

from Juked #4  
Fall 2006

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## *Exotic Like That*

I LIKE PACKAGES. Brown paper packages, tied up with string. Everyman fare. Mystery houses built on sand, woefully unprepared for the elements: fragile dun pagodas, barely sheltering impatient contents: a throwback to an earlier time, a more innocent time, the undeniable sensual appeal of brown paper.

Fragile.

Fingers rasp along the box, gently tugging at the corners, drawing out the undressing.

And the color of the brown. Saharan sand, Moroccan mud huts. Exotic like that. A jaw dusted with stubble.

I'll breeze into Marrakech. I'll book into the Shiva. My mood will be broken-down but still enthusiastic. It will be there for me, under the reedy but tenacious protection of a scrawny Moroccan. His smile will match the gleam of his forehead, his hair long gone.

"This for you," he will say. And there it will be. The package: the possibilities of crumpling. Each one of my brown fingers will vie to match the elegant hue of the paper. The crevices, the inviting whorls and fissures, presided over by stern, sandy cliffs.

My fingers will slyly move to the side, the shadowed one, to tug at the folded-over corner, the Moroccan all but forgotten.

I will take the package and repair to the chair in the corner, set to brashly profess a love of the sleek: a love of the officiously professional splashed with red and blue ink; the invulnerable plastic; seamless, space-age coating.

Slick.

How much better to have received something in perfect condition.

I will kick off my boots, curl up with the package under my head, and listen to what's inside.