

SYD'S JOURNAL

VOLUME SEVEN

in this ishu

WAR

TAWDRY
OBSESSIONS

SEX &
OZONE

LOVE
GODDESSES

writers

NEUBE

SYD

SARAH RYAN

JAMES SIPLE

BARBARA G.

MURIEL

RON
FLESHMAN

There will always be a dog barking at the moon. The things that truly haunt me come back again and again, to such an extent that they no longer torture, or terrify. They are almost welcomed because they are familiar, and I'm finally calm enough to speak that most basic spell for lifting a haunting—to ask the shade what it wants. This is hard to do with a new haunting, but in time the terror wears away and you can look the old ghost square in the eye without forgetting that you're the only thing in the room that's still real.



WAR



Long, hot night. Underline long. Underline long twice. Make a squeeze-in mark and add "very." Scratch out "very." Add "terribly." Scratch out whole line. The day has been like this.

Who cares? Who should? Everywhere people are being killed, beaten, raped, or caged—things I wouldn't subject an animal to. It doesn't matter that I had a difficult day or that this night is terribly long.

We don't need more order. We need more money. We the people are definitely not having fun. We have been impoverished so that a few people can enjoy the privilege of vaporizing whole towns and countries from hundreds of miles away, and make films from the nose cones of missiles of the ultimate arcade game.

War is money. Money is war. I like money so my ideas war. My war comes down to money--how to gather enough of it to do the things I think I should be doing. That's hard, and it gets harder all the time. There's too many people and not enough money. I think Sadman Fuzzbrain had this same problem. It always makes for war.

Rain falls like the night's own tears. The whole town is stained with shimmering grief. There, in each separate cubicle, each apart-ment, there is grief as endless as this rain. And if those griefs were all gathered to a single, enormous list, it would be measured in gigabytes, and no book could ever be made that would hold it all nor computer built that could load it without crashing. That the grief would flow away and dry like the rain would be my prayer if I still had a language with which to make prayers. I'd say the prayer out loud, "Let the grief dry like the rain," to whatever god-form happened to be standing around. Then I could go back to whatever I was doing and feel that I had done my bit at least. But even the god-forms don't stand around anymore. They slip from cover to cover like commandoes, silent as ghosts, trying more to stay out of the cross fire than to make any sort of statement. Perhaps, I understand, but that doesn't mean I approve, so I'm left on my own.

Night falls like tears. What we see when we look at each other is terrifying. That consuming hunger to realize self, to be seen, touched, remembered, manipulated, is so huge and impossible to fill that someone must reach for it and fail, battle and lose, fall and make new grief. It is a river. Tears fall like rain. Rain becomes torrents, and torrents become rivers. Rivers become oceans--oceans we can drown in or learn to fish. Sometimes I put on my sailor's cap and go walking on the water.

The night's tears fall like rain. You'd think we'd have enough grief to get us by, but no, we make these wars, scar the lives of thirty million people forever in a night, a week, an eternity of digitally interfaced hell. Shed new blood to go down in the history books next to all that old blood already there.

Rain falls like the night's own tears. If I could remember all of my own ideas, not counting what I've been taught, but if I could simply keep in mind what I know, I would be a rich man. I would be the most powerful man on my street. But then, were I that powerful, I would probably be as horrible as the rest of the supremely powerful. So the god-form has blessed me with forgetfulness--at least I know who to be mad at...until I forget again...

I'm not drunk, but it would be a good idea to be because Americans fight well when we're drunk. I know this because the movies say so. We take our licks, toss down a couple of cocktails, forget, and come back for more. That's part of our problem with the Moslems. They can't drink so they can't forget anything so they're worked up all the time. In due course they have gotten on our nerves. Apparently, we've had a similar effect on them. We crush them, get drunk, and forget.

I'm fighting against sitting up all night with all the lights on watching TV. That's my war right now--to throw off the tyranny of video and inertia, and think some kind of different thought, see the world in a non-ordinary way. War against the idea that I'm a washed-up piece of Sixties debris, and that the best thing I could do would be to go ahead and die, and thus get on with my next round of agonizing self-discovery. I have to fight that right now.

