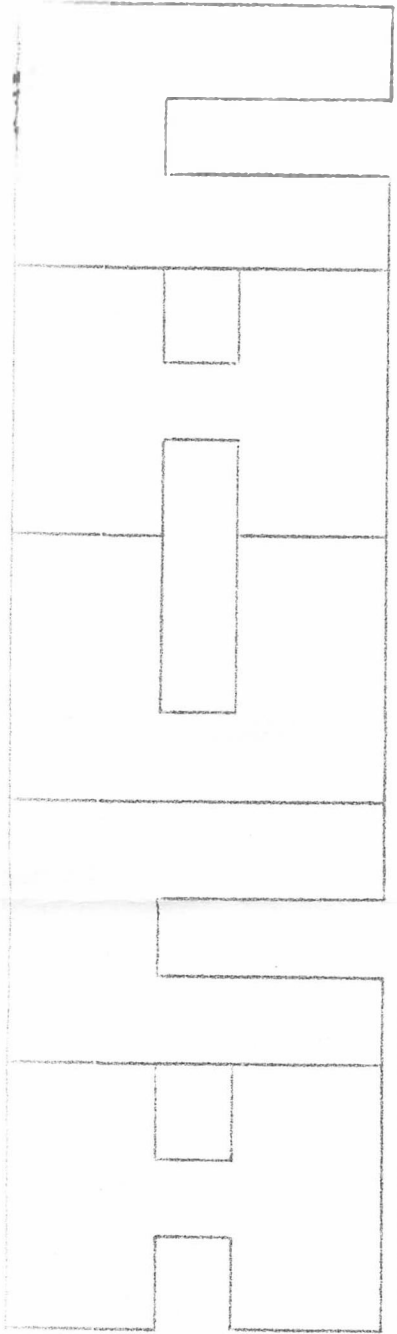
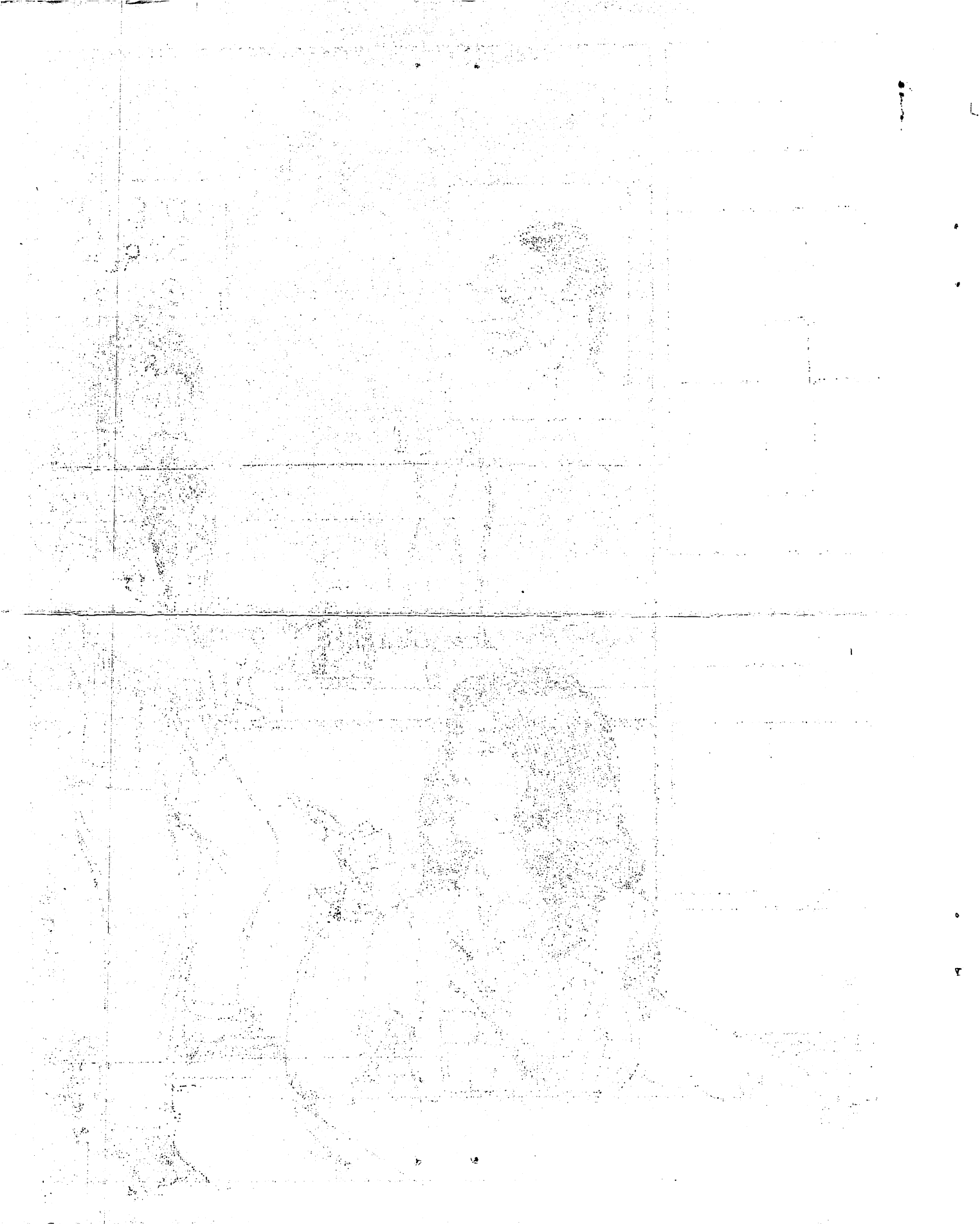


LOOSE LIPS
SPREAD
QUIPS



HANSEN '86



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"Those people take fandom too seriously!" Gregory barked into the phone. This was of course Gregory Pickersgill, and we were discussing an article in a recent fanzine. The problem with Gregory's analysis was that he and I both take fandom seriously—it is, after all, composed of our social network, our *friends*, and this is something to take very seriously indeed. And so I explained it to Gregory: "those people" take their *idea* of fandom as a field of art in a vacuum too seriously; fandom itself they take seriously not at all.

The social network in which I find myself so mired is one composed largely of people who write, and what they write about most often is themselves, each other, and their passions. To read each piece, or the body of work of each author, as no more than a discreet work of art or merely as the output of some artist would be to deny the fundamental humanity of the creators of those works. These are people who reach us frequently, and who respond to our writings as well; to deny the inter-relationship we have to each other, as friends, would be to deny our own humanity. Yours is not just the meaningless by-line of some stranger who writes for the Sunday newspaper; we write together in a conspiracy of creative friendship that combines the cocktail party with the jam session and transcends any distinction between 'Art' and a society of friends, acquaintances, and lovers.

Each of us could be writing for money, and most of us who worked to create this publication do. Chris Priest told us a story while sitting on our livingroom sofa, and although he surely had commercial work to run through his word-processor, he nevertheless assented when we asked him to write that story down for us. Dave Langford is forever sweating out the completion of another book or article and the cost of living, yet he heard our pleas for a contribution, and it came. Patrick and I both ignored the dictum that time is money and wrote for free when we could be doing it as, well, prostitutes. The desire to do it for love wins out all the time. We love to write, and more, we love to write for each other.

