

# Matthew Perry



*by Miles Mathis*

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I lost some readers with my last paper and no doubt will lose more with this one, but that's how it goes. I am not here to maximize readers, I am here to tell you what I think, based on a lifetime of studying the world. If you disagree with me, that's fine with me, but you have to admit I have the same right to think what I wish that you do. Or, you don't have to admit it, but I have that right even if you don't admit it.

You would think that, as opinionated and productive as I am, I would lose some fraction of readers with every paper, being down to zero by now. But amazingly that hasn't been the case. I have found that a significant section of society worldwide is hungry for this sort of pointed research and commentary, and that they can put a pin through anything they disagree with for the sake of being in the presence of an old-fashioned, unfiltered human being of the pre-Modern sort. They can come back to it later, when one or the other of us may admit we were wrong. I come across as someone out of a time capsule, I know, and I cherish that and play it up. I am 61 now but I could be 120 or 240. I see it as my job to provide what no one else is: a view of the world that is as far as possible *not* of this time, not limited by the current rules and strictures. A view that flies in the face of all contemporary standards and expectations, but not because it is religious or reactionary. My thinking is just as often of-the-future as it is of-the-past, but I am not thinking anything just to be novel. I am trying to get at the truth by the straightest path, wasting as little of my time and yours as possible. As on my science site, I am trying to solve problems in the most efficient manner. That hasn't been the way of the world for a long time now, so it rubs many people the wrong way, I know. But it can't be helped. The fur of most people is brushed the wrong way to start with, so the truth is bound to create a static shock.

I hinted I had something on “Matty” coming up, and here it is. It isn't what I thought it would be going

in, but it may be more useful to you this way. To be honest, some things about his death weren't adding up and I thought he might have faked his death and retired to some island, to be with his pals Heath Ledger and River Phoenix. That's still a possibility and I don't rule it out, but honestly I didn't find any smoking guns. I bought a used paperback from Ebay of his 2022 memoirs, hoping to find some clues, but didn't find a single thing in that line.

I did learn a lot, though, I have to admit, and I recommend the book for anyone who is a *Friends* fan or who was wondering what happened to him or who just wants to learn more about addiction from the lips of an addict. Having a completely non-addictive personality, it was always a big mystery to me, so I found the book very informative. Perry admits he isn't the smartest person\*, and that becomes very obvious, but he isn't the dumbest person, either. Comedy requires a lot of smarts, of a certain sort. He is also a pretty good writer. The book isn't just readable, it is well-written in parts and in small bursts—though the first half is far better than the second. Like his life, it sort of crashes and burns. He tries to tie it all up with a bow towards the end to re-ingratiate himself with his fans after all that self-bloodletting, but it doesn't work. The last chapters all collapse in platitudes and incoherence: he needed a much stronger editor here. But because he is so honest and doesn't mind wearing his heart on his sleeve, the whole thing is pretty transparent. Yes, he does make a lot of excuses for himself, but they too are so transparent you can't really call them lies. They just come off as pathetic dodges, and he admits that, too.

He manages the feat of being both very likable and very unlikable at the same time, often on the same page. He calls himself cute and charming, but that is OK because we all know he was. We saw him, and he doesn't oversell himself. Or not much. We can believe he sat around a table at a coffeeshop in LA even before he got super famous and charizzed the panties off big groups of girls. But we can also believe his own description of himself as a big loser, since he was that, too. He had no sense of self, couldn't be alone, needed constant affirmation, had zero self-discipline, and treated a lot of women pretty poorly. No one has ever shat their own bed—literally—and had to sleep in it more than Matthew Perry.

