

FEELS LIKE THE FIRST TIME

A COLLECTION OF STORIES

ILLUSTRATED BY

MARIANNE R. PETIT



FROM THE PARTICIPATORY BOOK SERIES

VOL. 01

FOR ALL THE FRIENDS WHO
GENEROUSLY SHARED
THEIR STORIES



"FEELS LIKE THE FIRST TIME"

A PARTICIPATORY BOOK

STORIES BY

MATTHEW BELANGER

SARAH HADLEY

HOWARD MITTELMARK

MARIANNE R. PETIT

ROBERT RYAN

ILLUSTRATIONS BY

MARIANNE R. PETIT

IN JANUARY 2007, I HAD AN IDEA FOR SOME BOOKS I WANTED TO MAKE, BUT I DECIDED THAT THEY WOULDN'T BE ABOUT ME. I WANTED A BREAK FROM MY OWN STORIES, AND I KNEW THAT MY FRIENDS HAD SOME REALLY GREAT ONES. I WANTED TO TRY TELL SOME OF THEIR STORIES, SO I STARTED THE PARTICIPATORY BOOK SERIES.

I CAME UP WITH SOME QUESTIONS AND POSTED THEM ONLINE, AND INVITED SOME FRIENDS TO TELL WHATEVER STORIES THE QUESTIONS MADE THEM THINK OF.

HAVE YOU EVER HAD A SMELL TRIGGER A MEMORY? DO YOU BELIEVE IN AN INTERVENTIONIST GOD? HAS THE MENTAL HEALTH OF OTHER PEOPLE HAD AN INFLUENCE ON YOUR LIFE? DO YOU REMEMBER YOUR FIRST LOVE? DID YOU EVER BREAK UP WITH ANYONE?

THIS IS ONE OF THE BOOKS THAT CAME OUT OF IT. I HOPE YOU ENJOY IT.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO SEE SOME OF MY OTHER WORK YOU CAN VISIT MY WEBSITE: WWW.MRPETIT.COM M.R. PETIT COPYRIGHT 2007.

PARTICIPATORY BOOK ENTRY:
FEELS LIKE THE FIRST TIME

WHAT IS YOUR FIRST ROMANTIC MEMORY?
WAS IT A FIRST KISS?
A FIRST PITTER PATTER OF YOUR HEART?
IS THERE A STORY OF YOUR FIRST LOVE?
WHO WAS IT?
HOW OLD WERE YOU?
WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER?

TELL ME THE STORY AND I'LL ILLUSTRATE IT ...

"HEY MARIANNE!"

STORY BY MARIANNE R. PETIT

THE FIRST PERSON I MADE OUT WITH IN HIGH SCHOOL WAS A NICE ENOUGH GUY. HIS NAME WAS GEORGE.



WE WERE AT A CAST PARTY FOLLOWING OUR PRODUCTION OF THE PAJAMA GAME.



SOMEONE TURNED OFF THE LIGHTS BECAUSE A NEIGHBOR HAD CALLED THE POLICE.



BUT REALLY I DIDN'T LIKE HIM VERY MUCH AND FOUND THE WHOLE THING ODD, SORT OF BORING, AND NOT PARTICULARLY PLEASANT.



AND LATER I REGRETTED THE INCIDENT COMPLETELY BECAUSE I HAD FORGOTTEN IT WAS DAYLIGHT SAVINGS AND THE CLOCKS SPRANG FORWARD AND I CALLED MY MOTHER OVER AN HOUR LATER THAN I SHOULD HAVE AND SHE WAS FURIOUS AND SORT OF SCREAMED LIKE A CRAZY LADY ON THE PHONE AND I GOT INTO A LOT OF TROUBLE.

SO, MAKING OUT REALLY JUST DIDN'T SEEM WORTH IT.