And so, we gather our friends together in print as we can't always manage in the flesh, drawn to each other across such great distances as we often are. From Reading, New York, Madison, and London we come to celebrate yet another creative act conceived of our friendship and love. These are our friends, talking about those great and small things that have gone into making them who they are, the people we love. Their pieces in this first issue are not 'fannish' in the sense that they discuss our little social microcosm in any great detail; and yet, they are very fannish, because they each represent a part of the life of each author, the human being, the fan.

"Rob and I have decided to have..." I scribbled on my Fanfather Chuch Harris' clip-board, since he hasn't yet learned to read my lips, "a fanzine."

"Oh!" he said, relief replacing an expression of alarm when he saw the last word. "I was going to say don't name it after me!"

But of course, we already had.

Quattel

Patrick
Nielsen
Hayden

"The globa-trotter lives in a smaller world than the peasant. He is always breathing an air of locality. London is a place, to be compared to Chicago; Chicago is a place, to be compared to Timbuctoo. But Timbuctoo is not a place, since there, at least, live men who regard it as the universe, and breathe, not an air of locality, but the winds of the world."

- GK Chesterton

"On Mr. Rudyard Kipling and Making the World Small"
Heretics, 1905

Chicago became a place when I was four: when we left it. Before that, my earliest memories are of the world - a world of subdivided townhouses lining cracked streets, lakefront beach three blocks in one direction, public library and nursery school two blocks in the other. Today, the inner city is fashionable; sleek young professionals compete for apartments on Fullerton Street, and the corner where we bought milk is a gelateria. In 1962, it was just another shabby-genteel urban landscape on the way down. Success meant the suburbs. My parents were artists. For me, it was everything. I learned to read on my mother's lap, progressed to decoding the jackets of Vanguard folk LPs. The nursery school sent me home after I spent a day there, curled up in a corner antisocially reading a book (*Have Space Suit, Will Travel* by Robert A. Heinlein). None of the other kids could read, so why should I talk to them? What was there to talk about? My parents took to parking me at the library instead. When I turned four I discovered that the girl next door could read, too, but we moved. The world collapsed and became places.

Over the next twelve years they multiplied. Throughout grade school I went to a different school each year, bouncing from neighborhood to neighborhood in Iowa City, Tempe Arizona, Portland Oregon, Scottsdale Arizona, each summer broken up by vast journeys: Michigan, Washington DC, California, Colorado, Mexico City on the Nuevo Laredo train. In high school, at last, life seemed to slow down: three years in the same place. Then we left the country. In Toronto, sixteen, just discovering fandom, I never did restart high school. Instead, I left home. With my parents' blessing: they'd gone the overachieving academic route, then spent years discovering the limitations of such achievements. So it was *Vie La Boheme*, go to it: have fun and don't forget to write.

Actually mostly what I did was hang around with fans, work junk jobs, go to cons. No worse than cruising for burgers, I guess. But it did mean that, on the verge of passing through one of the few culturally standard rites of validation I'd

ever been pointed towards (I never dated, didn't grow up glued to the TV, didn't go Out On The Town until I was an adult, hardly even cruised for burgers, really), I dropped out. As a result it took me years to figure out whether I was a grown-up yet. All I knew was that I was odd; I hadn't fit *there*, and I didn't really fit *here*, either, but at least no one was throwing me out. Though the older ones were prone to quiet wry smiles and the observation that I was certainly *sui generis*, all right; hard to fit. I tried to take this as a compliment. What I really mostly knew was that I came from Somewhere Else.

Somewhere Else. Where? Arizona, the previous stop? Hardly; I'd been from Somewhere Else there, too: a city kid in the suburbs, strange memories of Chicago and the downtown Portland schools. Oregon, then? Iowa? Chicago? Michigan? Wrong again, and again. If I ever lived in a world, it vanished when I was four; since then, I'd always been from Somewhere Else. And kept being from there: after a year in Toronto I hit the road for some months, went back to Phoenix for three, returned to Toronto briefly, stayed in New York for a summer, lived in East Lansing for a year, then down to Phoenix again, ran a Worldcon with several others including Teresa Nielsen, flew to San Francisco with her when it was over, sank down exhausted for several months, recouped, got married and hauled up to Seattle where we stayed four years, a record. But always: Somewhere Else.

Somewhere Else is weakness. Somewhere Else is being unsynched, the odd man out: painfully unique, first day of school in a new neighborhood, a new town, forever. Somewhere Else is fear, and its diffident disguise. Somewhere Else is feeling not quite real. *Here* is the ground of being, immediacy, rootedness, establishment. On this rock. *Here* is where these children of Timbuctoo have been all their lives, shared experience never available to me. Sky, water, rock: they felt the winds of the world. The bulk of me always Somewhere Else, I mostly saw mud huts. The winds of memory couldn't be shared. I remained at a loss.

And Somewhere Else is oppression. Internalized. These others *must* know what they're doing; I am but a neophyte here. (Not that I ever admitted it. But I *knew*. Overabstracted, rootless, intellectual, hike!)

But Somewhere Else is power, too. "This so-called norm is arbitrary." "I have seen this elsewhere." "In Volponia, the natives wear baskets over their *heads* when courting; here, they strap them around their waists." "There is a better way to do this." "There are more interesting ways to *be*." Admittedly, this can grow tiresome to the people of Timbuctoo. But a reputation for insight, however erratic, beats being known as a confused screwball any day of the week. "Hola! I am the Mysterious Outsider, come to bring zing, pizzazz, and the lore of faraway!" "Faraway? You mean Fresno?" "Yea and even further, my son. Listen and I will tell you of the strange rites of the Mid-West."

Eventually one learns. But one never stops suspecting that the Timbuctoonians have a point. If only they didn't seem so relieved to see one go.

Yet Somewhere Else never ends. The time came, the heavens rumbled, the earth quaked and the wife fell asleep a lot. Slowly, inexorably, the continent tilted and deposited us both in New York, one of this country's two refuges for the incorrigibly Somewhere Else. On Manhattan, *everyone* is from Somewhere Else, it seems sometimes, and most of them are going back once they make their pile. Supposedly it's worse in LA. There, you're expected to mellow out. Here, at least, it's okay to

huddle on your five square feet, trembling with *anomie* while declaiming your love for New York. "Can you *believe* it? In Seattle, I couldn't even get a bagel at four o'clock in the morning. Here, I can get a bagel at four o'clock in the morning." Ah, cosmopolitanism. (Whether I ever *wanted* a bagel at four o'clock in the morning is a question best left unasked.)

But New York is really for those whose Somewhere Else is simple: say, Dubuque. Flash, bang, sizzle and blatant upward thrust, it works best on those who spent their childhood in one smaller town, or a succession of identical suburbs. To this particular Somewhere Else, though, it's just another place, in fact the culmination of most of the other places: all the ones I hated as well as all the ones I loved. Much is made of the claim that New York is not America. Nonsense. New York *is* America, freeze-dried and indigestible without added money. The greatest difference between New York and Dubuque is that, in New York, the wrong side of the tracks is anywhere out of doors, so that lacking a portable concrete pillbox even the residents of Columbus Avenue must occasionally catch a glimpse of the bag ladies who, in Dubuque, are kept well out of sight. New York, with its brutal but telegenic leaders, its perverse pride in unsubtlety, its politics of pure resentment, is as American as West Texas, Tacoma or Dubuque. Kind of brings a lump to your throat, if you don't think about it too hard.

