

Incidental Music

I was just thinking about you -

It was always the first thing I heard when calling home after my father died. Fact of the matter was that my mother was lonely. She was at heart a social creature and she just wanted to talk to someone, that's all. Nothing wrong with that. Nothing at all.

Nor am I much different from my father who, upon visiting, in the high stages of illness, would look left, then right and then reach for Classical CDs from my collection, sliding them into his coat pocket as if no one was looking. I saw, and I loved the bony hand reaching for a cure (he once commented that Vladimir Horowitz knew how to "tickle the ivories"; a maestro's heart for the stuff, in a Bazooka Joe wrapper). And every New Year's Day, he demanded quiet and Strauss, his one-day-a-year of required Solitude. "You might like these too", I handed him several more. He was surprised at Generosity; an odd thing from such a generous man. Granted, he wanted to kill us all at our first bath, or so he used to say, but he didn't. He was extraordinarily decent that way.

She, on the other hand, was a bitch of staggering consequence. She would always be smarter, always, and remember the history of it all, in far finer detail than you, doing it all at 40 paces, dismantling your shiny intellect with a withering glance, a slow draw and a spit of venom. Caffeine, Nicotine, Whiskey and Print - cigarette half cocked, and any pretension at smarts was undone. "It's true" she'd say. She spoke of Cheever, Bellow and Updike with true love and an admiring sigh, and of the essential elements of her never-dainty bag, inevitably and always, there was a half eaten Hershey bar, Kool cigarettes half-burned, mangled and mashed, and maybe a dog eared paperback (be it Wapshot, or Augie or Rabbit; the evidence of Need hung on her like a stain.) But for all of my mother's pull-the-wings-from-flies maternal charms, she was awfully sweet when she wanted to be.

Here and Now, there are half-eaten chocolate bars in odd drawers, half-empty bottles of gin, the odd smashed cigarette and books scattered about; dog eared paperbacks, coffee stained hard-covers and sentences piling up on odd scraps when I've had to write myself to sleep in hopes of quieting my agitated brain. I worked long and hard to manage their gaping absence, almost too well, and now the sparks of faded memory surround me with an incidental music; I read her books, listen to his waltzes, I remember how I came to be - I had not wanted to forget all of it. It is a Spring littered with ghosts. I respond to this agitation in my own unsocial way by hitting the road - to the waltzes of Strauss.

I wander beneath Zion's Watchman Peak on a warm spring night under a sky spattered with stars, I pat a horse on the nose, I drink a grand old White Burgundy from a paper cup. The evening chirps a little, but its quiet here and the wine sings as great wines do, returning me to a quieter softer place. The Puligny-Montrachet I drink comes from a vineyard named "crazy earth". It is wine as Deep Breath, as Lullaby; it smells of evening and earth and warm desert air -- and the chirping of crickets. I sit with my ghosts. I call my brother. We tell stories.

I leave for Salt Lake the next morning. "A Hard Rain's Gonna Fall". I see it on the horizon. Cold and violent, it beats a haze from the parched horizon and a mist rises from the soil. I should stay in Zion but I don't. I am drawn to Calamity it seems. I manage my affairs for another week before the agitation strikes me again and I do as the unsocial and solitary do, I am my father's son after all, and I travel further. Radetsky beckons (It's a Strauss piece - look it up, and yes, Strauss is traveling tunes; oh, and one more thing, yes, I air-conduct). I just need to be *away*.

The stinging blast of spring roaring from my glass is redolent of a restless season, and I listen to the singing night wandering under a gaudy show of stars, my eyes adjust, still more appear. In the morning I wander further. Spring in Mendocino is thrilling and vibrant, filled with emergent color and a nervous brightness. I read in a poem once that "things are more essential in Northern Light" (Charles Wright / Buffalo Yoga) and as I stand on a hilltop, looking down on a land brimming with vigor and life, the aromas of new flowers and the burning of vine clippings punctuate the air with sweetness and spice. It feels ancient and new, young and old all at once. Things are as they've always been. I return to the task at hand. I dig a small hole, fill the space next to the vine with compost, see the earthworms, defer to the lizards, move to the next vine. This vibrant place. There is an order to things; ghosts sing for a reason.

