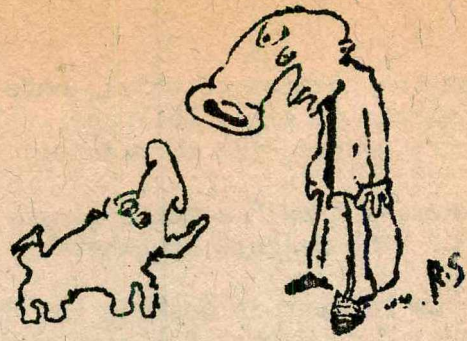


Welcome to CONVENTION GIRLS' DIGEST, brought to you by those fun loving West Coast party girls: Allyn, Sharee and the nefarious Lucy. All complaints should be directed to Stu Shiffman, who lives sufficiently far away to be safely picked on, ho ho. Contents copyright (c) 1984 by Allyn Cadogan, Sharee Carton, Lucy Huntzinger; founding members fwa. This is a Group Mind Publication #1. Cogneato Press. God Save Rob Hansen.



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So I'm sitting here, nice day in the park, reading *The Snarkout Boys And The Avocado Of Death*, minding my own business, when who runs by but Moshe Feder in a White Rabbit suit, pink ears twitching, clutching an exotic timepiece. "I'm late," he mutters distractedly. "Great Ghu, I'm late!" Grabbing my hand in passing, he yanks me peremptorily to my feet. "Hurry!" he cries, "Ben Yarrow will have my head!"

He dumps me unceremoniously into a giant hopper filled to the brim with an assortment of unusual creatures in strange garb. I look about in wonder as we fall through a large wire sieve. Costume freaks are left behind as their swords and wings catch on the mesh. Moshe's rabbit suit has miraculously been transformed into white pants and t-shirt, and instead of the watch he is now clutching to his breast an old copy of *Placebo*. "I'm still a trufan!" he weeps defiantly. "This is strictly DNQ," he hisses, noticing me for the first time. "Don't tell my editor."

A second layer of mesh holds back media fans, unable to see through the fine wires that separate them from reality. We pass through the third screen just inches from the stolid backs of a small army of bodies adorned with walkie-talkies, waving their arms excitedly at each other, crying out: "Move along! Ops! We'll have to close the party if you don't quiet down!"

The walls are closing in now, as if we are travelling down a giant funnel. Succeeding layers of mesh sort out confen, concom, and filthy pros.

After what seems like an eternity, we are bounced onto a bed in the middle of a smof-filled room. Jeanne Bowman attacks. "What took you so long?" she laughs, wrestling Moshe to the floor. Around the room, heads bow as Malcolm Edwards chants, "'Tis a fwa, fwa better thing..."

"The rule is," Gary Farber sneers, "jam tomorrow and jam yesterday--but never jam today."

Terry Carr rolls across the end of the bed and drops catlike to the floor. "So how was Britain?" he enquires of Lucy. "Great," she responds, "just great."

I wander through the crowd partaking of bits and snatches of conversation. Sandy Cohen drifts past, in a t-shirt bearing the legend "EAT ME" in large letters. Ted White presides over the conflagration from atop a giant mushroom in the corner.

The room begins to whirl; here and there bright flashes of light break up the monotony of green wallpaper. Time flows strangely. Days become hours, and hours become like 60 minutes. Is this Thursday, or Monday?

"Where's Lucy?" a voice floats out of the melee.  
"Off with Malcolm somewhere."

Bryan Barrett is hosting the Britain in '87 party. He thrusts a pot of tea into my hands. Wisps of bluish smoke drift ceilingward from its tilted lid.

"Sorry," I decline, passing the pot to my neighbor, "this stuff only puts me to sleep." "I know exactly what you mean," says Victor Gonzalez, as he slides down the wall into personal reverie. Bryan, price tag dangling from one blade of his propeller beanie, leaps to my side. "Real Ale?" he enquires with a wide grin. I look all around the room, but see nothing but tea. "I don't see any Real Ale," I remark.

"There isn't any," he says.

"Then it wasn't very civil of you to offer it," I say angrily.

He points me toward Colin Fine, standing sentry near the entrance to the euphemism. "Tally ho!" I cry, pushing my way past his growls to the grog.