Of course, New York is where Somewhere Else is no *disadvantage* at all. Is it a coincidence that all the native New Yorkers we know seem at a loss to figure out what to do with themselves, while the out-of-towners we run into all seem, like us, to be intently clawing their way along some sort of Track? I doubt it. New Yorkers, the real sort, have come to believe their own hype too much. They believe that New York is the world; therefore, the world is New York. This makes them depressed. Only those of us from Somewhere Else have the naivete to look for better apartments, more interesting jobs, all those impossible things.

After enough Somewhere Elses, the logistical problems that stump other people and panic them into dithering seem mild indeed. Pack up all the possessions and move? Where to? Okay, I'll have the boxes and strapping tape this afternoon. Right, fine.

I'm bored with New York; it's hardly a new Somewhere Else at all, just an endless repeat of all the old ones, like a three-minute single being stretched to twenty minutes live. If I have to carry this much Somewhere Else around behind my face, I might as well carry it someplace where it *really* makes a difference.

If you can't get rid of your deformities, make them part of your act. Overabstracted, rootless, intellectual, let's rock! The Timbuctoonians can have their world of mud huts; we'll take our alienation, and become aliens. Aliens have Weird Powers. Aliens See Things People Don't. Aliens, the best sort, can pass among Timbuctoonians in disguise and, insinuating themselves up close, utter Magic Words.

Rootless, we fly.

—Patrick Nielsen Hayden

Our Lady Of Pain

DAVE LANGFORD

It was one of Huxley the Mad Mathematician's parties. Perhaps the one when the fire extinguisher was placed in his bed and embarrassingly proved to leak. Perhaps the one after which they played indoor croquet in Martin Hoare's room: it wasn't the hour of 5am he objected to, but that they were so noisy about hammering the hoops through his carpet. An Oxford bed-sit the size of a young cathedral (since redeveloped into four spacious student flats and a dining hall), it was crammed sardine-fashion with people, cheap wine, Warren and me.

"I don't see a lot of talent here," said my partner in crime, physics practicals and Lovecraft. Warren had lately been studying women with the abstract intensity of Ahab swotting up whales, and with rather scantier success.

As Brownian motion forced us back on to a passing sofa, I found I'd sat by a dim figure with promisingly long hair. Any social risk was better than hearing, once again, Warren's General Theory of Where The Talent Was. In a conversational gambit of great daring I said, "Hello."

"Hello," she said. "I'm glad somebody's sitting down."

"You're well in there, Dave," said a plaintive voice on my deaf side.

She was called (let us say) Dolores, she was studying English, and she recoiled slightly on discovering I was a low caste physicist. "Oh, I speak English too," I said confidently. "I mean, I read it. Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary, over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore...

I'd recently memorized the entirety of "The Raven" for a bet. God, we were wild and reckless youths in those days.

"You're not handling this the right way," whispered Warren.

"Can you remember it all?" said unattainable womanhood, curiously.

I could. I did. We giggled over the sillier bits while Warren appeared to be taking notes. (*Tuesday. Learn "Rime of the Ancient Mariner". Find woman.*) One thing led to another, until I barely heard the thin complaint of "Isn't that a bit public, Dave?" This being a seething Huxley party, nobody else even noticed.

Dolores, it proved, was an enthusiastic kisser of the Vampirella persuasion. Her face crashed into mine like an iceberg impacting the *Titanic*. Bits of tooth enamel flew wide. After the first wave of oral cavalry charges had begun to subside, I selflessly fetched drinks and took the opportunity to lick all my wounds

except the most disturbing one, which appeared to be on my tongue. This was... well, different. (My last brush with passion had been when I escorted a lady to the college ball and, as I took her hand for a dance, she confided a deep-seated phobia about being so much as touched by anyone. It was a long, chaste night.)

As I lurched back, juggling leaky paper cups, I realized why Dolores had been so cheered when someone sat by her, and why Warren's infallible whispered strategy for Getting Her Back To Your Room would be as useless as it was unconvincing (etchings, etc.). Her leg was in plaster, up to the thigh.

After driving her home to Lady Margaret Hall college I passed a sleepless night. The throbbing pangs of lust were, unusually, centred on my upper lip.

"Charnel," said Warren in the Nuclear Physics lab. "You have to have a charnel stench."

I consulted the notes. "We've got two. Including 'Ah! Ah! The smell! The smell! The charnel stench!'"

We were conducting a serious scientific experiment, to make the university computer write HP Lovecraft stories. There was a rich vein of phrases to be quarried.

"'Lumbered on its eldritch course.' That's a good one. Your lip looks funny, Dave."

"Pardon?" I said unconvincingly. "And 'a writhing mass of blood-red serpent forms'."

"I said your lip looks funny.... Which story has got the writhing mass of blood-red serpent forms?"

"None of them. It's a brilliant pastiche based on the spaghetti bolognese we had for lunch."

Warren became very serious, and paused in his thumbing through *The Lurking Fear*. "That's not *right*. It won't be *authentic* if you put in things like that." He stared at my swollen upper lip. I began to suspect the canker of jealousy in his soul when he also rudely blue-pencilled the snappy line "I am the public health inspector, what about this charnel stench?"

Though for weeks I visited her and drove her to parties, Dolores and I never actually succeeded in having a conversation. "I'm very fond of John Donne," she would say dreamily, and I would reply, "Something sings in my soul when I contemplate the second law of thermodynamics." Once I tenderly wrote Rutherford's equation for the scattering of alpha-particles on that enplastered leg. The mutual blank stare would be hastily interrupted by a demonstration of how all Dolores's pent-up, immobile energy could be directed into a single white-hot focus--a transcendent frenzy in which her rather attractive mouth became a pitiless machine for converting male faces to hamburger meat.

My dentist, listening to an evasive account of how a front tooth had become chipped, fell about in unobtrusive hysterics.

Warren, though he dutifully typed in raw data for the mighty computer program ("Long, greenish-grey tentacles with red sucking mouths!"), remained distant and reproachful.

"I love the seventeenth-century poets," said Dolores to the ceiling as she lay on her bed. "Come sit here."

"I like the nineteenth-century poets," I offered, drinking her sherry and failing again to build intellectual bridges. Nineteenth-century poets, it transpired, were the pits. My massive 40p investment in Swinburne was to be of no avail. Trying again for common literary ground, I described the awesome Lovecraft Program. Dolores, strangely enough, had never read Lovecraft: I quoted with fervour. "Shrieking, slithering, torrential shadows of red viscous madness chasing one another through endless, ensanguined corridors of purple fulgurous sky...formless phantasms and kaleidoscopic mutations of a ghoulish, remembered scene; forests of monstrous overnourished oaks with serpent roots twisting and sucking unnameable juices from an earth verminous with millions of cannibal devils; mound-like tentacles groping from underground nuclei of polypous perversion...."

"Only a computer could churn out rubbish like that," she sniffed.

"No, that's the real stuff, from 'The Lurking Fear'."