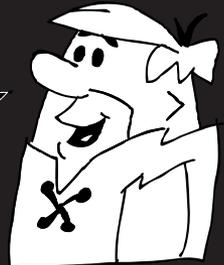
MY FIRST CELEBRITY CRUSHES INCLUDED:



JACK KLUGMAN AS OSCAR MADISON



DICK VAN DYKE AS CARACTACUS POTTS



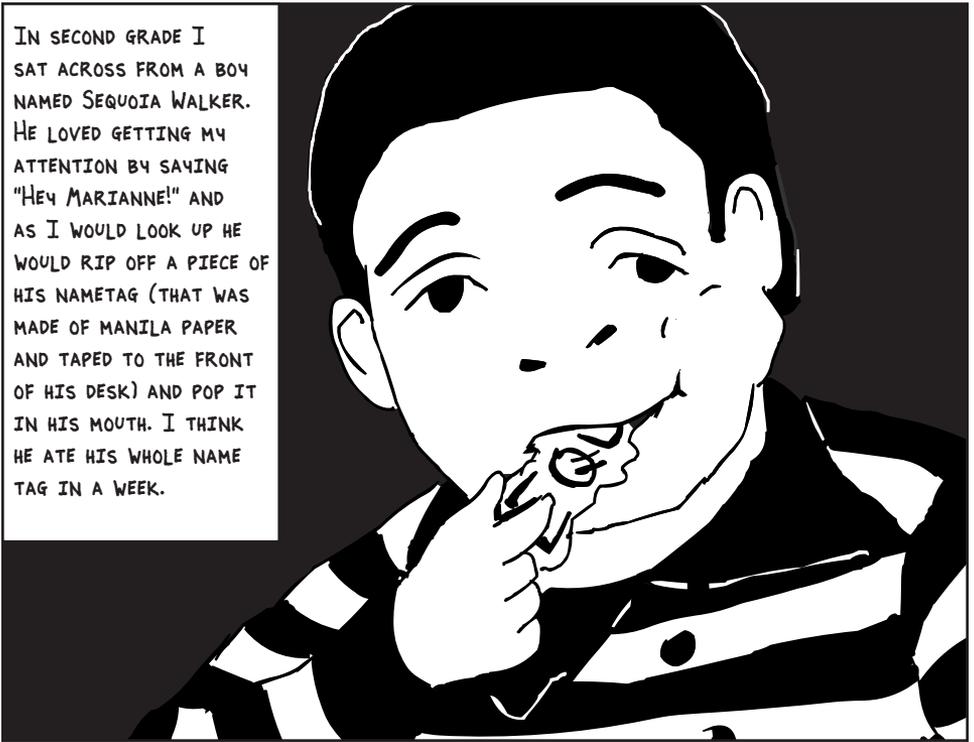
AND BARNEY RUBBLE

I THINK MY TASTE IN MEN WAS DUBIOUS UNTIL ABOUT THE AGE OF THIRTY-SEVEN.

I GUESS I'LL HAVE TO GO WITH STORIES OF THE EARLIEST FLIRTATIONS I CAN REMEMBER, AND THOSE WERE IN SECOND AND THIRD GRADE.



IN SECOND GRADE I SAT ACROSS FROM A BOY NAMED SEQUOIA WALKER. HE LOVED GETTING MY ATTENTION BY SAYING "HEY MARIANNE!" AND AS I WOULD LOOK UP HE WOULD RIP OFF A PIECE OF HIS NAMETAG (THAT WAS MADE OF MANILA PAPER AND TAPED TO THE FRONT OF HIS DESK) AND POP IT IN HIS MOUTH. I THINK HE ATE HIS WHOLE NAME TAG IN A WEEK.



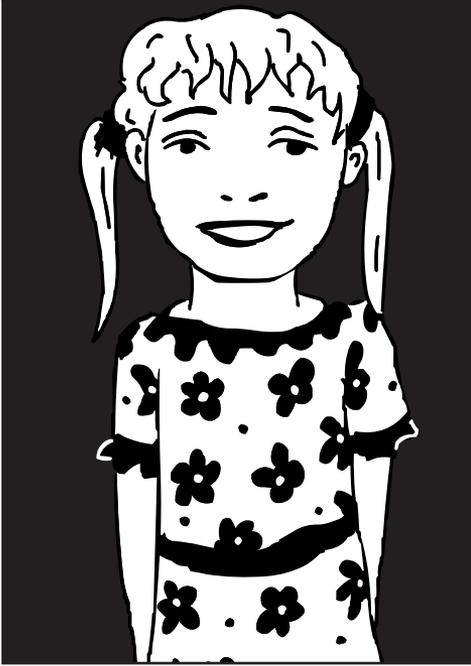
IN THIRD GRADE I SAT NEXT TO BRUCE FEDERICO, AND HE WOULD DO THINGS LIKE SAY "HEY MARIANNE!" AND THEN THRUST A LEAD PENCIL INTO THE PALM OF HIS HAND. I FOUND IT VERY IMPRESSIVE.