There are little wars everywhere. The skirmish lines form up at cash registers and stop lights. I am driving by a house, one I've never noticed before, but think that I catch a little muzzle flash in an upstairs window, or maybe it was a video-guided head game finding its target. I don't know, but I feel the hostilities everywhere. It's spooky. This is a different kind of war, ugly, confusing, covert.

The tube of Colgate toothpaste has a cap which screws off and pops open at the top. Now there are two procedures to remember to get the toothpaste out of the tube, but it is a choice, and I, the consumer, like choices. The tube of Crest has a simple, old-fashioned cap which does nothing special, but the Crest has Tartar Control while maintaining its original flavor--it must have been a neat piece of chemical engineering to get that tooth gunk stripper to be tasteless. I like the simple cap of the Crest, and appreciate its mission to de-gunk my teeth, but it sets my teeth on edge and I like the taste of the Colgate better. Colgate wins. This is just a tiny war, but there's already been more money than I'll make in my lifetime spent

on the battle between these toothpastes.

The Soviets feared our nukes--a clever diversion Truman created to amuse Stalin--but the Soviets never dreamed that it would be our Visa cards that would take them out. They should have seen it coming, so I can't say that I'm eaten up with sympathy. "This is Chapter 11, Mr. Stalin. You need Chapter 7 down the hall. No, sir, I don't want to buy a watch."

I am speaking darkly again, opaque, crippled with obscure meanings. It's only because I can hardly put a name on the thing I see. This war is everywhere. Young dudes in funny clothes lie in the sand waiting to turn each other into history for the same reason that I'm sitting with the lights on all night--too much of not enough. The war is everywhere.



HOUSE OF NAKED DESIRE

In the book-filled hallway we
remove garments which once protected us
from each other so that on the wide-waled
corduroy couch I become accustomed
to your penis, under the accordion lamp
by the baby grand. As I water the plant
I feed you at the wooden table
with what I chop at the kitchen counters,
my hands pulling out of the oven my bread,
as I have kneaded you, needed you, my love.
Let us relieve you of the others,
drain them away, whirling them down.
We would bathe together,
nearly under water; the rules
that simple. At my desk I would take a page,
write of you--fresh green lines of your
younger tree, sinewy, willowed.
You snap your branches at me,
intimidate. But unexpected I bloom,
overpower you with scent. Till in the numbered room
you relent, photograph me, frame
my poses, my seated ease; my awkward tenderness
withheld till bedded safety, the soft cut velvet
peach against our mutual skin;
our hair; our longing. We strain
on the flowered sheets, upward
into each other. As afterward
we wash away our guilt;
all the harm we have done; our lost
innocence; not a soul betrayed.

Muriel Karr



Once upon a time, too near and yet too far away, in a little dark town there was born a **wizard** who just happened to be a little girl.

No, her life was not very good because all her relations were either insane or cruel or not there.

For when her father got carried away by a dragon, her mother took to her bed in the tall, thin tower and lamented the day long. And nights, too, often.

Now, one night while this lamenting was going on, a magic white dragon, who happened to be flying overhead, objected, freezing everyone but the little girl who just happened to be a wizard, in time.

So the wizard who just happened to be a little girl had to grow up fast without appearing to in case the dragon's spell wore off and everyone woke, because, naturally, she didn't want her mother to wake and find her little girl gone.

No, you'd think that the life of this little girl, who just happened to be a wizard, couldn't possibly get worse,

But it did.

Her mother, who was asleep from the wicked dragon's spell, married a drunken beggar, who made them sweep out the hearth and muck out the swine and the wizard, who just happened to be a little girl, was very miserable.

And, no you know, it can't possibly get worse...

Unless you consider that the ghost-ridden ivory tower that her stepfather locked her in to keep her from being harassed by the other wicked and cruel relatives, who were, even so, still asleep, is worse. But being as the little girl was a wizard, she spent her time learning things like how to become invisible, and how to be a robot, or a stone...

Which killed her wizard powers almost totally.

And then one day, having forgotten she had been born a wizard, she jumped out of her ivory tower, hoping to land on the very sharp and rocky shores of life below and die.

But she didn't. So she just walked away. and tried to make of life of her own, but the ghosts of her former life followed her everywhere.

One spring day, she got really irritated with the ghosts who were jeering her attempts to do anything and hollered back at them.