"My God. Come here and kiss me."

As was becoming usual, I didn't sleep well that night. Large tracts of my face seemed afflicted with terminal radiation burns and about (unlike the rest of me) to drop off. In the small hours I gloomily browsed through the 40p Swinburne....

*By the ravenous teeth that have smitten
Through the kisses that blossom and bud;
By the lips intertwisted and bitten
Till the foam has a savour of blood;
By the pulse as it rises and falters,
By the hands as they slacken and strain,
I adjure thee, respond from thine altars,
Our Lady of Pain.*

These very Lovecraftian cadences were thought so exciting circa 1866 that they were banned, and defiant Oxford undergraduates marched through the cloisters chanting such extracts from "Dolores", and as I tossed on my bed of strange agonies it occurred to me that those young gentlemen of yore knew bugger all about the subject.

"You look terrible," my fellow-physicists told me. I weakly laughed it off, with the same reflex that makes one convey that last night's eighteen pints were nothing to one's iron digestion, any pallor and trembling being ascribable to cholera picked up from a draughty toilet seat. "No, you look *really* terrible," they said, and Warren delivered the clincher.

"Your lip," he paraphrased, "is oozing a foetid greenish-yellow ichor. A blasphemous ichor. Honest. Frothing in primal slime, it is."

I dubiously located a mirror, and fainted. Could one catch lip cancer from inadequately sterilized English students? The college doctor, persuaded at length to issue antibiotics, fell about even more painfully than had the dentist.

For a week I lay low, sipping rum and reading the complete works of James Branch Cabell. Dolores failed to reply to an agonized deathbed letter: my unexpected grin of relief was properly punished by eldritch cracking sensations and a dribble of

unnameable juices. Presumably she escaped from the plaster ("The heavy white limbs, and the cruel Red mouth like a venomous flower" - SF reputations have been founded on lesser prescience), reverting to a healthy life of hockey and tennis. I didn't see her again, and vindictively cannibalized the poem which called her to mind. While I convelesced, Warren sat at a teletype and dutifully transcribed "barren delights and unclean", "things monstrous and fruitless," "the lips of the foam and the fangs", etc., without ever noticing their dubious parentage.

The Lovecraft-writing program was a great success, but I'll spare you its actual deathless output. Term ended; the long summer passed; autumn was a new Oxford year, and I was induced to feed all the lastst SF group members names into the computer (programmed this time with an SF generator which combined the literary pretensions of EE Smith with the tight continuity of AE van Vogt). Several yards of rubbish ensued, and soon I was accosted by a 'bespectacléd lady who said in pained tones: "I am not frigid!"

This is not a usual form of introduction.

Sure enough, random factors had thrown up the immortal SF line, "The frigid Hazel Saiter was reloading his ultimate weapon."

"Er," I said, falling back on the vacation's literary feat (141 stanzas memorized after an even rasher bet with Huxley the Mad Mathematician). "'Just the place for a Snark!' the Bellman cried, As he landed his crew with care, Supporting each man on the top of the tide By a finger entwined in his hair. 'Just the place for a Snark!' I have said it twice, That alone should encourage the crew. 'Just the place for a Snark!' I have said it thrice...."

"Can you remember it all?" said Hazel, curiously.

"What I tell you three times is true."

A few months later, despite the protests of my mother ("She's not black, is she?"), we were engaged. I owe it all to the nineteenth-century poets... The wretched Swinburn, though weird, wrong and anyway preferring the attentions of strict governesses, will doubtless insist on the last word:

*Time turns the old days to derision,
Our loves into corpses or wives;
And marriage and death and division
Make barren our lives.*

Goodness knows how HP Lovecraft would have put it.

— Dave Langford

* * * * *

COMMERCIAL MESSAGE: Get more of the wit and wisdom of Mr. Langford in his TAFF report, *THE TRANSATLANTIC HEARING AID*, available from Dave Langford, 94 London Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 5AU, UK, for a mere £2.25 including postage, or £2.00 if you manage to get one off of him in person. And worth every penny, you betcha.

END COMMERCIAL MESSAGE

Thank you Girls

Christopher
Priest

I only once ever picked up a girl at a dance, but the result was so momentous that I have often wondered why I never did it again.

I was nineteen, and working away from home in a small Welsh town called Ruthin, hidden in an unattractive valley in the Clwyd hills. When not actually at work, I found that time hung heavy in Ruthin: there was almost nothing to do, beyond getting drunk or setting out in search of girls. Both of these activities were entered into with adolescent enthusiasm, although only boozing was done with any real success. Ruthin girls, if there were any, kept well out of sight and were certainly well out of reach. As the wintry weeks slipped by, even the gormless middle-aged waitresses in the hotel restaurant started to seem attractive.

Ruthin was a sort of punishment, meted out to the laziest and least competent junior staff of the accountancy firm I was being "trained" by. It is no coincidence that I was sent on audit to Ruthin every winter from 1959 to 1964. (In the summer of 1965 my articles of traineeship expired, and I was promptly sacked.)

During this particular visit to Ruthin I was working with a recent recruit to the firm: a young lad from North London called Tony. Tony was a year younger than me; he was tall, slim, had cool blue eyes and a shock of fair hair. He had a distinct eye for the girls, and they for him, but the scarcities of Ruthin would have tested even Casanova. After a few randily unsuccessful ventures into the deserted streets, we resigned ourselves to long bored evenings in the bar, bragging about past conquests.

During one of these sessions we fell happily into conversation with Mary, the prettiest of the hotel receptionists. Mary, unattainable within her protective shells of job, formal hotel costume, aloof manner and engagement ring, had always resisted our desperate flirting, but off-duty she was friendly enough. When she learnt that we were having to spend the coming weekend in Ruthin (the firm was too mean to pay our fares back to London, except every now and again) she suggested we could go to the dance in the town hall.

This is perhaps the place to point out that a central condition of our life in Ruthin was a kind of juvenile snobbery. We felt we were sophisticated Londoners, accustomed to the metropolitan life, and although we were not choosy about girls we did feel that some things were beneath our dignity. We had already heard about the dance, but we arrogantly turned up our noses at the thought of being seen at the annual thrash of the Ruthin Young Farmers Association. The news that Mary might be there, though, put it into a different light.

We spent most of Saturday lounging around, but in the evening we put on our business suits and headed for the town hall. A local pop group was grinding amateurishly through Gene Pitney numbers and Shadows instrumentals. We each paid our two shillings and sixpence, and walked in.

Our entrance caused an immediate stir, both in us and in everyone else already there. From our point of view the major revelation was that the hall was full of girls, dozens of them, their existence in Ruthin previously unsuspected. A small group of men huddled defensively around a makeshift bar at one end of the room, ostentatiously ignoring the girls, tanking themselves up for a blundering advance at the end of the evening. They also noticed us, but pretended not to. Meanwhile our arrival was causing a visible reaction: a ripple of whispering, giggling and barely concealed stares passed along the lines of waiting girls.

Feeling very self-conscious, but also rather flattered and encouraged, Tony and I went to the bar for drinks...and experienced a wave of mute hostility from the men as we did so. We quickly retreated to the dance floor, where we felt safer.

