then just turn at the old Sooper-Fill gas station toward Edgefield, and you're on your way.

3: C'mon, man, that's just the scenic route. If you want to make good time, start out by going straight through Sellstrom until you see where the old elementary school used to be, and then hang a left to get onto Seventy-first. That way, you can cruise onto Northport, skipping all the traffic coming down from Terraceway, and drive backwards through Thirty-ninth real quick-like.

4: What's the matter with ya'll? Listen here, clearly you need to get there in one piece, so I recommend ducking the squad on Gillman before zig-zagging around Fircrest with that Five-iron express. Then, and this is key, don't exit at Trinity, just cut right through the house on Mansfield and trim up the Fourteen to mosey the lane at Four Acres Highway.

5: Bill, you ignorant son of a gun, don't send him that way! Just remember this here: pay the fare to hover Holman's bridge, and stonewall the curves at Zone Jackson before banking left up the fourth bypass intersection to Abelsville. Sync Marfield Road to give Three-hundred-first Avenue breathing room at Exit C, or waive Douglas Street from the bypass at Greely. That'll drop you at Cone Canyon Court, so it's just a matter of running Cid to L-four.

6: Sweet biscuits, these guys are trying to get you lost! Here's the straightforward path: goad a crest at the Vista, shoal and bone from Bigot Junction clear up to Charter, then cast a net via Hauser writ large. At that point, you can either vale your carriage through the west angle, or just drop a chain 'round the Ferryman Breaker. Either way, now you're switched up come winter, so it's only a matter of Holden to Quarry, Greensboro at Timberback, Piston and Nomenclature by way of Stammer via the double-stack - and Bob's your uncle, you're ready to drive!

7: Fuck's the matter with front-loading the ol' null and void? If I'm going your way, I grime down Smokey Village toward yonder bygones, hang a man at the S-curves, build up steam across the arteries, wrap a maneuver under the southbound function, keep it by the book near Bard's Landing, or scoot yourself just past a hairsbreadth. Then, just dismount at the second way and kiss the third rail before acknowledging the fourth wall. Alls you got to do at that point is cross a couple dimensional loci, pray for rain, hop, skip, and jump to lay her down real easy, now.

8: Cut your damn zip-ties, Mac. About face! Pace twelve degrees north-northeast by eighty knots over two stone. Pass bends and crooks till kinks and curves define the path,

y'hear? Windchill, Governance, Volatile Chemistry, Two for Seven, Back-alley, Quarterly Kerfuffle, then then then then then then then then them. Them. Them. THEM. THEM! Shit, don't worry about *them*, you've got places to go, so pop a squat. Humdinger, let it rip on the mainstay. The foliage is soaked, you'll need galoshes. Hold up, wait up, and shut up. Yessir, this cave runs deeper, faster, and more efficient than ever. Cucamonga, Vile Sport, Chain Gang, Butterball, Dead Ringer, Fizz Fuzz. If that lint-rolling motherfucker steps on my line, I'm quitting the whole milk production. ▲

NOODLES: 6.5/10

These stringy and starchy carbs are a bona fide culinary classic – but are they worth the hype?

From hearty udon rice noodles to fine angelhair pasta; from hot pad thai to chilled soba; from savory chow mein to sweet Twizzlers, the noodle is certainly prolific, but it has the potential for more. So, what can be done to elevate the noodle to prominence? And, is noodle-making a dead art? And, is hair technically a noodle? And, what if we're all just noodles in the pasta of existence? Read on for my in-depth review of the noodle.

A HISTORY OF NOODLES

We all know that bread, rice, and dirt have been staples of the human diet for millennia, but few realize the ancient history of the humble noodle. Primordial Italians made an early form of spaghetti noodles with thin twigs, and the famous red sauce was simply cow's blood. It was a far cry from modern spaghetti, yet the first steps toward the invention of the noodle. When pasta technology came to prominence (in a time-period known to historians as the *Noodle Era*), humanity flourished across the globe. Italian pasta, Thailand's pad thai, Chinese ramen, and French fries – all these famous edible strings have their genesis in the auspicious Noodle Era (circa 300,000 BCE). However, since the development of the sandwich (in the *Sliced Bread Era*, c.

155,000 BCE), the noodle has become all but obsolete. The only people who even know how to make noodles have extensive historical training, and often have obtained a PhD in Culinary History.

NOODLES IN MODERN CUISINE

Enter James *Huck* Hinkleton and his wildly successful restaurant chain *Gonzo's*. In the mid-nineteen-seventies, *Gonzo's' Baked Mac & Cheese with Spaghetti in a Deep-Fried Calzone Enchalada on Alfredo* (or *GBMCSDFCEA*) brought pasta to the common, if morbidly obese, man. The dish was a hit until *Gonzo's* went out of business in the mid-nineteen-seventies due to lack of interest.

Where does that leave our friend the noodle today? Relegated to the dregs of gastronomical culture. Typically made from flour or rice, there are now bizarre attempts at noodle reinvention. As a case in point, innovative, cutting-edge chefs concoct noodles out of quinoa, beans, milk, glass, photons of light, dark magic, *cxula'ae*, $\neg\ddagger$, and more. But no one can truly reinvent the noodle, like we have done with the wheel many times over.

CONCLUSIONS

In the end, all noodles must be loudly slurped by the diner. In my experience, this obnoxious slurping exercise is the downfall of the worm-like cuisine. It also sets up a vicious catch twenty-two: chop the noodles up, so that no slurping is required, and you're left with rice (which is no longer scientifically classified as a noodle), or leave them long, and kill yourself at the end of the meal. Yes, the riddle of the noodle has perplexed chefs for generations.

My personal favorite noodle is the asparagus, one of few naturally-occurring noodles in the animal kingdom. They look damn good with their leafy tops and deep green noodle-parts, and I love the added feature of making my pee-pee smell funny.

My least favorite noodle is the hot dog. That's a big *no thank you* to meat-based noodles from this esteemed critic!

The noodle had its heyday, sure, but our modern slippery strings pale in comparison to the great noodles of old. Indeed, the ancient noodle is tied up in generations of human consciousness. Perhaps it's no wonder, then, that there is a great noodle inside each of our heads – *our brains!* So, use your noodle next time you think about eating pasta.

THE VERDICT: 6.5 / 10

Pros:

- International food staple.
- Commonly served wet.
- Great with moonshine.
- Phallic appearance.

Cons:

- Intensely radioactive.
- Often mistaken for clumps of moist hair.
- Unsettlingly, even suspiciously delicious. ▲