One stalked off offended, threatening the most dire of happenings. The only thing that happened was that there was one less ghost to make fun of her, so she began to offend the ghosts one by one, even the shape-changing ones, even the invisible ones, even the ones seven-hundred feet tall with fangs and claws.

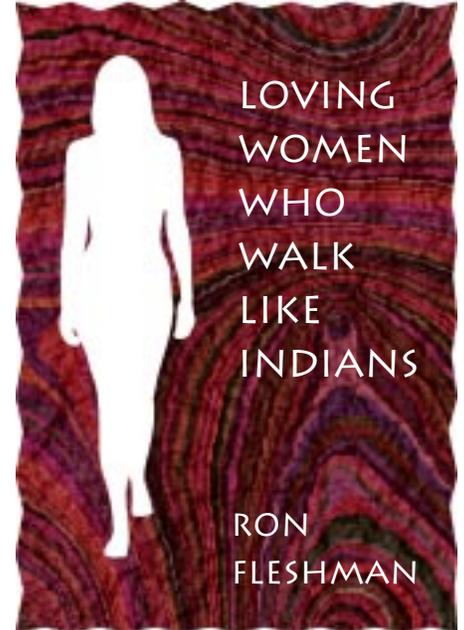
And finally she remembered, very slowly, ghost by ghost, that she had been born a wizard. She walked up to the top of the nearest hill and stood there and raised her arms, and her power shown out from her like a thousand candles and

fourteen resin torches and she said, "I love you. I forgive you," and she meant everyone, even herself.

And the rest of the ghosts were extremely offended so all went home.



At seventeen I fell in love—again beside the sea. Patricia and I scorched the hours of summer and fall and our flame spread to the following year and beyond.



Patricia was a jealous, wet, bosky, mermaid. My belt was my tether and she marked me with her teeth. A happy fool, I stomped the earth when she whispered our enchanted history. Each time we dance or played or made love—all became magic by her telling. We had a special song, a secret sign, private touches. Grand passion. If you have not been so loved, look quickly now and try. Believe me.

One day on the beach I saw that she walked with her feet exactly parallel, toes pointed forward—not spread nor splayed like other people. Patricia walked like an Indian.

At nine I'd read about Indians with the certainty that my parents were not my parents. I was too different. Inside, I had to be an Indian. Indians endured pain without remark, were noble in battle, stalked silently through the forest. Indian nostrils flared to scent their prey. Indian footsteps were sure and straight.

I strived to be true to my unknown tribe but failed on every count. I howled before my father's belt touched me. In schoolyard fights I hit below the belt. I galumphed and stumble through the woods near our house, sniffing and snorting and frightening squirrels and birds. I practiced but did not master the Indian walk. My footprints, like footprints of every non-Indian, wallowed on divergent paths.

Patricia walked one path: straight and sure like an Indian. Neither this nor the other was enough. She must be a grandma now, graying and matronly. I remember no detail of our enchanted history—only that we had one.

I have known one Indian: Edmund House Elm, North

**ONCE
A
WIZARD
SARAH RYAN**

Sioux, best man at my wedding. Elm did not have the walk. Perhaps he had forgotten how.

In last winter's snow my wife and I went to buy a newspaper. Tamar was born in the desert, one generation beyond The Pale and ghetto. We've shared thirty-two years: time enough for secret signs and touches, time enough to put them by. She took my arm when we crossed the ice. I was meant to believe she needed my support, but I knew she held on to keep me safe. We are the same age, but I am clumsy with years.

When we had the paper and were returning home, our old footprints came to meet us. Mine trudged, heels deep, toes pointing outward; hers, straight and sharp and true. In thirty-two years, I had not seen: She walks like an Indian.

At this late hour, my hear feels tired. I do go outside but where strange women walk, I am careful to avert my eyes. I'm no fool.



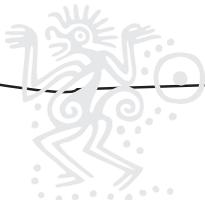
was a feminist boy
not rough and tumble
boy
it make me what i am

grown up in stages
in your fight
nothing matter with you
demons can be kill

caledonia i return to you
you have saved me
i have saved you
give up on games
that i play i was good at
playing them

am i sinner or i am just
a person

james siple



On the streets you hear about folks. Streeters will warn, will compare, will tantalize. When one of their own is exceptional, they boast about him/her as if they are a favorite child.