Aside from the fact we were strangers, it was not hard to work out why we had caused a stir. Although every girl in the hall was done up to the nines in pretty dress, hairdo, make-up, and so on, the men all appeared to have come straight from the fields. Several of them were wearing muddy rubber boots, and most of them were unshaven and wearing their working clothes. The most smartly turned out man in sight was a bus conductor: he was in full uniform, including his ticket machine carried on a strap around his neck. Tony and I, by contrast, were wearing dark suits tailored in the narrow Italian style then fashionable, we had button-down shirts, straight slim ties and trendily pointed shoes. In fact, these were our own usual working clothes, but the way the girls were still staring at us it seemed that for once we were in the right job. I came to the heady realization that we could have the pick of any of them.

Tony apparently felt the same way. We consulted briefly, glancing edgily back at the bar, from where menacing looks were now coming our way. We quickly agreed on two girls we liked the look of--there was no time for character assessment; we based our choices entirely on bosoms and legs--and moved in on them without delay.

We had a couple of dances, then the four of us decided to get out before any trouble began. All thoughts of the engaged Mary were entirely abandoned. We waited nervously while the girls found their coats, then left. Behind us, the pop group launched into a hesitant version of Cliff Richard's Living Doll.

For the rest of the evening, Tony and I got up to no end of innocent naughtiness in our respective rooms at the hotel. After midnight we all joined up again and walked the girls back to their homes.

Their names were Ann and Stephanie. They were seventeen years old, and although they both came from Ruthin they worked during the weeks in Liverpool, where they shared a flat. They said they had to return to Liverpool the following evening, and when we told them we were using a rented car they suggested we might like to go with them. They were as keen on us as we were on them, and they said they wanted to show us what was going on in Liverpool. They claimed it was now the most exciting city in Britain, that even London had nothing to compare with the "scene" there.

Tony and I, still trading on our imagined London mystique, felt this was dubious.

"What kind of scene?" we said.

"There are clubs everywhere...the Iron Gate, the Mardi Gras, the Cavern. And the groups! Have you heard of The Beatles?"

Suppressing our derisive snorts at such provincialism, we started to expand on the cosmopolitan wonders of London night-life (almost all of which, needless to say, were entirely unknown to us except by hearsay). The girls, perhaps surprisingly with hindsight, became very defensive. Yes, they knew the group's name sounded silly, but it was spelt with an 'a', and if we heard them play we would find they were as good as anything London might have to offer.

"They've just signed a recording contract with Parlophone," they said.

We knew Parlophone: that was the label that brought out dance music and novelty records. We remained unconvinced, but they had a trump card.

"Acker Bilk sometimes plays at the Cavern," they said.

A silent look passed between Tony and myself. If this was the case then the Cavern could not be totally beyond credibility. We were both fans of trad jazz, what we then thought of as the hottest thing in popular music. Pressing home their advantage, the girls said that the Beatles had just returned from a long stint in Germany, that they had already released their first single and were now playing the Cavern every Sunday lunchtime and evening as resident band. When we at last condescended to try them out, the girls bubbled with excitement, assuring us that one day the Beatles would be even more popular than Adam Faith. ("And Cliff Richard?" we said as a final test. "Possibly," they said.)

On the Sunday afternoon we again smuggled the girls into our hotel rooms for adolescent groping experiments, and in the early evening set off in our rented Ford Anglia for Liverpool. The closer we got to the city the more the girls' excitement increased. They talked incessantly about the Beatles, calling the boys in the band by their first names. Tony and I were not at all pleased with this: the intimacy with which they related to the band made us wonder just how well they actually knew them. They seemed to be more interested in the Beatles than in us. At one point it occurred to me that we had been retained as unofficial emissaries from London, our only function being that we would carry the message about the Beatles back to the capital. Resentments grew: our principal interest was in getting the girls to their flat, where it seemed possible the groping might develop into something a bit more satisfying. We saw this expedition to the Cavern as merely a step on the way to what we were really after.

I drove the car through the centre of Liverpool, and Ann directed us to the warehouse district. Mean streets were closed in by massive Victorian blocks. Matthew Street, where the Cavern was situated, was a narrow, cobbled alley between two of these high, ancient warehouses. I drove slowly along it, looking for somewhere to park. Suddenly, Ann, sitting beside me in the front passenger seat, let out a terrible scream.

"Stop the car! Stop the car!"

I braked at once. Ann wound down the window with frantic haste and yelled something to two young men walking down the alley. They came over to the car and leaned down by the window. They grinned in at us, cocky and self-confident. Ann was writhing with excitement, and Stephanie clambered forward from the back seat. They both seemed to be breathing with a weird rasping noise. Although they were only a few inches away from me I couldn't make out a word of anything that was being said; noise was somehow generating around us. I saw one of the men kiss Ann, and Stephanie thrust herself across Ann to the window, where she too was kissed.

Then Tony and I were remembered.

"George...this is Chris, and this is Tony."

We shook hands coldly with this loutish intruder. He stared at us, grinning sardonically. "I like yer suit," he said, puzzling me considerably. Then the other one pushed him aside, leaned through the window and kissed the girls and shook hands with us. "This is Paul. Chris, Tony..." I revved up the engine, wanting to get the girls away from these two buggers who were barging in on us. I heard George say, "See you later, Ann," and paranoia coursed through me.

I drove the car around the Corner, the girls in a state of shock.

Tony said, "Those your boyfriends, then?"

To our amazement, the only response this got was two loud screams, in unison. Eventually one of them gasped, "Those were the Beatles! THE BEATLES! George kissed me! I can't believe it! Aaargh!" (Etc.)

By now distinctly put out by all this, as was I, Tony said, "How about finding a pub?"

"They'll be playing in a few minutes!"

There was no arguing with this, so we locked up the car and headed back down Matthew Street, the girls hurrying us on by the hands.

We reached a dark doorway, which was lit by a failing illuminated sign and guarded by two monstrous bouncers. We were told the place was full. While the girls argued I felt a strong vibration coming up through the soles of my shoes, and I crouched down and touched the damp paving stones; the music from below was thudding like a jackhammer beneath the street. Then we were allowed past the guard. We went through the doorway and down into what seemed like a hell of darkness, heat, humidity...and noise. The air was thick with smoke and sweat, the music crashed off the walls and up the staircase towards us. I gulped for breath as we went down, as if plunging into deep water. People stood or squatted on the steps, and we stumbled past them in the narrow gloom. There was a small table at the turn of the stairs, and we paid the entrance fees, the girls signing us in as guests. A second staircase led down into the cellar itself, and here we had to push through the crowd to get near the stage. All the while the girls tugged us on, determined to be at the front.

The Cavern consisted of three short tunnels under the warehouse, connected by occasional breaks in the brickwork. At the end of the central tunnel was the stage: a tiny platform about nine or ten feet wide. A few seats for the audience

were in front of this, but most people stood up in an untidy crush. There were no seats in the side tunnels, and these were where people danced, or shouted to each other above the music. The place was obviously never intended for human occupation: the curved ceilings were only about nine feet from the floor at their highest point, and because this was where most people wanted to dance we were crowded to the edges. Neither Tony nor I could stand erect. There were very few lights, and no ventilation: condensation literally ran down the ceilings and walls, or dripped on us.

