

MARIAH CAREY ISN'T ALLOWED BEFORE NOON

by Bob McDiarmid

The worst thing one can do when brokenhearted is listen to the radio. Every city has that station that plays "music to make you feel great" or basically "the least offensive hits of the 80s, 90s and today." These are the kinds of stations that you shouldn't be listening to AT ALL, but are incapable of not listening to.

I know these folks mean well - love songs are supposed to make us feel good. I think it is the underpinnings of passive-aggressiveness though, like Toni Braxton's "Breathe Again" -- apparently not having her boyfriend causes her to question whether she'll ever breathe again - but not apparently enough that she can't reach the next Barry Manilow style upward key change.

It's like pouring salt on the wound every time you turn the radio on - but you find yourself inexplicably drawn to it. I have nobody to blame for this but myself. I leave the station programmed in my alarm clock like a ticking time bomb of punishment.

I heard the almost silent 'click' of the alarm clock and the room was invaded with unexpectedly full throttle Mariah Carey at 900db above the pain level, "I can't liiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiive - if living is without you....." to which Barnum banged on the wall and screamed, "Die already...."

I came home to a handwritten note on the kitchen table,

" Roomy Rule-ette #949832, Mariah Carey isn't allowed before noon. That is the fourth morning in a row of passive-aggressive feel sorry for yourself pop music. It's like you have the tragic diva channel set on your alarm clock, not good sweetie.

I'd rather hear your alarm do the garbage truck backing up noise than hear this stuff so early in the morning. As for Celine Dion - she's on the permanent ban list. Don't make me hurt you?! Thanks... - Auntie B."

My therapist says that these songs can be cathartic but I'm with Barnum when it comes to Celine Dion. Why, because she believes her own PR people which is a dangerous move for any pop diva. It's also because she has sat down and created a French-vibrato saturated song for each stage of grief.

The proof? She was on Larry King the other night, talking about the Hurricane Katrina victims. First, why was SHE being interviewed? Do any of us care what HER opinions are about anything? Then Larry King asked her if she had a "message of song" to send to the victims. This almost got me to add Larry to the hate list. But then she actual DID have a message of song! She broke out in song at the interview desk on Larry King.

Cue a Poseidon Adventure tidal wave sized eye roll.

And if I NEVER hear that Titanic song again, it will be too soon. Trust me, Celine, if you were to suffer vocal chord disfiguring injuries in a freak blimp accident, *my* heart would go on.

So that's how my day started - my first day back to work in San Francisco and I'm fighting getting drawn down into the muck already.

I darted into the coffee shop to flirt with my Coffee Otter. It's a required part of gay life in San Francisco –we all have our coffee otter.

He is new in San Francisco and managed to get the perfect 20-something job. He's a barista at the local lesbian owned coffee shop right off the trolley line and across from the muscle bear gym. The look of the coffee otter is important – that perfectly trimmed, unnaturally beautiful thick red/brown beard, sparkly yet simultaneously caramel smooth brown eyes, big gold hoop earrings, and of course, zero percent body fat showing off his perfectly muscled up body. I had never been offered the coffee otter training program in my 20s. I went from pimply faced teen to middle aged bitter homosexual in one swoosh of passing time.

Jason constantly in flirt-mode and probably has four or five husbands he's stringing along. Of course, I hate him for it.

"Hey handsome! Where you been? I've been lonely without you!" he says as I walk in the front door, "You got some sun - you were probably off at some tropical location with your big bear daddy getting some honey action."

"Pardon?"

"Ya know - bears makin' honey." Jason said gyrating his hips like a porn star fucking.

"Bears.... .making..... honey....." I repeated slowly to make sure he knew how close to nausea I was.

"That's enough with scaring the customers, Junior," said the woman working the espresso machine, turning and winking at me, "Less honey - more money."

"Just don't get any in my coffee" I quipped.

Jason, looking dejected, handed me my coffee.

"Oh sweetie - don't look so sad. See what you've done Rachel? You've hurt the baby-gays feelings. Remember when life was all about romance and everything was new like fresh rain shower?"

"Okay – now I am going to vomit," said Rachel.

"Don't think we haven't noticed your tan - and you haven't said a word about the hot men you met in Palm Springs," teased the Coffee Otter.

"Oh – he hasn't had the pleasure yet, " replied Rachel, "but I'll keep an eye on Miss Culture Vulture... Jason is too new to be exposed to her majesty."

"I wouldn't worry. Apparently it's Chinese takeout season." I said using hand quotes.

Jason look confused, Rachel looked repulsed. I winked at Jason and said to Rachel, "Later Goddess!"