Two stories leapt out at me from the pages above all others, the first being his admission that as a teen he would start crying like a baby when he was losing at tennis. I was a tennis player as a teen and so saw my share of spoiled namby-pambies, but I can't say I ever saw anything that bad. We had the usual screamers and racket breakers and quitters, but no one that would just sob during the match. The second was the jet-ski story during his filming of *Fools Rush In*. On a break from shooting, Perry—the star—saw some people jet-skiing on the lake and wanted to rent one by himself. Everyone on set told him no, since if he got injured it could ruin the whole movie. But he did it anyway. . . and of course got injured. And of course got given pain pills by some unscrupulous doctor, to which he immediately got addicted. That was the hugely publicized addiction after season three of *Friends*, that put him in rehab. So it didn't only jeopardize the movie, it jeopardized the most popular show on TV, a show making millions for hundreds of people.

Which leads us into the thesis of this paper. The explicit and stated theme that runs through the book is that **addiction is a disease**, and that Perry was very “unlucky” to have the genetic make-up that made him highly addictive. He wants you to know that above and before anything else: none of this was ultimately his fault. He was born with a weakness for alcohol and drugs, neglected by his parents, and left early on with a big hole he could never fill.

He blames his parents over and over, and I have to say that blame *does* land. The rest of his blame game sort of fizzles, but if anything he is too easy on his parents. Even here, though, he secretly hates

them for the wrong things. He hates them for leaving him alone, putting him on planes alone as a child, and generally not being there. All horrible, but as it turns out not as horrible as **not teaching him any discipline**. His Dad abandoned him and his mother at age one, and she soon abandoned him as well to be Pierre Trudeau's assistant/mistress. So it is easy to see where the hole comes in. But that hole was made fatal by a second hole, one that Perry never once sees: no one ever taught him discipline. Like most of these famous people, he was both neglected *and* spoiled. We take it that he was living with his maternal grandfather as a small child, so that grandfather must have also failed to teach him anything about discipline or self-discipline. He was later completely self-indulgent, so he must have been totally indulged as a child. No one ever told him no, so he had no way to say no to himself.

Which brings us to a third, related, peak in the book, when he is describing his interview in London with Jeremy Paxman and Peter Hitchens. He calls Hitchens a tool for not buying his “addiction as a disease” spiel, framing it instead as weakness. Unfortunately for Perry, his entire memoir reads like an extended proof of Hitchens' argument. Which is not to say Hitchens isn't a tool. He is, and so was his brother Christopher—who Perry calls “wonderful” and “great” just to needle Peter. But on this, Peter is obviously right. Or close. Addiction isn't a “moral” weakness, as he claims, but it definitely is a lack of self-discipline. Perry doesn't understand how his father or other people can quit cigarettes or alcohol when it is impossible for him, but we don't see him expending any mental energy *trying* to understand it. Not once in the memoir does it seem to occur to him that there might be an easy answer, and that it has nothing to do with genetics. Because some doctors told him it is genetics or a disease, he accepts that as the easiest thing and moves on. His answer to Hitchens is that the AMA diagnosed addiction as a disease in 1976 and has stuck to that, so end of argument. Doctors and other “experts” have accepted that, so it must be true. The problem is, the AMA has diagnosed everything else as a disease since then, down to nose-picking, so that they can prescribe drugs for it and create a multi-billion-dollar market for fake addiction-mitigation. Same thing as in every other field. Perry admits he has spent 7 million on rehab, getting nothing from it, but it never occurs to him it is because the whole thing is a scam. Or, he does sort of see it is a scam, since he jokes that they prescribed him OxyContin when detoxing from OxyContin, but he doesn't take it beyond that. He doesn't make the connections, seeing that that blows his entire “AMA diagnosed it as a disease” argument. He knows that doctors have been preying on him for decades, then references doctors when he gets in a jam in an interview.

Plus, the whole book is about how weak he is, and he admits it over and over; then he gets mad at Hitchens for implying he is weak.

No doubt he would say I don't know what I am talking about, since I am not an addict. But I can turn the tables and say *he* doesn't know what I am talking about because he doesn't have any self-control. If he can tell his story, so can I, so let's just frame it that way. We hear a lot from the addicts but never hear from the non-addicts. I read his memoir so now read mine. Instead of listening to doctors, try listening to someone with self-discipline. That's how you would learn tennis or basketball or anything else: you would go to someone who knows how it is done. You don't go to self-help groups of people who don't know how to play tennis or basketball, do you? How is sitting around with a bunch of other addicts going to help you?