I heard about the Cap'n for years, Not one bad word. That was the first thing that struck me. Precious few of us aren't spat upon behind our backs...by someone. The streeters I interviewed universally loved the dude. Those streeters who'd toured Nam were especially enamored of the Cap'n. They called him "the goods."

Elmore bummed a smoke from me. "Hey, the Cap'n got out. He's over `hind the IGA. You oughta check him out. He's telling his stories."

The man's rep drew me like a magnet. My cast-iron curiosity is like that. The odd attracts me.

The Cap'n held court in a wheelchair parked inside the ruin of a tar paper garage behind the supermarket. Nobody had mentioned the wheelchair, but I wasn't surprised. Hollywood might fetch John Wayne and Chuck Norris home hale and hearty, but real people usually paid a blood-price in war.

Astonished by his appearance, I couldn't help but gape. I joined the other listeners, staying on the fringe. The cynic's slice of my mind waited to pounce upon his first mistake. The urge to expose his lies tightened my throat.

Yet, I lent him my ear.

I saw the oily contrails of Phantoms as they arrived to napalm Charlie. I heard thumping Hueys coming toward our LZ. I tasted the bile of fear as we crawled away from snipers. My feet peeled like a banana from the constant wet. My back ached from the weight of the insane pack Command required me to hump. Supermarket customers glanced in our direction and I knew they'd toss a grenade if I gave them half a chance.

His words became a time machine.

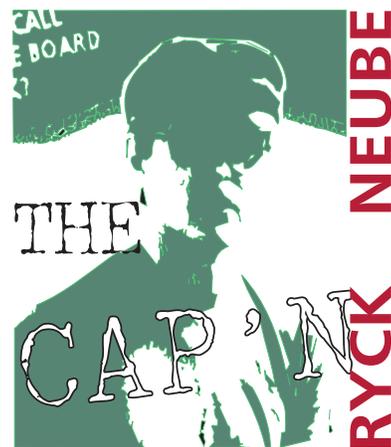
Growing up in an age of TV and special effects, I'd never been exposed to a storyteller of his calibre. As a writer I felt tempted to chuck my typewriter into the Ohio river. Paper words could not begin to match the power and glory of his spoken word.

Strangest of all, Cap'n was a dwarf. He'd no more served in Nam than I'd flown a starship.

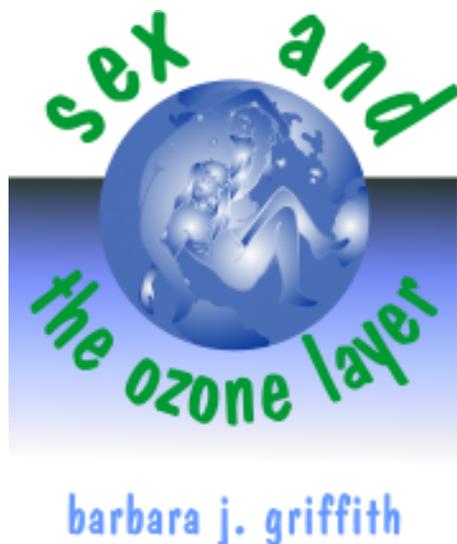
"Ya musta dropped this," I said after he finished, picking up the folded fiver I'd dropped beside his chair. It was simpler that way, less like charity and its unintentional contumely.

Later, I'd ask Three Finger Kevin about the Cap'n. Having lost flesh and soul at Hue, I thought he could give me an insight. "Like aincha pissed about him stealing yer...war?"

"Mannnn, it don't mean nuttin'. Besides, he's the goods." Who am I to argue?



Fletcher and I aren't married, but we're a couple. To make it a legality seems, at this point, whimsical. We may change our minds, however, and having that option makes us feel rather modern. When we want a laugh, he calls me his foxy lady, and I call him my gorgeous hunk.