As we arrived the band playing was Gerry and the Pacemakers, who were loud and discordant, the music violently distorted by the combination of small amplifiers turned up too high, and the awful acoustics. Tony and I listened critically, and cast snooty aspersions on their musical ability.

Ann shrieked at me, "But they're fab gear!" She really said this...the first time I had ever heard the expression.

After a few songs Gerry finished the set, and another band began setting up their instruments. This was the Red River Stompers, who played trad jazz. Tony and I instantly brightened; this was more like it! But Ann and Stephanie would have none of it. They explained that this was merely the interval act, and so along with about ninety per cent of the rest of the audience we trooped out of the Cavern and invaded the nearest pub. Meanwhile, the Red Rivers stomped their way into their lonely evolutionary niche.

Half an hour later we were back in the Cavern. By dint of clever manoeuvring, Ann and Stephanie had taken us to the furthest, most airless end of the right-hand tunnel. We were no more than three feet away from the stage, which was on the other side of one of the gaps in the brickwork. I was pressed against the counter of the place where coats were checked in; the girl who ran this was leaning out so she could see the stage, her shoulder pressing against mine and her ball of fuzzy red hair making my face itch. Ann told me she was called Priscilla White, a Cavern notable. (A year later, with her hair done differently, Priscilla White became Cilla Black.) The crowd was surging to and fro, pushing against us. Immediately next to my head was one of the main loudspeakers, giving out loud bangs and buzzes as instruments were connected up. The atmosphere of excitement and anticipation was infectious; Tony and I removed our ties.

Then, casually and unannounced, the Beatles appeared on stage and went straight into Sweet Little Sixteen. My head, a few inches from the loudspeaker, felt as if it had been clouted with a mailed fist. In galvanic response I craned forward to see the group better: they were belting out the music in a way I had never before known was possible. The sheer aggression, the driving beat, the explosion of movement and noise, the fabulous racket...it hit me like a blast of heat.

When the number finished the audience began screaming and whistling. One of the guitarists stepped forward and bellowed into the microphone, "Sharrupp!!" Miraculously, silence fell. Ann whispered to me, "That's John, he's the--" He heard her speaking, we were so close to him, and he screamed at her to shut up. Ann sighed, and pressed her body gratefully against me.

A second number began, one I didn't recognize. The audience did, and hooted and whistled enthusiastically. (Later, Ann told me it was the best-selling single

in Liverpool, and was in the bottom half of the national Top Thirty: Love Me Do.) Long Tall Sally followed, in a renewed blast of fiery rock and roll.

Lennon dominated everything between numbers, but whenever the band was playing he receded into the group identity. Like everyone there, I was thrilled and intimidated by Lennon's raucous announcements and threats, but when the music started I stared in a kind of wild trance at the whole group. Gerry and the Pace-makers had been loud, raw, chummy and incompetent; the Beatles were about twenty-five thousand feet higher in the sky. They looked aggressive and uncouth, they lit cigarettes between numbers, they abused the audience. But they were also highly professional: the songs were well-rehearsed and played, they had a group image, they were totally at ease with the audience they so roundly insulted. They wore white shirts, leather waistcoats and trousers, heeled boots. They had their hair combed forward. (Heeled boots! Hair combed forward!) They grinned at each other as they played, moved their bodies in time with the music, shook their heads when they chorussed. The overall effect was to create a feeling such as I had never known before: a contradictory blend of fearful resistance to the intimidating power of their appearance and music, and the way they made the girls' eyes glow...and of warmth and close rapport and identification with what they seemed, obscurely, to stand for.

They closed their set with a raunchy, rhythm-and-blues version of The Yellow Rose of Texas, and a second rendition of Love Me Do. When it was over we reeled out into the rainy street, exhausted, deafened, damp with sweat. None of us said anything. We found the car, drove the girls to their flat near Port Sunlight and parked under a lamppost opposite the Kelvinator factory. With the steady blue glare of the neon sign on the factory wall making our skin look pallid, we mauled the girls half-heartedly for a few minutes, but the music had changed everything. When the girls went inside without inviting us to join them, neither Tony nor I really cared. We drove back to Ruthin along the hilly roads, and we talked about the Beatles. We were hoarse from the smoke and the shouting, but we kept laughing.

Two days later, our ears still ringing from the evening in the Cavern, we drove back to Liverpool, picked up the girls and went in search of the Beatles. We toured several clubs, but it was Tuesday evening and the Beatles weren't playing anywhere. We settled for the Swinging Blue Jeans who were playing at the Mardi Gras, and we sat in the balcony overlooking the half-empty dance floor, drinking beer and talking about the Beatles, talking about the Beatles.

It was December 1962.

We never saw the girls again. At the end of the week we returned to London for the Christmas break. When I went back to the London office at the beginning of January, Tony had already been sent to check the accounts of another client. I was due to return to Ruthin with another hapless junior the following week, and was wondering how to go about a second assault on the Liverpool scene. At the end of the Friday afternoon, Tony came into the office to pick up his pay. He saw me at my desk and came straight up to me.

"They've got a new record out," he said, no other explanation being necessary. He showed it to me; it was called Please Please Me. We sat and talked about the Beatles, suddenly as exhilarated as we had been after the Cavern. Other people came over to find out what was going on, so we told them, the flame of zeal in our eyes.

"The Beatles!" they cried scornfully. "What kind of a name is that?"

We said, lamely, "One day they'll be bigger than Elvis."

Still they mocked, but we were sure.

I stopped off at a record store on my way home, and tried to buy a copy of the new single. The woman in the shop had never heard of it, and when I spelled the name for her she simply smiled. At a second shop I was more lucky, and carried the record home, thinking it was the most valuable thing I had ever possessed. I played it as soon as I was home, pressing my ear against the tiny loudspeaker of my Dansette portable, trying to recapture the experience in the Cavern. I played the record again and again, until my father threatened to break it in half. Seven weeks later, Please Please Me reached number 1.

Seven months later, as the first waves of real Beatlemania were sweeping through the country, Tony died of cancer. I went to his funeral with a group of people from the office, stood dry-eyed as he was buried. He was still only eighteen years old. I had never really known him very well; he had just happened to be there at the time, as I had been there for him, and all we had in common were the Beatles. We had hardly seen each other again before he went into hospital, but whenever we met we talked about the Beatles, as obsessive in our admiration as ever. For a time we had sincerely believed we were the only two people outside Liverpool who knew what was about to break on the world. But even this had changed: by the time of Tony's death in August everyone was obsessed with the Beatles. He and I had simply been there just a few weeks before anyone else.

I did cry in 1980, when Lennon was killed. I had never known him at all, not even to shake his hand resentfully through the window of a rented car, but his death was a personal blow, one I shared with millions of others. Like many people my response to the Beatles was entirely personal, but like many of those same people my feelings changed with time: the early proselytization, the amazed rejoicing as they succeeded beyond the wildest of imaginings, the growing sense of disillusion as they were adopted by the media, by governments, even by parents, the sense of betrayal as they succumbed to drugs and the Maharishi, the feelings of disgust as the businessmen squabbled, the con men moved in, the names were called, the lawsuits flew around...but through it all the marvellous songs, the unique sound, the candour and the wit. A personal identification with the Beatles survived all this, even with Lennon, bombed out on drugs and made pathetic by Yoko, ending as a sad broken ghost of what he once had been. I trace my own sense of identification right back to the evening in the Cavern, when I had felt that obscure sense that they stood for something... Even though they dazzled my girlfriend and mocked my suit, they were somehow there on my side, saying things that would never enter my head, living a life I could only fantasize about, yet managing to speak for me and make me feel I was a part of it all. It became a truism that the Beatles changed the lives of a generation, but however trite it is I know that my own life was fundamentally altered by that evening in Liverpool. The miracle of the Beatles was that they could invoke the same transformation in millions, yet leave everyone with a sense of individual gain. They will never happen again.