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Your feedback is welcome and wanted - any thoughts on how I might improve this newsletter are welcome. I want to hear it all — the good, the bad and the ugly. Questions, concerns, thoughts, experiences, both fair and foul, francis.fecteau@gmail.com

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A Salt Lake City guide to all things juicy and delicious in the world of wine.

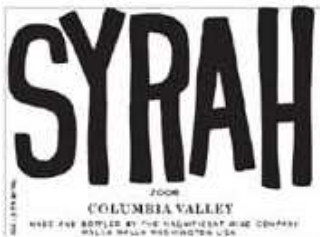
Tambourine Man



Take me on a trip upon your magic swirling ship” —if ever there was a lyric for shameless big-titted wines like these, it's this song that sings of a shameless high alcohol delirium. **Orin Swift “Papillon” 2005 / 2006 (\$55)** is a bare-knuckled butterfly, a Bordelaise blend (that is to say, Cabernet, Cabernet Franc, Merlot, Malbec and Petit Verdot in its mélange) that shows a surprise a minute; soft rich summer jam at one turn, an 8 cylinder roar the next. This is serious deep heart-of-darkness stuff. The **Saldo Zinfandel (\$28)** shows a sunnier disposition, ripe black fruits with streaks of anise and dark chocolate, it is a more jovial version of their prize winning “Prisoner” (\$35), but somehow it manages a fatter deeper darker streak thanks to a judicious dollop of Alicante Bouschet and Petite Sirah - it's a bass note for the ages.

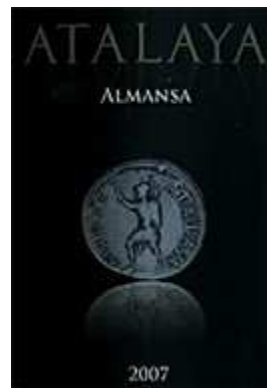
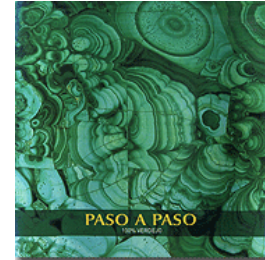


It's a simple marketing principle when it comes to the selling of wine. Give 'em the basics, the Five W's; Magnificent Wine Company (no joke, the producers name—it's a second label for the famed K Vintners of Walla Walla) these Columbia Valley Wines knock it out of the park for varietal expression and precision. Cool climate they may be, but the purity and richness are stunning. **The Magnificent Wine Company CAB 2006 (\$19)** is gorgeous. Its rich, laden with cassis and jammy black fruits yet never overburdened with oak. The concentration stays dead center and develops with air time, a magnificent deal. **The Magnificent Wine Company Syrah 2006 (\$20)** plays those same heavily concentrated, rich plush notes with remarkable varietal precision, showing notes



of cassis that finish up with jammy fruit and smokey black pepper tones. Ordinarily I might suggest this as a cold weather wine, but the flavors are so bright and precise I can see this next to many BBQ all summer long.

Boots of Spanish Leather



I am sailing away my one true love, is there something I can send you from across the sea? Yes, as a matter of fact, you can send these. **The Paso a Paso Wines 2007 (both \$10)** — the red is an old vine Tempranillo that sees 6 months in French Oak (a touch that gives it a ridiculously unctuous, hefty fruit). The White is a stainless steel fermented 100% Verdejo that shows terrific “ping” (a ping that gained in complexity over the course of two days in my fridge), a wine for the dog days of summer. **The Atalaya Almanza 2007 (\$16)** shows an immediate soaring grace that develops in the glass. Made from a blend of Garnacha Tintorera and Monastrell, it offers up a sultry perfume of violets, anise and black fruits with an even, silky balance that follows on the palate. **The Bodegas Volver, “Volver” 2005 (\$16)** boasts a display of sweet floral notes, cherries and an intriguing array of berry chocolate aromas that linger and trail down the impressively lengthy finish. This is well built stuff that develops with a few hours of airing. Judging from these, La Mancha is indeed a bounty this month - tilting at windmills indeed.