Fletcher and I have been going together for five years. It happened this way. I lost a husband of thirty-five years and put up with being lonely for a while, then took an ad in a personals column asking if there was a gentleman out there who would like to have a sixty-five year old friend to walk the beach with,

star-gaze on clear nights, maybe a little bird-watching on weekends. I put it that way because those were the things that kept my marriage with Henry going strong for all those years. I figured that anyone with those interests would be a candidate for sharing my next twenty-five years on earth. In the back of my mind, I do not blush to admit, was the physical thing, something I didn't want to do without for a while yet. It would be nice to find that, along with the rest.

Fletcher answered the ad and suggested we talk over possibilities at a local coffee house. After the preliminary facts and statistics exchange, he paid me a very nice compliment and asked if he could see me again. Two dates later we got around to sex. Our generation didn't talk about it with any specificity years ago, so we were a little rusty about the terminology, but I guess the proper communication was established because we went back to my apartment and, well, draw the curtain here, along with your own conclusion.

You can call seventy old, if that's the way you think. Seventy to us is a couple of digits that don't have much to do with how we feel about each other. Let me explain.

Fletcher is a retired athlete, plays tennis once or twice a week, and keeps himself in shape with jogging and visits to the health club. In my background there's a history of four years on a ladies's rowing team in Boston, when such a display was considered distinctly unfeminine (who cared?). So you see, the bodies we bring to this relationship (Fletcher doesn't like this word) are in fairly decent condition. For sufficient reason, we don't reveal our liaison (I don't like this word) to the members of our respective families who are still nearby. We'd rather not provide them with an opportunity for merriment at our expense.

Fletcher and I do some unusual things for our age, that is. We march in parades with the Pro-Choice folks. That's a laugh you say? Just because we're too old for it to be a matter of personal concern doesn't mean we don't take the issue seriously. The functions of a woman's body, we are convinced, are not a matter for government to meddle with.

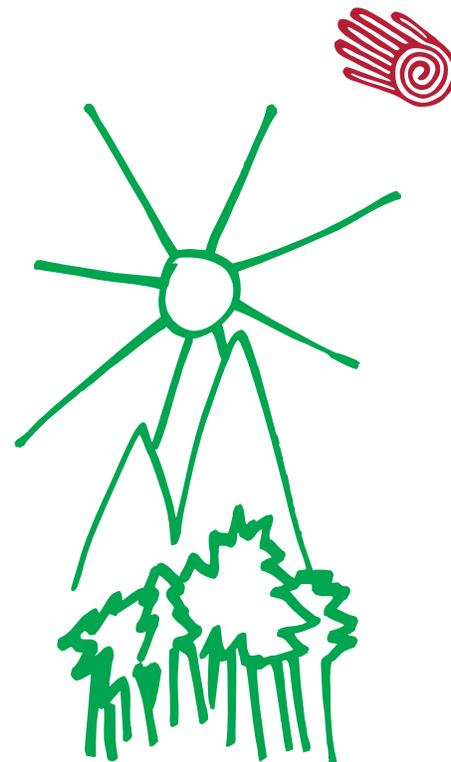
We think about the ozone layer, too, and why nothing much is being done to preserve it. And we get emotional about the landfill crisis all those dirty diapers piling up, mountains of them, circling our cities. Our kids wore cloth ones, which we washed ourselves. Isn't that an antique concept!

Dolphins get our attention, as humans decimate their numbers, and we haven't eaten tuna in a long time. Fletcher has written his Congressman about it. Lately, there have been signs that commercial fishing companies are getting the message, which is heartening.

Globally speaking, "Peace" is found only in the vocabularies of speech-makers, but on the chance that this might change, I've added a codicil to my will, leaving a portion of whatever's left to the Peace Corps, provided they're still alive when I'm not.

We think all these things are related: sex, preservation of nature, the fate of the planet, a female's right of choice. In spite of certain indications, Fletcher and I think highly of the human race. Just because we're old doesn't mean we're cynical.

And if you're sixty-five or seventy and the physical thing is still a matter of interest, don't forget the dolphins and what's happening in the sky over Antarctica when you make love. Fletcher and I believe it's all part of the same thing.