—Christopher Priest

FINDING OUT

Jeanne
Gomoll

The Big Changes in my life have always stemmed from finding out new things about the world. Finding out how the glaciers scoured the part of the midwest where I grew up, and finding out that the ridge visible through our livingroom window marked the place where a mile-high glacier had paused for a Pleistocenic coffee break helped to inspire me to major in geography in college. Working off my science requirement in the least painful manner had been the original, cowardly motivation for enrolling in Geography 101, but amazingly, I actually majored in it more or less because of the heady, sense-of-wonder sensation that goes with *finding out*.

I suspect that you're not really interested in reading about glaciers and their relation to my career. It was exciting at the time, but it may be one of those things that you have to experience directly to appreciate.

There have been lots of other "finding out" episodes in my life, though... Finding out that daddy didn't make up the stories as he went along, but that I could *read* those squiggles. Finding out about Santa Claus, the Easter Bunny, the Tooth Fairy, and my Guardian Angel. Finding out about dinosaurs, other planets, and fandom. Finding out that everyone doesn't believe in God. Finding out that I didn't believe in God. Finding out about sex...

The archetypal experience of "finding out" is of course the time we find out about sex. For me it was an exercise in research methodology.

Up to a certain point, mom had given me the necessary information. I was two years old when my brother Rick was born and four when Steve arrived. There was no silly business about cabbage leaves or storks, and the evidence of mom's coincidentally expanding waistline provided pretty convincing corroborative evidence for her explanation. Still, it was all pretty abstract to me. Mom would grow big, go away for a week or so, and return home with another brother. We visited some friends of my parents who lived on a farm once in a while, but the experience didn't provide any mammalian examples, just chickens and corn. Those visual aids might have sufficed had I been wondering about genetic mysteries, but that sort of question hadn't occurred to me yet.

Anyway, by the time I was 11 or 12, the "where" question had been answered in sufficient, though hazy detail, and the question of "how" babies were made was bothering me. The first few times I asked, mom didn't seem to have enough time to answer, but it soon grew plain that she was avoiding my inquiries. Finally, I cornered her. We were alone in the car, on our way to the grocery store, and I asked her as we turned out of the driveway.

"How does it *happen*, mom?"

Mom got all red in the face and hugged the steering wheel with a death grip that inspired me to survey the road ahead with a worried glance. But it was OK; the road was empty. Still she hadn't answered and I asked her again. "Mom...?"

She leaned into the steering wheel, glaring straight ahead of her and tightened her grip as if the car were struggling through thick fog. Then she partly gasped, partly yelled through tense, strained lips, "*It just HAPPENS!*"

Well. Just like when Nancy Drew gets kidnapped for asking the Wrong Question, I knew that I was on to something. Something important.

Imitating the girl sleuth, I did the usual kid sort of investigation: I tracked circular, frustrating, self-referential circles through the dictionary and eavesdropped on adult gossip sessions. I poured obsessively through titillating stories in mom's magazines like *Good Housekeeping* that had titles like "My Most Horrifying Experience: How I Coped When My Daughter Was Molested." But the kernal, crucial, descriptive part of the information was always deleted. These were the old days when *Life* magazine ran the photo of the topless swimming suit in which a woman wearing it could *almost* be seen through the rippling water of a chlorinated pool. I'm sure that photo was just as frustrating to some boys my age as were those *Good Housekeeping* articles to me in which the crucial paragraphs were written all rippled and vague, so that you only knew what they were talking about if you already knew what they were talking about. It drove me crazy. Nancy Drew never had such a hard time.

My best friend, then, was Leslie Baseheart, and she and I decided to cooperate on the great research project: to find out how IT happened. Leslie was a skinny, unusually tall, gawky grade schooler who traded Nancy Drew books back and forth with me. Her family home was built on the top of the glacial moraine ridge in my neighborhood and she and I biked up and down that hill to one another's house on an almost daily basis. We were determined to unravel this ultimate adult secret.

First of all, we decided to pool all our "clues." We knew that married people had babies, and if this were our only information, we might have been willing to accept my mother's statement at face value. It might have seemed perfectly reasonable that people as powerful as our parents could have children merely because they decided to have them. "Because I said so," encapsulated the explanation for so much in our lives already; one more thing wouldn't have bothered us. But we had another clue that contradicted that theory. Leslie's older brother, David, had bossipped to her about *high school girls* who got pregnant and were thrown out of school for the offense. Furthermore, he told her that they got pregnant in the back seat of *cars*. Older brother David wouldn't divulge anything more than that though, and we were on our own.

It was an important clue. We deduced from it that girls could get pregnant *before* they got married and without meaning to do so. But that was a terribly frightening idea. Who knew what the trick was? What if it was something simple, a thing someone might just accidentally do in a clumsy moment without understanding its dire consequences? Could a mistake in square dancing class make us unwed mothers? We'd heard all sorts of speculation in the girls' restroom. You could get pregnant from just kissing a boy, something called "french kissing." (And that precipitated a wild digression in Leslie's and my research project that uncovered the correct but almost unbelievable description of *that* procedure. "Yuck!" was our first reaction to the idea.) A sixth grader had overheard a seventh grader say that it had something to do with *rubbing* and *touching* and for a while we fearfully avoided any contact

with boys, keeping a safe margin between ourselves and boys when we stood in line or sang with them in the choir loft.

But after a short time, Leslie and I decided that nobody in our grade knew the truth, or if they did, they weren't going to share it with us. And so we taught ourselves how to use the card catalog and poured through the encyclopedia during library hour. That search was doomed from the start, however. The library at St. Luke's Catholic School held only a couple hundred books at the time and all of them had been carefully screened for any so-called "objectionable" material. I gleaned more from *Good Housekeeping* than I could discover in St. Luke's library.

Then, finally, we thought we'd achieved a breakthrough. For the next five Saturday mornings, I had been signed up to attend "charm school" class at Boston Store in downtown Milwaukee. A series of classes for pre-adolescent girls in the arts of deportment, make-up, and wardrobe was being offered by this department store. The first week, the instructor presented us with a big box of make-up samples and taught us how to sit properly (by backing up to a chair and waiting to feel the edge of it against our legs before sitting down). I thought I'd never heard such a bunch of boring, silly stuff in all my life, which was probably one of the reasons that mom had signed me up for the class in the first place. And so, after that first session, I decided to skip the next three. The fifth session was unavoidable because we were scheduled then to display our newly-learned charm to the assembled instructors and parents in a formal reception.