It may also help to look at it this way. Is Perry or the AMA going to claim that riding a jet-ski when you shouldn't is a disease? Is doing something stupid like that also hardwired in your genes? No, it has nothing to do with disease or an addictive personality. There is no such thing a genetic addictive personality, or one caused by a disease, and that idea was only invented by people making excuses for themselves. Clearly, Perry was being wildly self-indulgent in the jet-ski story, ignoring all warning

signs, advice, and known risks, and he was doing *exactly the same thing* whenever he took drugs.

So why am I so disciplined? Or, why do I *think* I am so disciplined? Was I born with a non-addictive personality? Maybe, but I doubt it. I will start by nodding deeply to Matthew Perry by admitting I was breast-fed and rocked for hundreds of hours by my mother as a child. My father was also present and loving, and though he had a temper, when I saw it I almost always deserved it. So I never had the hole Perry did, from the start. I give him that as his first cause, though as you see it isn't a disease. Parental neglect isn't a disease, it is more like a crime. That said, I was brought up in a very disciplined house. My mother has told me many times she spanked me almost every day in my terrible twos. No meant no and there were consequences. My father also spanked me often, and as my brother and I got older Dad did more and more of the disciplining. My mother could no longer make it hurt, and he knew that. Dad had an old belt that put the fear of God into us. We only hoped he would hit us in the butt, and not hit lower on the back of the legs, since that hurt twice as much. We also got "licks" in school in those years. My last paddling in school came at age 14 in 1978, in 9<sup>th</sup> grade. The paddles at school hurt even worse, since they were wooden.

That is all sold as very barbaric now, but I didn't see it that way then and don't now. Except for a couple of times, I deserved it and learned from it. Some of the arguments I have heard against it include the idea that it promotes violence, that it promotes bowing to raw authority over reason, or even that it promotes sado-masochism. All I can say is that in me it did none of those things. I am not a violent person, I am not sado-masochistic in the least—I have no fascination with pain, *especially* during sex—and as you know I don't bow well to any authority. But because the rules then being enforced were (mostly) based on reason, and I could see that, what I learned was the value of discipline and self-discipline. I learned that there were consequences for all actions, and that it was best to study those consequences before you acted. Not simply to bow to authority, but to make things easier on yourself. A lot of those rules were about not creating unwonted harm, and I didn't want to accidentally harm myself or anyone else by stupidity, ignorance, or indulgence.

But let's back up and look even closer. I think the reason I didn't see the spankings as barbaric, unreasonable, or violent, is that they came first from the mother who had also breast-fed me and rocked me for a whole year. I trusted her and knew these spankings weren't just her being violent and unreasonable. I learned pretty quickly that there was love and reason behind them, and that I was being saved from worse things like getting burned by hot lights, shocked by sockets, chewed up by animals, poisoned by plants, or drowned by water. Yeah, I was clever that way.

It is the same reason my kittens don't hate me for swatting them occasionally, to keep them out of trouble. They know beyond any doubt that I love them and so they trust me. They know I am not whacking them for the sheer sport of it, and understand that they are doing something I don't want them to do. I am pretty sure that after a few rounds of that they realize I am trying to teach them something, just as their mother teaches them by cuffing them. Cats are clever that way, too.

I know because they *do* learn.

More confirmation comes from my own family. My younger brother was not breast-fed, and he didn't respond to discipline as well as I did. He was spanked, but he often didn't stop doing whatever it was he was doing. Grounding and detention didn't work, either. He didn't become a drug addict or alcoholic, but he was somewhat less disciplined than I am. What this tells me is that the full dose of love and trust has to come first, before any attempt at discipline.

