WACKJOB'S JOURNAL:

SOMEONE KILLED THE FUNNYMAN LAST NIGHT.

CALL IT, FRIENDO...

IT'S A CLASSIC LOCKED ROOM MURDER MYSTERY. OR IT WOULD BE, IF THE DOOR HADN'T BEEN KICKED IN.

"YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT COMEDY. HE REALLY KILLED LAST NIGHT. HE HIT EVERY PUN-WHINE."

"Yeah." "He slaughtered 'em."

"He knocked 'em dead."

"He savagely beat the audience into a pulp with a mass and hurled them through a plate glass window."

"Well, maybe not."

HEH HEH. HEH HEH. STILL A CLASSIC.

HEY, CHANGE THE TV CHANNEL ALREADY. I'M TRYIN' TO DETECT OVER HERE!

WILL YOU SMURF ALONG WITH ME, PAPA SMURF? AB-SO-SMURFLY!

"Ab-so-smurfly!"
WARNING DELIVERED, THEN THINK I'LL JUST STAND HERE MAKING STRANGE NOISES UNTIL I GET ON YOUR NERVES.

HURM.

VURT.

MILP.

GLOON.

ZZZAAAPP!!!

SOMEONE'S OUT TO KILL MASKER.

THE CONCEPT OF "DEAD" MEANS LITTLE, WACK JOB. AT THE SUBCELLULAR LEVEL, IT REPRESENTS A SIMPLE REDISTRIBUTION OF KINETIC ENERGY.

GOOD OL' DR. VAN PATTER. PREDICTABLE.

I'VE SAVED MORE MONEY ON CASSETTES WITH HIM.

I DON'T GET IT. IF THE GOVERNMENT'S BEEN TRYING TO FIND THAT LOONBURGER FOR YEARS, AND YOU. THE MAN WHO CAN DO ANYTHING, WORKS FOR THE GOVERNMENT, WHY HAVEN'T YOU JUST BROUGHT HIM IN ALREADY?

I AM UNINTERESTED IN MUNDANE LAW ENFORCEMENT.

I HAVE SEEN FOURTH GENERATION QUARKS EMBRACE FROM CHAOTIC NOTHINGNESS. I HAVE Glimpsed THE TEMPORAL CONVECTION OF RISEN FLUID ON THE MOONS OF NEPTUNE, WHICH WERE BELIEVED DORMANT.

TO YOU, THE FUNNY MAN WAS ALIVE YESTERDAY, BUT IS DEAD TODAY, BUT THE TRUE CONTINUUM OF EVENTS IS NOT LINEAR.

I EXPERIENCE TIME DIFFERENTLY THAN YOU DO.

GESUNDHEIT.

NOW CUT THAT OUT!

I HAVE SEEN A HINT OF MYRNA SEEVERT'S TALENT.

ACHOO!
Here's a Kleenex. You've really left him?

You're so easy to talk to, Dan. The only positive human relationship I have.

Let's ruin it right away!

But, but, I don't know. Rebound hookups never lead to anything lasting.

Someone who understands human feelings.

Someone a little less blue.

In that case, you may begin your ascent.

Ouch, ow, move a little.

As I mentioned next week, I do not experience time as you do.

You're, you're on my feathers.

What's wrong? Doesn't my manic-depressive moodiness get you hot?

I think I have something that'll give you a little 'up, up and away'.

Chalis?

Now that's more like it.

You're the second-best lover I've ever had who wore an owl mask while fooling around.

Fondle!

Slurp!

Boff!
There's one thing I don't get, Boss. What's the connection here?

What do you mean?

There's always a direct, concomitant parallelism on each page of this book. The last page featured an owl mask. What does a prison riot have to do with owls?

Haha. Good question.

How about this? The owl was considered an omen of death in many cultures, including Mayan and Aztec.

That's a little esoteric, don't you think?

Hey, Larry, slow down with the lock cracker. We have to get this story out first, or the whole sequence falls apart.

But now you're conflating larger thematic concerns with specific visual cues. Maybe we were overthinking this. An owl is a predator, and we're here to kill Wack Job.

The owl was associated with the Greek goddess Athena, patron of Odysseus.

Isn't this entire story also a quest for heroic truth, and the moral limits of existence?

Yeah. Dang. If only I'd made a threatening remark about "Don't look over your shoulder," we'd be set.

Owls can swivel their entire heads. Dang. If only I'd made a threatening remark about "Don't look over your shoulder," we'd be set.

I wish we'd planned this murder better.

Maybe there's something to the juxtaposition of the owl mask with the act of procreation. Have we considered the egg?

We need to think "owl." Owl species are found on every continent except Antarctica. Considering where this story ends up, I find that omission significant.

Eyeball! Eyeball! Eyeball! Stabbim inna eyeball!

With the extralegal parallels, maybe it's a premonition of...

What perfect luck! Good thing the authorities had you in an unguarded cell after a ten-year manhunt.

And now, we fly south. There's still one teensy-weeny little thing to check out.
I didn't think it was possible, but this cold Antarctic weather is having a “shrinking" effect on me!

Brrr, why make us travel this far?

So sue me, glad you could come.

What can I say? I adored "Happy Feet"!

What's this mystery all about, Ozarcrochips?

First, ask yourselves a question. What happened to the paranoid dystopia we used to share?

When did it start to go wrong?

My solution is ingenious, yet so obvious.

By using my transmitter ray to zap a gigantic space squid into New York, thus killing millions, I will end all war.

How did you finance this insane project?

With an even more insane project! I sold the rights to "Botchmen" to Hollywood!

But our story is structurally complex, mature artistic statement.

Will a big movie studio understand and honor the source material?

Hurm.

Can you believe this is the best plan the world's smartest man could come up with?

I get a fifth of all merchandising revenue. Let me show you these stuffed "Botchbuddies"! They're just adorable!

Plus, I get a fifth of all merchandising revenue. Let me show you these stuffed "Botchbuddies"! They're just adorable!

Zap me first, doc! I want to be annihilated!

No, kill me! Kill me!