It's a new entry in the value sweepstakes, another Magnificent Wine Company Wine, **Steak House Red 2007 (\$10)** is a 100 % Cabernet, fermented and aged in neutral oak. It has a ripeness and an appeal that belies its Washington origin. It's the picture of balance, never one element showing out of place with all the fruit and texture weighing in on a great value finish.

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No Direction, Home

I am trapped in an odd gray limbo, Dylan rings in my ears and spring skitters along plucking at its sharps and flats. Last time I sang with Dylan this much, I tore carpet, slathered drywall and tried not to kill myself rewiring outlets. The snow falling outside then kept me scant company and the house, redolent with years of accumulated sounds, smells and stains, became a valuable lesson in the history of my senses. They'd accumulated 23 some years in the same house and now — "They" - even now I keep the pronoun impersonal, my parents, A and F, shame on me — it seemed that all I had left of them was evidence of their frayed pride, of Wear and Use, accumulated over decades of effort, and there I was for three months saying goodbye, each and every day for months; Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's Eve and Day, Vienna, holidays real and imagined, all of them. I scrubbed it clean, paved it over and made way for the new. I may as well have done them in myself, denying their presence thus.

My Father was the Man of the House, and my brothers, all, were and are, more man than me. I had no facility for this, none, I was terrified and the task fell to me. Men fixed things as I understood it. They knew the business end of a wrench, how to locate a carburetor; they knew where the hardware stores were, they drank a little whiskey at night, maybe they played a little Nickel and Dime. They shagged a long ball on the weekends. I knew that they never spoke.

And so I set about the task of reconstruction, dead of winter, chill of night and neighbors afraid to approach the sad dim lights of grief framing my labors. Slowly, slowly things came 'round. Rituals rose around my grief as if sheer repetition of task would shield me from further hurt; all it did was allow me time to acclimate. Things had changed; labor created a comfort zone and the repetition of task gave me some measure of breathing room. What I remember most wasn't the bonesaw-cold and solitude of those darker months, but the warm April afternoons that followed; when the lilac shrubs planted years before flooded the yard with a perfume; when for one peach and lavender colored twilight afternoon as I walked about the house, the smells of the sick and the dead were replaced by the aromas of pulsing life and voices past; "Hey, look who's home!", "You talk like you got a paper ass" (Father's favorite snip), "I'll make your life a Living Hell" (Mother's favorite bark) and the long ago "Are you coming to Mass?". I breathe it all in and hold it tight while I sit in the backyard. I sit in the long bluegrass, sipping my last bottle of **Latour's Corton Grancey '95** until the crickets sing at its summer aromas of lilac, rose and tea. (Great old Pinot Noir really does have metaphysical ramifications).

For a moment I was made more man. I owned a power drill. I was on a first name basis with the Home Depot Paint Counter. I flirted shamelessly (to no avail) with the girl on register 6. For a moment I knew well the business end of a wrench. I bought razors for cutting, Christmas lights for cheer. I remembered my parents for their immeasurable youth; Father wanting to "throw a ball like he used to" (at 79) and Mother splurging on cosmetics at 75 (she also celebrated her 43rd seven times). They did not go gracefully into that good night - I'll show you the life of the mind. For once I did not speak; I "did". And for a moment, I remembered the ticktock pass of a life well spent; me, the lilacs and the crickets.

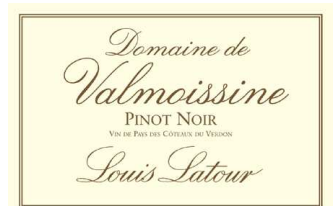
I Want You

Strength is for the weak. Character, Fortitude, Will Power; all of it, the province of the weak, timid and lily livered. Want is raw, cold, exposed, electric, painful, thrilling (spend the better part of four years in and out of dental care—this riff will make more sense). It is the essence of the season, a collective shrug, a herky jerk. Birds do it, Bees do it, even educated fleas do it. Want is want. I answered, reflexively, the wine I wanted to live and die on was Burgundy. Pinot Noir or Chardonnay, it didn't matter. It was, more than anything, the fact that the thought of living without it just made me misty at the thought of its loss. The heart wants what it wants (I heard it once in a Woody Allen movie, it must be true)



James Macphail is a great winemaker. The **Macphail Pratt Vineyard Pinot Noir 2006 (\$44)** with its truffle and black fruits and the **Macphail Anderson Valley Pinot Noir 2006 (\$36)** with its raspberry, tea and rose characters, are brilliant, expressive terroir driven efforts. The Small Winery Exemption makes these a terrific deal

Latour's Domaine de Valmoissine Pinot Noir 2006 (\$12) saved me from insolvency. Burgundy is an expensive habit but this has the stuffing to satisfy an expensive jones. So French it makes me smoke.