Spare the rod spoil the child was the maxim for hundreds of years, and that has only changed in the past 40 years. But it hasn't really changed since the maxim continues to be proven: children just get more spoiled every decade. Society is spinning out of control for many reasons, but one them obviously is because people don't have any discipline or self-discipline anymore. Society has more and more stupid rules every year—rules that apply only to the non-rich—but enforcement of rules (good and bad) has gone out the window for almost everyone. Like Perry, kids are now both neglected and spoiled, and the schools are now both more chaotic and more top-loaded with asinine government programs. Young people are squashed and stirred in about equal amounts now, but they aren't molded or educated in any logical fashion.

Given all that, we see that what Perry most needed was the ability to say no to himself. But if you miss that lesson when you are a child, can you learn it as adult? Is that even possible? I would say we hardly know, since it has never apparently been tried, other than by sending a teen to military school or other bootcamp and further humiliating him. That isn't what I am talking about at all, I hope you see. A military school would in no way match my early upbringing, obviously, since there would be no foundation in love or trust. Having a drill sergeant screaming in your face and calling you names would be counterproductive in every way.

Perry might have been saved early on by one of those women who loved him so selflessly, had she been able to also discipline him. But the cards were stacked against her by fate, since just when he needed someone to stop indulging him, he got famous and got indulged even more. No woman could have any power to discipline him at that point because no matter what carrot or stick she used, he could just move to the next woman.

From there it snowballed, since he was no longer a child that could respond to a small amount of pain on the hiney. Before he was thirty he had put himself through so much pain with drugs, pain was no longer a deterrent. That was his message to the nurse who told him to quit hitting on her: he immediately proved to her that she couldn't cause him any pain he hadn't already caused himself ten times over, by going into the stairwell and smashing his head against the wall. That's what that was about. That and another sad cry for attention.

By reading the book closely, we can see that Perry was conspicuously, and knowingly, trying to win the biggest-brat-ever award, to punish his parents for abandoning him, and to win at that if nothing else. He even admits it with his Yoda-doctor, who told him pretty much the same thing. Once someone has decided to do that, there isn't much you can do to help them, is there? Plus, he figured someone would always be there to save him, just because he was so cute and adorable. They always had, from the doctors and nurses to the girlfriends to the family members. I am sure he was very surprised no one was there to save him at the end. Surprised but not disappointed.

In closing, there is also this: Perry says he really wanted to quit from an early age, but that isn't the feeling we get from the memoirs, is it? He loved the experience of the alcohol and cigarettes and drugs *above all other things*, and clearly DID NOT WANT TO QUIT. So I could argue it wasn't weakness as much as it was not really wanting to change. He said he wanted to, and wanted to want to, but didn't really want to. So he didn't. At the end of the book he *has* succeeded in quitting them all, so we see it wasn't impossible. He finally wanted to stop, for real, and did. But even then, he didn't have to overcome the addiction by sheer willpower, did he? He admits that by age 50 the pleasure was pretty much gone. He had burned out his pleasure receptors by then. He couldn't get drunk even after consuming 14 triple vodka tonics, so the ride was over. It is easy to step off the rollercoaster once the cart has come to a stop in the final bay.

I also feel obligated to say this, for any young people reading this. By far the easiest way to avoid this ride is to never get on it. That was my secret. I passed on cigarettes, alcohol, and drugs the first time, so I have never felt that rush, whatever it is. I have never even been drunk. I found the first buzz unpleasant and stopped there, never getting beyond it. Did I avoid them out of fear? No, I avoided them because I never woke up of a morning thinking life owed me a certain number of highs that day. It wasn't a problem I was trying to solve. There was no hole I was trying to fill. I wasn't trying to ease some primordial pain or obliterate some recent memory. And it isn't because my life was all kisses and cookies. I am sure I have been alone more than any of you. By one measurement, the last four years have been hell. But I have never measured that way, simply because it isn't useful to measure that way. I don't let myself do it. Life isn't a thrill-seek. I knew that innately, I think, and my upbringing confirmed it. Life is about finding something interesting to do with yourself, and getting wasted is obviously not that thing. I thought far too much of myself from the beginning to waste myself getting wasted. You should, too.