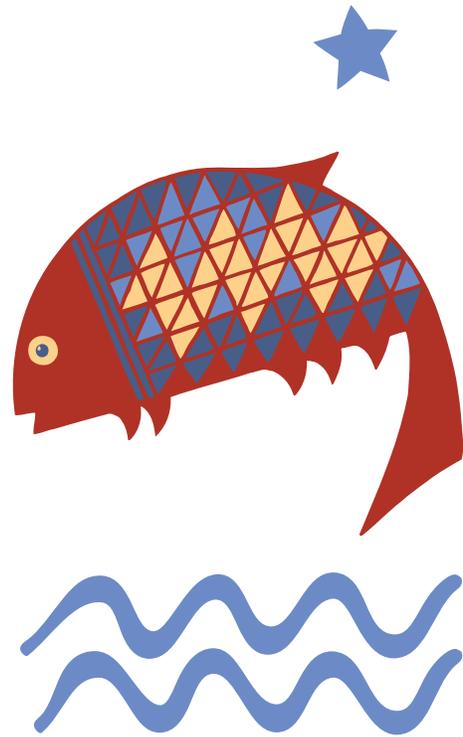
Retrospective

syd weedon

The first edition of *Syd's Journal* was produced in 1988 using a Compaq portable, a dot matrix printer, and WordPerfect 5. I printed out 10 copies, mailed some to my friends, and that was it—a rough personal news letter. A series of *Journals* followed over the next four years. I made the mistake of getting listed in a small press publisher's mag and started getting submissions from strangers and the subscription list grew to about 200 people. This proved to be the undoing of *Syd's Journal* because the burden of reading the work of all those strangers who sent me things, making judgments on same, returning manuscripts with rejection letters, coupled with the cost of printing and mailing all of those copies was too much for me to deal with given the other pressures of the time, both financial and emotional. This particular edition, *Syd's Journal, Volume 7* was the break-down issue. It has been on disk and on my computer for six years. The last of those well-intentioned submissions from other folks are in these pages. If I can track down their addresses, I'll send them a copy, but I'm not optimistic on that score. I probably owe some people some subscription money to boot...oh, well.

There was another matter which had nothing to do with the pressures of publication and that was the silence. A silence hit me and shut me down. The muse went out to lunch. I still don't understand the causes, but I came to believe that writing my thoughts and impressions down and publishing them was completely pointless and that I really had nothing to say that would be of any interest or value to anyone else. Those pieces that I did manage to hack out, such as "Lost Weekend," "West Beaver Creek," and "Divide By Zero" were longer and more involved, and didn't lend themselves well to placement in a news letter. As to the existential issues of meaning and value, I managed to get over that without really resolving it. I'm still not sure I have anything to say, but I'm writing again. The muse has returned from her long repast, and I guess you have to just tell your story and leave it to your reader to judge.

In 1988, there was no World Wide Web as we know it today. There was the old Internet, strung across the Arpanet backbone between the universities and research facilities, but it wasn't accessible to most people then. Page forward ten years: my computer is now a muscle-bound Pentium honker; I operate 4 web sites and have all of this cool graphics and publishing software—stuff I only dreamed of in



WORDWORKS

<http://www.win.net/~sydwdn/wordworks/wordworks.htm>

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GRAPHIC DESIGN
PREPRESS
PRINTING
PHOTOGRAPHY
WEB PAGES

●

'88. Suddenly it dawns on me that I have a way to publish *Syd's Journal* in a form that is virtually cost and trouble free thanks to the fine folks at Adobe. I can publish *Syd's Journal* on the Web in electronic form, in color and free in the Adobe Acrobat PDF format.

I never really cared about making money off of *Syd's Journal* but I felt that I had to in order to recover my production expenses. It's not that I don't like money; I just never figured the *Syd's Journal* material to be particularly viable in a commercial sense. For the most part, web publishing relieves this pressure.

Publishing in this way assumes that the people who want to read *Syd's Journal* have a computer or a friend who has a computer and access to the Web, and in most cases this is true, since this is one of the revolutions of consciousness which has occurred in the past ten years. But, in the event that a person wants to read *Syd's Journal* and lacks the electronic gizmos, I really don't mind if you print it out and hand it around. These PDF's print out very nicely. If you're printing to a non-PostScript printer, be sure to get the PCL printing patch for Acrobat Reader from Adobe's web site at <http://www.adobe.com>. While we're doing the address thing, my email address is sydw@sydwdn.win.net and my website is at <http://www.win.net/~sydwdn/index.htm>.