Bethel Heights Estate Grown Pinot Noir 2007 (\$29) matches Burgundy 2x its price with its bright, high red fruit cheekbones and lengthy spicy finishing notes. Grand.

Who'd a thunk this one? Deep dark brooding fruit from New Zealand, the **Spy Valley Marlborough Pinot Noir 2007 (\$23)** ~ it's a dead ringer for good Cote D'Or with its warmth and richness.



The best of the best wine stores;

Park City / 1550 Snowcreek Drive / 435-615-8538
Metro Salt Lake / 255 South 300 East / 801-533-6444
Cottonwood / 1863 East 7000 South / 801-942-2580
The Big Shiny New One / 280 West Harris Avenue
(about 1600 South, 300 West) / 801-412-9972

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Best gets Better, Bravo!



308 West 300 South
(801) 531 - TONY

It's official. The National Association of Specialty Food Retailers chooses five recipients each year based on peer recommendations and this year, Caputo's won one of those coveted spots. Caputo's is one of the best Specialty Food Stores in the country. The desire to be great, the very best is like a hunger with these people. Each year it's a new development; the chocolate selection which grows by the day, the impeccable selection of some of the world's rarest and finest foodstuffs, the year-round availability of truffles and that incredible cheese cave. And to think they do it all at the lowest prices in the valley for staple items—I'm talking to you Albertsons, Smiths, Dan's... Better Cheeses, Better Meats, Better Prices.

Eat, Drink, Cook, Learn

The Awards kept rolling in for Caputo's this year - Salt Lake City Magazine conferred its "Best Food and Wine Education" Award for 2009 to the crew at Caputo's for their tireless evangelizing of all things oily, cheesy, porky, boozy, sweet and delicious. Thank you for your continued support of this neighborhood treasure and come join me for a class. So Good, so very cheap.

JUNE 22th

Cooking Class: Italian Summer Favorites

Provincial recipes from all over Italy, chosen to highlight fresh produce of the season and effortless preparations. Not only are these recipes rich with the bright flavors of early summer, but they leave time for what is truly important, your family & friends. Its easy food for an easy season.

Class: \$45 Wine: \$15

JULY 13th

Focused Tasting: Intermediate Chocolate: A Horizontal Tasting of Madagascar

This class will be more like a meeting than a class. As experienced cacao culturists, we will taste, discuss and rate all the world greats from Madagascar. There are some new bars here you won't have tasted and we will jointly decide which Caputo's should and should not carry. Must take Intro to Fine Chocolate first, no exceptions.

Class: \$15



Keep Eating...

It's a terrific concept and its also one of the best dining deals in town, especially so considering the quality of ingredients. It was borne of a simple idea, "what if a restaurant used the best ingredients available, what if the restaurant was already an importer of some note, why, what if that restaurant was housed within a National Association of Specialty Food Stores Award Winner for 2009?." When you can use some of the finest ingredients in all the whole wide world (obtained at ridiculous pricing) you can, with the help of a great chef (all around psychopath and food freak Adam Kreisel) enjoy a great dining experience without going broke.

Italian cuisine is doggedly, devotedly local, nigh unto impossible to precisely duplicate because it is so heavily dependent on what's in the neighborhood and what's in season. Using that as a model, Caputo's / Tipica sourced produce, meat, eggs and flour from Utah sources, farmers they support through their "Locavore" mini-farmer's market (see next page). What couldn't be found locally, Caputo's pantry provided the rest from all around the world and, it could be said, a new regional italian cuisine has appeared, "Lago di Sale". Between Tipica and the flowering of new restaurants in Salt Lake City over the last couple of months, Salt Lake is fast becoming a truly great food town, truly a "Lago di Sale". The wine list is clever and interesting with about thirty global selections divided by texture (Chef Kreisel IS a texture fanatic) half of which are by the glass.