**Next day:** I am already getting accused of being an old stick-in-the-mud or tight-ass for my views on this, which I find a bit shocking. I remind everyone I paint nudes for a living, so I am hardly a church lady. I have probably had more than my share of fun in other arenas, but—fool that I am—I prefer highs that don't have any huge negative side effects. If it is thrills you need, you can get them without destroying your liver, your kidneys, your lungs, your heart, or your mind. Despite what Hollywood tells you, you don't need to risk your life for an orgasm, or for turning your blood to honey (as Perry puts it), either. I have experienced crashing highs and crushing lows without any synthetic stimulants, and they were that much better—and that much more informative—because I was fully present for them. Perry quotes Amy Winehouse to the effect she couldn't feel anything if she wasn't drunk or high, but that is just another negative side-effect of the drugs, which numb you to anything but the greatest inputs. As you develop a tolerance for the drugs, you develop an intolerance for slight or simple pleasures. You become insensitive to anything short of a brick to the head. Which is of course the last thing you should want. If you think of yourself as a hedonist or pleasure-seeker, you should want to get pleasure from the greatest number of things, being highly sensitive to the smallest or slightest beauties. You should be able to get goosebumps from a single musical note or a single line in a drawing. I say this because I know.

So that you don't think I am making it up, I will tell you what I have never told anyone. Let me think of the oddest thing I can, to prove my point here. I remember getting waves of thrills when my wife Mary was vacuuming. No, seriously. Something about the sound of the vacuum and the way it was moving across the carpet. It was almost like she was giving me a backrub, but the noise doubled the pleasure, like a giant cat purring in my ear. I never told her that. I used to be sort of embarrassed by it, I don't know why.\*\* Just as weird is my response to piano tuning. I get the same waves of thrills when someone is tuning my piano, but only when they are hitting the same note over and over and over. It needs to be a high note, but not too high, and the sequence can't be too fast. It is not a sexual thrill, since I feel it mostly in my head and neck and limbs, but it is exquisite.

My point is that these—and many other larger pleasures—are the things that open up to you if you *don't* take the drugs, but nonetheless allow yourself to remain sensitive to your environment. The world is full of things that can turn your blood to honey if you fully open your eyes and ears. And if you do it right, you don't become less sensitive as you get older, but *more*. You see and hear and understand more, to the point you have to stop yourself from weeping for joy or pain or loss or gain or nostalgia a hundred times a day. You are the opposite of numb, since you have to keep a lid on the emotions or they will leap out and overwhelm you, as in a dream. And this is not scary, though it may

sound so. The overwhelming wouldn't be a negative, it would be positive, but a positive you are not prepared for in this life. This life is mainly about learning and doing, and you can't do anything if you are constantly surfing a high tide of emotions. You are also very poor company.

If you don't see what I mean, I will tell you another story. I have been with several women who were hyper-orgasmic, meaning once we got into it, they couldn't quit having orgasms. It was just one after another. You may think that sounds great, and it probably was for them, but for me it was annoying. They had gone over into that place I was just talking about, where the lid flies off and the emotions become everything. But obviously you can't live in that place, because you become intolerable. You are no use to society or even to a one-on-one relationship, because you are just a writhing mess. On the one hand I was flattered, but on the other hand I couldn't help thinking "do I get a turn?" With someone acting like that, you can't concentrate. Which is my point. If we became perfect hedonists we would be of no use to one another. Society would shut down and the world would stop turning. We would all be lost in our little pleasure domes.

Which is why I have to be careful how I sell my own experiences. I want my young readers to know you don't need drugs to have fun, but I don't want to give too explicit lessons in pleasure, lest they get lost in the seeking. Those possibilities exist, but they aren't what life is about. Ironically, it is because I am polymorphously perverse (which is misnamed, there is nothing perverse about it\*\*) that I am *not* a hedonist, not addictive, and have no use for drugs. Because I can go to that place anytime I like, by a variety of methods, I don't obsess about it and don't give it undue importance. Having the piano tuned is nice, but I don't feel the need to have it tuned every week or every month.