The "breakthrough" didn't concern make-up or deportment, though. The fact that I had an hour and a half to do whatever I wanted to do in downtown Milwaukee between getting off the bus at the depot and returning home, while I skipped out of charm school—that was the breakthrough. An hour and a half in downtown Milwaukee meant an hour and a half free to spend in the Main Public Library with its millions of books and its roomful of card catalogs. I was a little worried about the reception in which I would have to carry off the charm without benefit of the instruction, but I couldn't face the classes, and the probability that Leslie and I would have *found out* about sex by then seemed to make the risk worthwhile.

Unfortunately, there was just too much in that library. There was a whole drawer full of cards in the subject catalog just on sex alone! Cross references would have filled a dozen notebooks. And besides that there were so many other books! Whole shelves of science fiction. I was in heaven. And so although I did find lots of books with sex in their titles and tables of contents, and I did take notes, those books tended to be written in obtuse medicalese, and with all the science fiction so close at hand, I easily gave in to the frequent temptations to "take a break" from the research project and read SF. By the end of the third week, researching had more confused than enlightened me on the subject of sex. And mostly I was upset that I wouldn't be able to finish one of the SF books I'd been reading. (Of course I couldn't take the book home with me and tip my parents off about what had *really* occupied my time in Milwaukee.)

Somehow, the charm school reception turned out all right. I remember following the other girls down the aisle, walking as they did, keeping my chin up as they did, and praying that I wouldn't trip over the steps going up the stage. We all sat lady-like and polite at little round tables, sipping punch from tiny, delicate, crystal teacups, and listened to the instructors make unabashed sales pitches at our parents,

and then it was all over, and very little was ever said about charm again. For whatever reason, I was grateful. But soon I was anxious about Leslie's and my research project and wished that I could think of another excuse for going downtown again.

One day Leslie called me up and told me that Cathy, an older neighborhood girl, had told her that she'd actually seen her parents Doing It. I rushed over to Leslie's and we hid upstairs in her bedroom closet and she told me what Cathy had told her. Apparently Cathy had surprised her parents in a spontaneous moment: they were standing up, making love in their bedroom, in the *daytime*. Cathy's description was (in retrospect) reasonably accurate, and Leslie reported it to me as completely as she could. We sat huddled there in the dark closet amid fallen clothing and shoes and games and considered this bombshell of information. It was difficult to believe. In fact, we didn't really *want* to believe it.

"It can't be," I said finally.

"Why not?" Leslie asked hopefully.

"We *know* this can't be how girls get pregnant..." I said, convinced now, and pausing dramatically to tease Leslie.

"Why? What d'you mean?"

"Because! It can't happen that way because they can't do *that* in the back seat of a *car*!!" I said triumphantly.

Leslie agreed in a second. I suppose she stopped speaking to Cathy, who we both decided had been despicably cruel, for trying to make us believe and pass on such a blatantly, ridiculous lie and make laughing stocks of us at school.

And so we continued on with our research.

It's amazing how obtuse any kind of material becomes if you can't believe or don't want to believe it means what it says. That was probably the biggest part of our problem when we tried to understand my notes from the library medical texts. It wasn't 'til months later when I came across a novel that presented the matter with less objectivity and more sensationalism that we were finally convinced of Cathy's accuracy.

St. Luke's library had received several crates of used books from a parishoner who had cleaned out their attic. Some of the books must have been shelved without a thorough screening...

The title of the fateful book was *Westward Vikings*, and its cover portrayed a marble statue of a Viking, heroically pointing and gazing westward (I assume), against a blue sky and fluffy clouds. It was a big, thick novel and I began reading it with no premonitions that the story was anything more than a quasi-historical adventure tale.

"My name is Lief Erickson and this is the story of my education," it began. And indeed it was about a Norseman's education...*all* levels of his education. I blushed more or less continuously for the two days it took me to tear through the novel and the several days afterward that I kept *Westward Vikings* to re-read the good parts.

Then I passed the book on to Leslie and Leslie passed the word on to other kids in our grade and I guess at some point the librarian grew curious about the massive popularity of the book and read it herself. *Westward Vikings* disappeared from the

shelves of St Luke's Library immediately afterward, but left its mark on several classes of grade schoolers who would forever associate ice and glacial landscapes with passionate embraces, heavy breathing and sexual mysteries. Some of us carried our fascination with icy landscapes into our adult lives.

Some people assume that I majored in art in college. I don't usually go into all of my reasons for choosing Geography as an undergraduate major. But sometimes I mention how *exciting* I found the study of glaciers in those days.

— Jeanne Gomoll

* * * * *

OUTRO What the hell am I doing back here? I dunno, I graciously allow my co-editor to type all the stencils and this is how she repays me. Oh, perfidious Avedon! (And after I was going to let her collate as well...)

As has already been explained, CHUCH was named after its grandfather, the very wonderful Mr. Chuck 'Chuch' Harris. I first had the pleasure of meeting Chuch at a Kent Trufandom meeting at Vinç Clarke's place on Sunday, 8th April 1984, and that meeting resulted in Chuch shooting off the following missive to Malcolm Edwards:

Dear Mr Edwards;

On Sunday last I was introduced to Mr R Hansen. After we had exchanged civilities, he took it out and waved it at me. I was astonished. It was a remarkable specimen and, if my memory serves, with a distinct bluish tinge.

I had never seen anything like it previously. I am not usually of an envious nature, but this was an object d'art I would dearly love to possess. Unfortunately, although he allowed me to inspect it more closely, there was absolutely no way he would (or could) part with it.

He suggested, seeing my obvious disappointment, that I wrote to you. He mentioned that you were Editor of Penguin Books and well known for making sudden advances. He thought there was a distinct possibility that you might make one to me. I am 55 years old with brown hair and a sweet smile, and I have all the other Izzards except this one so, er, how about it?

Malcolm was then the UK agent for IZZARD and this letter is a good example of why so many of us love Chuck's writing.

One of the nicer bits of fallout from the Great Unpleasantness of 1984 was that it helped bring modern fans and those who'd been active in the fifties closer together and to break down most of the barriers that existed. After all, when you'd seen these guys up on the barricades beside you and laying it on the line in your defence, you couldn't help but be impressed by them and one of the most impressive was Chuch Harris. Long one of the funniest fanwriters around, Chuch cheered us all with his letters to various fanzines and with his personal letters. He had a particularly cheering effect with those letters he sent to Avedon, and became a dear and valued friend. Later (having become Avedon's 'fanfather' through a process of mutual adoption, and beginning all his letters to her 'Dear Daughter'), Chuch gave her much advice concerning the Welsh and her forthcoming wedding - but I don't hold this against him.

— Rob Hansen

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CHUCH...The Fanzine
comes to you perhaps even in time
for Mexicon II and Corflu III
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UNITED KINGDOM

and is available by editorial
whim (which might be stirred
by properly encouraging loc or
trade).

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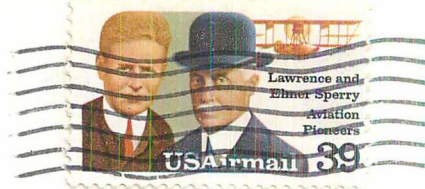
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More Special Thanx to Vinç at
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and moral support.

Still, There Will Be More: when
and if we have sufficient
material. That's our schedule.

These stencils were typed to
no musical accompaniment.



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