Tipica proudly proclaims itself "a tip to tail" restaurant, which means that they use everything (everything legally allowed that is). It's a menu that dares me to eat; sweetbreads, lamb neck, shoulder, ragout. At its heart its rustic cuisine, hearty peasant food, but the execution is impeccable. (Kreisel's touch with freshly made pasta alone is magic). Go now go often.

Tipica
314 W Broadway
Salt Lake City, UT 84101
(801) 328-0222

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Absolutely Sweet (eats) Marie

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Salt Lake City, UT 84102
(801) 532-0777

Pago is a brilliant new addition to SLC's dining scene. Owner Scott Evans hired one of Utah's greats—Adam Findlay to drive the kitchen. The slogan is "Farm to Table" and Scott insists upon it with the vigor of the newly evangelized. He spent years seeking out and securing relationships with local farmers and producers. Such great food and so close to home— Scott is a firm believer in keeping the dollars local and he puts his money where his mouth is. The space is remarkably cozy with a natural rough hewn feel. The wine bar aspect of the concept is nothing short of brilliant with all the selections by the splash, by the glass and by the bottle with all of which are neatly encased in a cruvinet system that keeps them all first-glass fresh. There isn't a single detail that's been left to chance, this place hit the ground running with such seamlessness, effortless service and brilliant food that it seems as if its always been here. Hopefully it will be for some time to come.

Tangled up in Blue

Chris Blue was once described by one of my favorite chefs as "intimidatingly talented". The latest batch of seasonal flavors will only increase that intimidation factor. The new flavors are here; Raspberry, Cherry, Sweet Corn, Chili, Lemon and Peach Caramel. It's a distillation of summer sun and perfume concentrating all the joys of a warm morning trip to the Farmer's Market. These flavors will drive away the June rain and put you squarely in a sultry summery mood. Each is a perfect melding of elements; a gust of aromatics followed by palate drenching concentration of silky texture and flavor. They have been my only reminder of summer through this drenching June. Proust had his Madeleines, I have my Blue. Again, available only at **Caputo's (801-519-5754)**

Miss the Farmer's Market?

TONY CAPUTO'S MARKET & DELI

We do, too!
That's why we started Caputo's Locavore Market.
This mini farmer's market is held every Saturday from 10:00am to 3:30pm.

We're hosting some of our *food artisan friends* and showcasing some of the **FINEST** food in the state. Best part... they keep everything they make. We don't charge fees of any sort. So shop local!
Local Eggs, Produce, Honey, Cheese, Grass Fed Meats & Much More

- WEEKLY VENDORS (may vary from week to week):
- * Clifford Family Farms (Fresh eggs, produce)
 - * Beehive Cheese Co.
 - * Larson's Piedmontese Beef
 - * Slide Ridge Honey (high-altitude artisan)
 - * Choffy (Coffee like bev from single origin cacao)
 - * Creminelli Fine Meats
 - * Cibo Mushrooms (fresh wild and farmed mushrooms)
 - * Crumb Bros. Bread
 - * Lau Family Farms Natural Beef & Lamb
 - * Other vendors rotate week to week.

Tony Caputo's • 314 W Broadway • (801) 531-Tony

MEDITRINA
Small Plates & Wine Bar

1394 South West Temple
Salt Lake City, UT 84115
(801) 485-2055

It's hard not to like Meditrina. Amy Britt and Jenn Gilroy have made this such a personal effort that for me, it doesn't feel like eating "out" and it always turns into dinner with friends. It's the warmest, homiest patio in the city and as twilight hits and the stadium lights are on, the roar of the crowd makes a remarkable dinner music. My personal affectations aside, it is a wonderfully sound and satisfying place to eat, if for no other reason than you have to admire the incredibly genuine and personal effort that animates the place. The cuisine changes seasonally and the ingredients are impeccable. The wine list features a rather daring 23 by-the-glass selections from all over the world, a reflection of the incessant curiosity of its creators, and a clever flight option allows diners to sample several flavors during the course of their meals. Corkages are reasonable and the proprietors are always eager to engage your inner wine dork. Mondays now feature a \$4 small plate menu and \$3 Sangria all day long. It's a terrific way to start the week. Best restaurant patio in town.