But if you want a lesson, I have already given you the biggest part of it: **don't do drugs of any kind!** As Freud discovered correctly, children are polymorphously perverse, so don't be in a rush to grow up. Don't do all the stupid things adults do. Cling to your early, innate knowledge, and guard it. Cherish the magic and don't let anyone shame you out of it. Don't even call it magic, because it isn't magic. It is closer to reality than the false reality most adults live in, and it has nothing to do with spell-casting, witches, or any of that foolery. It is just your natural connection to the place before birth and to the charge field that surrounds us and channels through us.

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OK, back to the faked death hypothesis. The book didn't tell me anything in that regard, and it almost succeeded in convincing me the death was real—which may have been its purpose. And it may have been real—who can know for sure. I admit I haven't found any definitive clues. But I did run across some more red flags while writing this and filling it out. I will list the red flags and let you come to your own conclusion. The thing that got me looking into this was the tiny house he was found in.



Yes, it is on the ocean and allegedly cost \$6 million, but still. Not what any of us were expecting. The neighbors are just a few feet away. He has no yards and would have almost no privacy. Then we have the fact that he had recently downsized and liquidated, selling \$35 million worth of properties (many houses) in the past couple of years. Why? You will say he was broke, having spent it all on drugs. No, again, he had just put \$35 million in the bank, making a profit on all those properties. Plus, he was still making \$20 million a year from *Friends* reruns. We are told his estate is worth above \$120 million, and I would guess *way* above. But if he was liquidating assets, it may mean he knew something was about to happen and planning for it. He had no wife or children and hints in the book that his parents won't be getting any of it, so many are speculating he put it into some sort of trust. A trust for what, or *for whom*?

Then we have the fact that Perry's weird male assistant was allegedly shooting him up, but no drugs or paraphernalia were found on the premises. Add to that the fact that Perry was famously afraid of needles. He had never done any intravenous drugs in 54 previous years of hellish abuse. Also that this male assistant was not licensed to administer, but immediately pled guilty. So none of this makes sense.

Then we have the fact that he was supposed to have been clean since 2022. He says so at the end of the book, which doesn't mean much, I admit, but all his friends confirmed it, even after his death. See for example Athenna Crosby, who was asked to comment about the Batman stuff, [saying that Perry](#) was

**'in an extremely good mood' before he passed away; that he was 'excited about the future and taking care of his health'.**

Plus, I am not really buying all the brouhaha about doctors and dealers being arrested and charged. It all has that special scent, like it was put together to pass the blame while selling the death as real. When known addicts overdose in their own homes in non-violent situations, the police never act like this, rounding up every shady doctor in the area. Compare to Heath Ledger's death, where they made a false run at some doctors and enablers before it all dissolved into nothing. I expect the same thing to happen here.

The other thing in the book that tends to support this was that he expressly mentioned Heath Ledger and River Phoenix as great souls that had pre-deceased him. It was in the same sentence where he dissed Keanu Reeves, I guess because Keanu isn't an addict. But since my readers know both [Ledger](#) and [Phoenix faked their deaths](#), it makes it all the more likely Perry did, too, nodding obliquely to us here. The shout-out to Ledger works in another way, since it also links us to Batman. For some reason



not really explained, Perry tells us in his book—apropos of nothing—that he is Batman. No follow-up as to what he meant by that, though he does tell us when he was a kid his father was Superman and he was Batman. That doesn't explain why he is still so attached to Batman at age 52. Plus, we find Batman signs on his crypt at Forest Lawn, which is really weird. And his last seven posts on Instagram in the weeks leading up to his death were about Batman. What was that about? To me it looks like some sort of bat signal, tying us somehow to the Ledger and Phoenix fakes. I didn't know this, because I haven't watched any of the Batman movies since the first one, but I searched on “did Batman fake his death?” and found this:

