

THE
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LIST



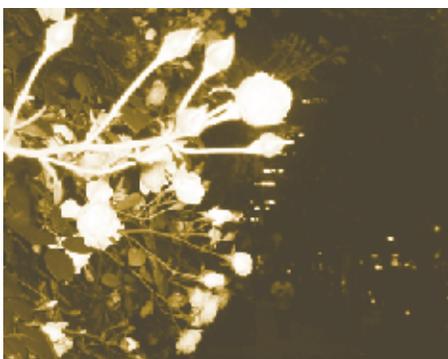
RHIANNON TOMTISHEN AND MADISON VORVA. These two 11-year-old, Ann Arbor, Mich., residents set out to earn a Girl Scout award by creating Project ORANG (Orangutans Really Appreciate and Need Girl Scouts), an initiative that aimed to assess the various environmental threats facing said primates. They discovered that palm oil plantations—which supply the oil that’s a key ingredient in Girl Scout cookies—are the leading cause of orangutan habitat destruction. Armed with this knowledge, the pair waged a five-year campaign urging their own organization, as well as Kellogg’s (the parent company responsible for cookie production), to cease using palm oil in those iconic Thin Mints and Samoas. More than 70,000 signatures later, Girl Scouts of the USA announced in fall 2011 that it will transition to more sustainable palm oil sources. It’s a small step, though, and the teens say they won’t stop until Girl Scout cookies are deforestation-free. —*Angela Boag*



BOOBIE BEANIES (boobiebeanie.com).

A refreshing response to the flowered neck drapes marketed to new mothers for shielding a hapless public from the sight of a baby nursing, Boobie Beanies say it loud and proud: Here I am, nourishing my child! The crocheted, 100 percent organic cotton baby hats are designed to look like a breast, with a choice of skin tones and nipple colors, as well as custom options. It’s a playful way to push back at the notion that it’s fine to ogle boobs on billboards, but not to perform the nurturing, bonding act that strengthens a baby’s immune system, provides protection against SIDS, and may even boost a baby’s IQ.

—*Nancy Davis Klo*



INSIDE THE MONEY MACHINE (Carolina Wren Press).

If the breakdown of capitalism has a poetic accompaniment, surely it’s *Inside the Money Machine*. Lifelong socialist feminist Minnie Bruce Pratt takes on the system like no one else with her stunning, stark poems about the heartbreak of layoffs, evictions, and globalization’s collateral damage. Philip Levine rose to poet laureate status for his working-class outlook, so it’s surprising that Pratt hasn’t received equal attention. Or maybe it’s no surprise: Aesthetically rigorous and brutally incisive, many of Pratt’s poems are about women: “all that work no one sees.” Read it, then Magic-Marker her verses on a sign at your next protest. —*Minal Hajratwala*



JENNY LINSKY. “This is the day—the day of days—the birthday of the little shy black cat named Jenny Linsky.” So begins *Jenny’s Birthday Book*, by Esther Averill, which was awarded the Best Children’s Book of the Year by the *New York Times* in 1954. Averill set up her own children’s publishing company in Paris after graduating from Vassar, then did the same in New York. While also working as a librarian and studying painting, she wrote and illustrated 13 stories about Jenny Linsky and her Cat Club before she died in 1992 at the age of 90. The stories range in length from 30 pages to more than 150, but each is imbued with the same elegant style. Averill’s simple pictures and her tender, unhurried tales of feline adventure teach us that everyone has at least one quality that can make the world a better place, and those who love us will find our other quirks endearing. Try *The School for Cats: Jenny stands up to, and then befriends, the bully Pickles*. —*Jim Burlingame*



1234V (1234v.ca). Vaginas—they’re moody, unpredictable, and capable of some amazing feats. And they’re the recurring heroines of the stories found in *1234V*, a Canadian zine chock-full of “incidental and anecdotal stories about vaginas.” From the hilarious to the horrific (but still kind of hilarious), *1234V* provides refreshingly candid, personal, and lighthearted tales of the wacky, mysterious, and often confusing female nether regions. The feisty Winnipeg-based publication, the brainchild of coeditors Sarah Michaelson and Jo Snyder, offers accounts of Brazilian waxes gone wrong, awkward oral-sex mishaps, the mysteries of female ejaculation, and much more. Dive in. —*Sandy Klowak*