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Girl from the North Country

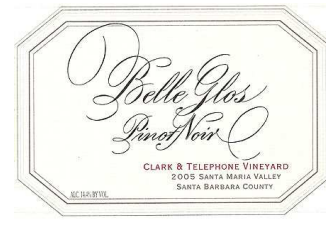


Reininger Vineyard's Walla Walla Cabernet Sauvignon 2005 (\$36) encourages my palate to forever look North for surprising Cabernet Sauvignon. This is pure rich and expressive stuff, barely kissed with French Oak; its loaded with black fruits, rich cocoa notes and a lively finish that is 45 seconds long.

From Oregon comes the **Bethel Heights Pinot Gris 2007 (\$16)** it's an oakless fleshy, tropical expression of Pinot Gris with great acidity and backbone. The finish is lengthy and bright. It's a wonderful alternative to Chardonnay fatigue and the screwcap ensures a fresh glass.



New Bottle Old Friend



It's important to revisit old friends, great winemakers after all try to reflect the essence of the vintage. Great winemakers will tell you they had nothing to do with it, that they just try to get the hell out of the way. These new vintages from Caymus / Wagner Family Vineyards are pure and expressive. **Mer Soleil Silver 2007 (\$22—down from a national retail of \$35+)** is nothing short of perfect; it is as close to eating grapes off the vine as once can get. It sees no oak time and no malolactic fermentation and is fermented in cement. This is age-worthy stuff thanks to its bright high acids ~ the flavors are summery and deep, showing sweet herb, grapefruit and a melange of citrus fruits. The **2007 Belle Glos Single Vineyard Pinot Noirs; Clark and Telephone Vineyard, Los Alturas Vineyard and Taylor Lane Vineyard** are, for the 2007 vintage, the best release of these wines yet. 2007 was a spectacular vintage for California Pinot Noir and these bottlings reflect the best of California Pinot Noir terroir; beginning with the crisp, intense Burgundian Taylor Lane, working down the coast to the warmer, earthier sunnier dispositions of the Los Alturas and Clark & Telephone Vineyards. These are intense deep rich efforts and are now available at great value here in Utah. Caymus' devotion to Utah's restaurants works to your advantage. **Utah Price on these wines dropped from \$40 to \$34** this month and will stay there for the duration of the vintage.

Native Sun, Italy & The Shape I'm In



With Summer so long in coming through this soaking June, my palate changes as if anticipating the Devil's Anvil (it's a Lawrence of Arabia reference—watch it) that is a Utah Summer. My palate craves liveliness, lightness and brightness, but I do not wish to sacrifice the deep seated emotional / intellectual / sexual pull of a great wine. The **Fattoria Selvapiana Chianti Bucerchiale 2004 (\$29)** is an utterly brilliant exercise in why memories of Italy bring sighs of love. This shows aromas of expensive new Italian shoes, roses, fresh raspberries and a beguiling warmth, there are two cases of this rare gem; one at 255 S 300 E, the other at the new wine store. Seek it out. Tasted next to the **Badia a Coltibuono Chianti Classico 2006 (\$26)** it illustrates the terroir of two gorgeous Chianti towns; Rufina and Gaiole. It's a brilliant contrast, the warmth of Rufina next to the lively bright red fruits of Gaiole. Further east, Giacomo di Neri and his Prada Sneakers shine their generous light with new releases, primary among them is the finest Tuscan Rosso I've ever tasted. The **Casanova di Neri Rosso di Montalcino 2007 (\$27)** is a plush, warm and powerful expression of Montalcinese power; rife with ripe red raspberry fruits, espresso notes and new leather, this is a brilliant introduction to the finest producer in this historic region. The **Casanova di Neri Tenuta Nuova Brunello di Montalcino 2004 (\$81)** is destined to once again be a #1 Wine of the Year / Wine Spectator. This is strikingly rich, profound and pure, loaded with jammy black fruit flavors, licorice, earth and a floral perfume unique to the sun drenched hillside where the vineyard lies. French Oak seasons and accents the fruit to a lengthy spicy finish. It will outlive you all.