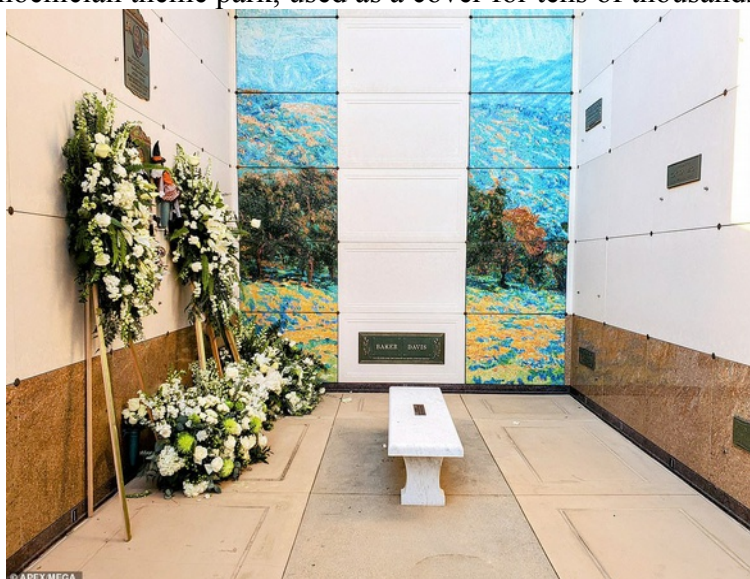
**Yes, Bruce did not die in the explosion.** He merely faked his death to get away from it all, and now Batman is hailed as a hero in Gotham.

That's from *The Dark Knight Rises*.

But there's more. Perry was allegedly buried at Forest Lawn in Glendale, which is a truly weird place. It is like a huge theme park or Las Vegas casino, with replicas of Michelangelo's most famous sculptures, a stained glass replica of Leonardo's *Last Supper*, a Court of Freedom celebrating the Declaration of Independence, numerous old-style European cathedrals, and huge burial sections called Babyland, Vesperland, Graceland, Slumberland, and Dawn of Tomorrow. What most of this has to do with a cemetery we aren't ever told. At a glance it is a monstrosity of bad taste, so we are not sure why anyone would want to be buried there. Why wasn't Perry buried with his family, for instance? Even more suspicious is that Forest Lawn happens to be the alleged resting place of just about every celebrity who ever died under mysterious circumstances, including Jean Harlow, Clark Gable, Walt Disney, **Michael Jackson**, Elizabeth Taylor, Paul Walker, Carrie Fisher, Freddie Prinze, Andy Gibb, Buster Keaton, John Ritter, **Bonnie Lee Bakley** (alleged wife of Robert Blake), David Carradine, **Rodney King**, Rick Nelson, Jeff Porcaro, and Carole Lombard. We know that many of those people faked their deaths, so the question becomes

IS ANYONE REALLY BURIED AT FOREST LAWN?

Or is this just a vast Phoenician theme park, used as a cover for tens of thousands of fake deaths?



We are told Perry's grave is somewhere there, but I don't get it. Is he supposed to be buried under the floor or behind the walls? How do they get him in there? They keep calling this a grave, but it must be a mausoleum. It obviously isn't a grave, which is a hole in the ground. It looks like Forest Lawn has a lot of room, since very few of those crypts are marked. Hope Matty doesn't get lonely there, with a smattering of people he never knew. He came from two rich prominent families, so I don't know why he would end up here, instead of being buried with grandparents, uncles and cousins. We saw a coffin, so he wasn't cremated. The coffin was huge and it doesn't seem like it would fit in any of those niches, but who knows. This question of Forest Lawn and fake deaths is a huge one, almost as big as something like WWII, so we will have to keep at it.

I will point out that Evelyn Waugh seemed to be in on the joke of Forest Lawn. See his novel *The Loved One*, which treats the entire edifice as a pre-Pynchonesque farce.

\*As proof, he says Obama is the smartest person he ever met. Really? The guy who doesn't know where he was born? The guy who never released his college transcripts? The guy who needs a Teleprompter to order at Starbucks? The guy who thinks there are 54 states? Because 50 is such a hard number to remember.

\*\*I am sure it is that wording that embarrassed me from ever admitting this innocent thrill before. Nobody wants to think of himself as perverse, or at least I didn't.