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Will Paris Die for Our Sins?

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Watching with fierce fascination the OJ-worthy arrival of Paris Hilton back into the embrace of the Los Angeles constabulary, I can only think of what General George Patton said about battle: "God help me, I do love it so."

Paris Hilton is in Los Angeles County jail because we want her to be. It's the ultimate reality show and, damn it, we pay good money to watch. To paraphrase another military man -- Jack Nicholson's Col Jessup in *A Few Good Men*: "Deep down in places we don't talk about -- we want her in that jail. We need her in that jail."

This is a kid barren of discernible talent who, according to *Forbes*, talked us into giving her \$6.5 million in 2006. A better scam could not have been hatched around the pool table at the Bada Bing.

Here's how we save Paris, Britney, Lindsey and all the other hard-drinking, bathroom coke-snorting, limo crotch-flashing young women of apparently easy virtue. Boycott every tabloid, every cheesy celebathon television show. When CNN cuts away from the sacking of General Pace to make sure they catch Paris getting in a car, you cut away too. When the networks take Paris-time from the half hour allotted to covering a world on fire, cut away again -- *Wheel of Fortune* is on somewhere.

Just say no. We'll have Paris in flats and a Young Republicans button in no time.

However, there soon will come a photo of Paris -- forlorn in her own eyelashes -- huddled in the corner of her jail cell. Be strong. Call Paris Anonymous. When you are tempted to listen to the Barbara Walters phone interview from jail, call your sponsor and he'll come over and have a drink with you.

We can change. We have the power to change.

But it's hard. This is fascinating stuff. We like celebrities for two reasons. One: we want to look like them, live like them, and have sex with the people they do. Two: we don't want to be like them at all. We can say, "I might not get my tan on the beach in Mustique, but at least I wear underwear."

We also like drama. And young Hollywood is primo stuff. There is a feeling that we're close to the end of act three. We are watching the players in their assorted dramas, waiting for something truly terrible to happen. There is going to be a fatal overdose like the ones that took John Belushi and River Phoenix. Or there is going to be a car wreck like the one that claimed Princess Diana. Something.

And when it happens, we will be glued to the 24-hour coverage on cable. We will scour the papers and magazines for the contents of their stomachs and the "exclusive heartbreaking photos from the scene."

We'll be sad. But hey, we paid our money. They owe us.