So *Syd's Journal* goes to cyberspace. Maybe that's where it belonged in the first place.



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Moby Dick Syd weedon



There was never any question that the universe would one day make cosmic answer to Psycho Magnet's equally cosmic resistance to getting anywhere closer than a couple of meters to anything feminine. And this doesn't mean that Psycho Magnet didn't like women—quite to the contrary, he liked them a lot. But he'd earned his name—he could draw out the most twisted personalities in any crowd. Captain Trash had once observed that, if you wanted to flush out every nut case in New York City, all you'd have to do would be to stand Psycho Magnet in Times Square and wait fifteen minutes. This unique, psycho-magnetic effect had the side effect of creating in Psycho Magnet's mind the unfortunate yet understandable misapprehension that all women were crazy, since the only ones he'd ever had the chance to spend time with were. Needless to say, he lived alone and grew a lot of hair.

On the other side of space and time, ten thousand years past in Earth's time, the existential Wholly Other had already begun to formulate its response to this ultimate challenge posed by Psycho Magnet. A raggedy-assed space freighter with "Bernie's Sundries" painted on its side in flaking red paint drifted toward Planet X where a race of goddesses blissfully contemplated the Euclidian harmonies of the universe. In the hold of that derelict freighter was something called "Bernie's Love Potion Number Nine." As it happens, Bernie was in arrears on his subscription to Interstellar Navigation, Inc., and was about to slam into the orbital docking station circling above Planet X, wrecking his ship, the station, and releasing a cloud of Bernie's Love Potion Number Nine, the most potent aphrodisiac in the universe, into the atmosphere of Planet X.

See, when the goddess appears, you've got to deal with her. They don't call them *love* goddesses for nothing. These are women possessed of cosmic power and supernatural lust, and all that animus twisted by millennia of deprivation and loneliness.

She appears and suddenly takes over your life—not like a normal woman in whom you might develop a rational interest or perhaps decide to leave alone because it didn't quite feel "right." No, the goddess appears and everything stops or gets set aside. You might think you have everything pretty well under control, your universe ordered and tidy, but then there she is, radiant and compelling, and suddenly you've got the will power of a homeless puppy.

Love Jones. There's no help when one gets on you, no help at all. Kiss your young ass goodbye 'cause your self respect is history. Psycho Magnet is sitting at this table at Snuggle Wet, the thrasher bar on Wilbur Street, and there's a babe sitting across from him and she is utterly spectacular—

long golden hair, the perfect nose, and the rest of the package fit together as well, and she's looking at him. She looks again and doesn't turn her eyes away when their gazes meet. The band's playing, "That's right, the women are smarter, that's right the women are smarter, smarter than the men in every way." Psycho Magnet says to himself, *Well shit, it's easy to be smart when you're that good-looking. People will find a way to make you smart.* He looks again and damned if she doesn't look back. *This woman's too good-looking to be looking at me,* he thinks again. She's a love goddess. Psycho Magnet doesn't know it, but she is and she's about to ventilate his soul with a love bullet.

Goddammitt, this is just the shit I didn't want. Some babe gives me a second glance and I'm wanting to climb her bones. This is crazy. She's talking. Her lips are moving, sound coming out, *She's talking, idiot, start tracking, come up with something intelligent to say.* She's bitching about a guy at the next table who's smoking a cigar. The smoke smells like underwear that needs washing. He says that. She asks him if he's been sniffing dirty underwear. "Only when I can't find any road kill," he says. She makes a face like she's going to throw up, and he awards himself the "Shoot Yourself In The Foot" award for the dumbest opening line of the year. Amazingly, she's still there talking. She hasn't grabbed up her things and moved to a different table. *She's still talking, asshole. Pay attention.*

She's asking a question with a smile that you'd die for, "What do you do?"

Shit, she's asking a question. This is just too intense. Oh, Lord, I'm lost—she wants to know what I do—she's interested. "I'm president of General Motors," he says and instantly has second thoughts, *Well, maybe not the most convincing lie, but she can't check it out 'til morning.*

On about the seventh virtual dimension, the Mother Goddesses from Planet X are starting to materialize using the waves of anxiety churned up by Psycho Magnet's distress. They're about to rescue him. They're launching the "Anything this much fun must be dirty" weapon. It's large, pink, and trailing a cloud of cheap mascara, but it is formless, at least in the real dimensions. It will have to take a form in the real third and fourth. It will beam itself in and take a shape which is compelling yet repugnant. At the level of gauge-field mechanics, a deep freeze is forming from the quantum fabric.