Jane Hawkins huddles under a table near the window, taking notes. "New zine?" I ask? "Topic A," she replies.

Lucy and Malcolm arrive arm in arm, looking smug. They form the core of the amoeba party. Floating up the hall, the amoeba from time to time stretches out a pseudopod to absorb stray trufen. Art Widner, Sharee, Jack Speer, Chris Atkinson, Douglas McConnel, Joyce Scrivner, Justin Ackroyd, Allyn, Jerry Kaufman, Rob Hansen, and Rich Coad are all enfolded. Encountering an elevator and a stairwell, the truamoeba divides and reforms at Ted's feet.

"It's wrong from beginning to end," he intones. "But you'll get used to it in time."

Charles Burbee allows as to how he would like to die staring at Sharee's Corflut-shirt. "Keep staring like that," Sharee replies, "and you'll get your wish."

Chris and Malcolm are huddled on the floor, playing a new version of scissors, paper, stone. They sigh, and sit back to confront their audience.

"Okay," Chris says, "given that Chris Priest is the fourth most attractive male fan, which three North Americans would be the most attractive?" Females present consider the possibilities. Silence fills the room. Finally Malcolm, to ease the tension, offers a few suggestions. While all are entertained by Malcolm's preferences, no women second his motions. Lucy suggests Grant Canfield. Allyn debates the nomination on the basis that he is no longer a fan. Grant enters the room. Responding to directions from the floor, he pirouettes so full body examination can be made, and proudly declares his trufan status. "Well, there's one!" we shout. Chris is noncommittal. Further discussion reveals that Grant is not merely the most attractive North American male fan, but the ONLY attractive North American male fan. Chris departs in search of desperate fun.

Dale Enzenbacher, California's Mad Sculptor, confesses a desire to become a Hugo winning fanartist, demonstrating his abilities by drawing a history of science fiction and fantasy on Sharee's shaved scalp.

Off in a corner Paul Williams, complaining about the heat, strips to his gold neckchain, accompanied by cheers and chortles and sort of desperate applause.

"Where's Malcolm?" a voice drifts out of the din.  
"Off with Lucy somewhere."

Allyn goes over the waterfall with Rob Hansen. There are no witnesses.

Joe Haldeman enters on the arm of an exotic creature from another time zone.  
"So, Joe!" Ted booms heartily, "Have you found all the best holes in town?"  
"Yeah, we were playing miniatures today," Joe replies, loosing sight of his left hand, "but I don't like the ones with those little mounds around the hole, you know?" "Yeah," Ted bellows, "they all have those LIPS around them, makes it hard to get it in.... Personally, I prefer putt-putt."

Allyn realizes she will have to sleep in her t-shirt tonight since Lucy has absconded with the chicken suit again. Fortunately, there are no kitty litter boxes at this convention. How will she break this news to Sharee?

Australians are in short supply at the Aussiecon party so Chris and Sharee set off on a quest to find some. At an extremely private room party they are humiliated at the door, this being a midwestern tradition. They gain admission after chanting the secret passwords, "Moshe, Moshe, Moshe," and are granted an audience with Jack Herman. Sharee is charmed; Chris vanishes in search of even more desperate fun.

Lucy reappears with Malcolm, looking less smug.

Tami Vining only grins. She looks good-natured, I think: still she has very long claws and a great many teeth, so I feel she ought to be treated with respect.

"Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?" I ask. "That depends a good deal on where you want to get to," she replies, and this time she vanishes quite slowly, beginning with the combat boots, and ending with the ruby red lips, which remain some time after the rest of her has gone.

We wander off to scan the SFWA suite and find it wanting. But! here are Tweedledee and Tweedledum from Glen Ellen, who promise great parties if we will only follow. "I know what you're thinking," says Tweedledum, "but it isn't so, nohow." They lie.

"I met some cool people from Arkansas last night," Sharee offers. "Let's go to their room."

"But I don't want to go among mad people," I protest.  
"Oh, you can't help that," Ted replies, "we're all mad here. "I'm mad. "You're mad."  
"How do you know I'm mad?" I ask.  
"You must be, or you wouldn't have come here."

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