

- [CONTENTS](#)
 - [Art Gallery](#)
 - [Articles](#)
 - [Columns](#)
 - [Fiction](#)
 - [Poetry](#)
 - [Reviews](#)
 - [Archives](#)

- [ABOUT US](#)
 - [Staff](#)
 - [Guidelines](#)
 - [Contact](#)
 - [Awards](#)
 - [Banners](#)

- [SUPPORT US](#)
 - [Donate](#)
 - [Bookstore](#)
 - [Merchandise](#)

- [COMMUNITY](#)
 - [Forum](#)
 - [Readers' Choice](#)

Alone in the House of Mims

By Barth Anderson

26 April 2004

As students poured into the first two rows for class, California maneuvered into Wyhoff's line of sight, folding his long body into a seat near the stage.

"Oat toast," said one student.

"Oat toast," said another.

A new girl laughed and tried again. "Oat toast."

It was a game that Wyhoff played with students and members of this acting troupe, both of whom took classes from the director known only as "the Big Core." Wyhoff and the troupe's newer students were imitating upstate New York tonight. Wyhoff claimed you could tell where anyone in America or Canada was from by the way they said *oat toast*.

"Oat. Toast," said Wyhoff, flattening the O in a perfect Rochester. He looked like hard cold cash in his black silk *SNL!* tour jacket. "C'mon, Cali. Before the Big Core starts class. Say it."

California was turned around in his seat, watching the game. He said the phrase, not imitating any particular accent.

"Hmm. Sacramento? Chico State?" said Wyhoff, impersonating California. "Dewd, c'n yew score some owt towst?"

Everyone laughed -- it was dead on -- and California's hands got hot as he realized that Wyhoff had been paying such close attention to him.

The house lights went down, then came up again, sapping the laughter and chatter from the *Edmund Fitzgerald's* little theater. The Big Core was starting his class.

Wyhoff walked by to take a seat near T.Z., whispering to California, "Don't let the bastard get you down."

"Spot, Nakamura!" The Big Core's voice came from shadowy seats in the risers behind them.

[Before Paphos](#)

by Loretta Casteen

8 January 2007

It starts again. The baby begins to cough and choke.

[Locked Doors](#)

by Stephanie Burgis

1 January 2007

You can never let anyone suspect, his mother told him. That was the first rule she taught him, and the last, before she left him here alone with It.

[Heroic Measures](#)

by Matthew Johnson

18 December 2006

Pale as he was, it was hard to believe he would never rise from this bed. Even in the darkest times, she had never really feared for him; he had always been strong, so strong.

[Love Among the Talus](#)

by Elizabeth Bear

11 December 2006

Nilufer raised her eyes to his. It was not what women did to men, but she was a princess, and he was only a bandit. "I want to be a Witch," she said. "A Witch and not a Queen. I wish to be not loved, but wise. Tell your bandit lord, if he can give me that, I might accept his gift."

[Archived Fiction Dating](#)