The Missing Dream—the girl who was never really there, the girl he had made up in his mind when he was sixteen and a snug pair of blue jeans would give him a hard-on. Some days she was blonde, some days a red head. At times she would be tall and athletic, but then the weather would change and she'd be petite and cuddly, a sultry, brown-eyed kitten with a shape like a girl from a Marvel Comic book. The only thing she was consistently was missing. She was never really there. She preferred to simply haunt, and in that way she was a demon lover, a tormenting phantom standing in the way of every other woman who might come close. In that way she was like the medieval knight's angel, appearing just in the nick of time to preserve his chastity when temptation was near. The Missing Dream.

The Mother Goddesses of Planet X knew all about The Missing Dream, of course, because they created her. When

all the crap is stripped away, the most beautiful and perfect woman in the world is a five-year-old's mom when he's got a scraped knee. This is a curse placed on everything male, however inadvertently, by the Mother Goddesses.

In geostationary orbit with their cloaking device on, the love goddesses are aiming the Testosterone Exciter Ray Canon toward a grungy bar thirty thousand miles below them on the planet's surface. In a mansion at the end of Bleaker Street, Madam Zelda looks into her crystal ball and sees a huge breast which seems to fill the entire sky. In the dim and smoky recesses of Snuggle Wet, Psycho Magnet sits at a table surrounded by three blonde love goddesses—Ingre the Valkyrie Maiden, Love Puppy, and Sr. Mona of the Church of Elvis. Psycho Magnet's got a hard-on like he hasn't had since he was seventeen. In the ninth, and perhaps last real dimension, Mildred, the supreme grandmother mother goddess, decides to tidy up a bit.

The sweeping broom of the supreme grandmother mother goddess is like no ordinary broom. Such a broom, wielded by such hands in the ninth dimension can make the planets swerve in their orbits, and thankfully for the citizens of Earth, Mildred isn't really warmed up and the lightly swishing broom is only enough to move the tectonic plate upon which rests North America by approximately seven and a half inches. Unfortunately for the patrons of Snuggle Wet, this shift of the tectonic plate occurs at precisely the instant that the love goddesses fire the Testosterone Exciter Ray at Psycho Magnet. Its aim now thrown off by approximately seven and one half inches, the ray falls on Dudley Limprick, a second year business student who is out on the town trying to accomplish all those things his mother told him not to do when he got to college—such is the vengeance of the mother goddesses. The full force of the Exciter Beam illuminates Dudley like a Christmas tree for a nanosecond, exciting every atom in his body to an erect and totally Neanderthal posture. He is Chuck Norris...no, Rambo...no, Captain Blood...no, they're all wimps next to him. The waves of supercharged testosterone dissolve the rational thought centers in his brain, and he hurls a full beer mug at Psycho Magnet and the table of the love goddesses.

Psycho Magnet, of course, is not the kind to take this kind of shit lying down, and besides that, sitting as he has for two hours at a table full of love goddesses, he's suffering from some pretty serious hormonal toxicity himself. Doing his best Conan the Barbarian, Psycho Magnet dives across the crashing tables and grabs Dudley, wrapping his wiry arms around the sophomoric berzerker. This noble act results in a sort of Nantucket Sleigh Ride around the crowded bar. In a fleeting moment of clarity, Psycho Magnet asks himself, *OK, genius, now you got him—whatcha gonna do with him?* Dudley, doing his best Moby Dick, makes a frantic lunge into the bar attempting to dislodge the alien life form which has attached itself to his back. The bar catches Psycho Magnet in the medulla. As he sinks into the blackness of unconsciousness, Psycho Magnet dreams of Marilyn Monroe commanding a Abrams main battle tank and chasing him through the desert with heat-seeking missiles. Love Puppy is so entranced with Dudley's sudden virility that she spirits him away to Jellico, Tennessee where they're married at three in the morning and conceive triplets before dawn.