"HOLDING HANDS"

STORY BY ROBERT BOBBY RYAN

MY FIRST LOVE WAS IN THE FIRST GRADE.
HER NAME WAS ZIA WATERS.



THINKING BACK ON IT NOW, AS A GAY MAN,
HER NAME MAKES ME THINK MORE OF A
WEIRD LOVE CHILD OF JOHN WATERS AND
ZSA ZSA GABOR RATHER THAN THE TALL,
CUTE, LONG HAIRD DANISH GIRL SHE WAS.



ZIA AND I WERE IN THE SAME CLASS IN KINDERGARTEN AND BY THE END OF THE YEAR WE SLEPT
ON MATS NEXT TO EACH OTHER DURING NAP TIME. SINCE THERE WAS ONLY ONE OF EACH CLASS IN
OUR SMALL SCHOOL WE WERE DESTINED TO MEET AGAIN IN THE FIRST GRADE.



IN SEPTEMBER I HAD A REALLY HORRIFIC ACCIDENT.

MY PET RABBIT BIT THE TIP OFF MY LEFT INDEX FINGER.



I WAS OUT OF SCHOOL FOR ABOUT A WEEK.

THEY NEVER DID RECOVER THE MISSING DIGIT TIP AND SO I WAS A SCARED CHILD.

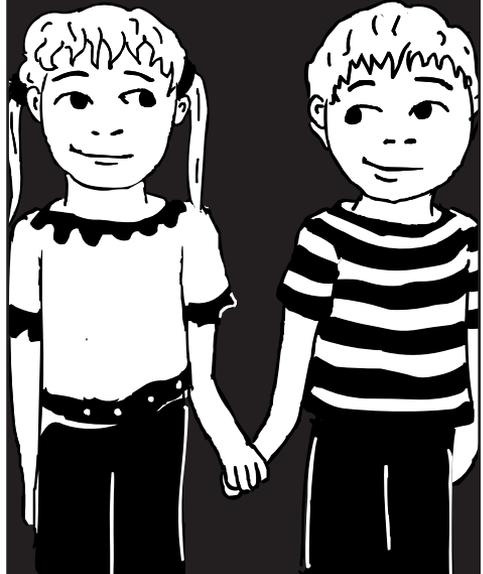


WHEN I CAME BACK TO SCHOOL THE TEACHER -- MISS PRUCIK -- MADE ME MOVE MY DESK TO THE BACK OF THE ROOM BECAUSE SHE FELT SQUEEMISH LOOKING AT MY HAND.

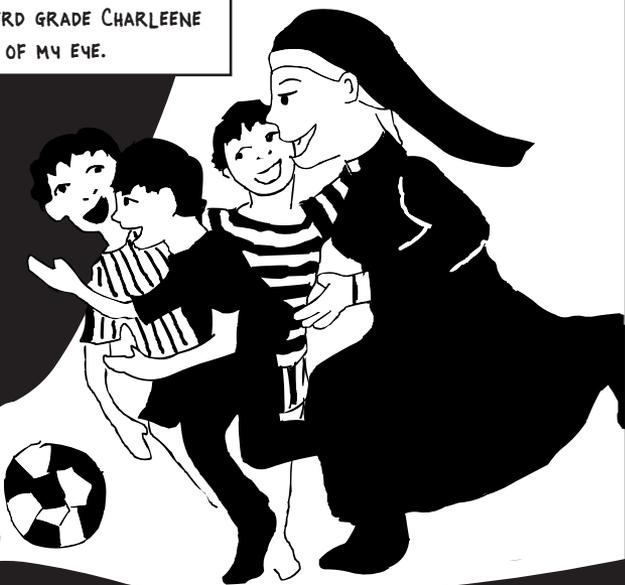


SHE WAS A VERY MEAN TEACHER.

ZIA WAS THE SWEETEST MEDICINE FOR ME. SHE AND I BEGAN HOLDING HANDS [MY RIGHT ONE, OF COURSE] AND WE WERE INSEPARABLE FOR THE NEXT TWO YEARS.



ZIA WAS MY FIRST LOVE. BUT LIKE MOST BOYS, I HAD FLEETING ATTENTION. IN THE THIRD GRADE CHARLEENE NORRIS WAS BECOMING THE APPLE OF MY EYE.



[THIRD GRADE: SISTER RAYMOND ANN'S CLASS -- SHE WAS AWESOME! SHE WOULD PLAY DODGEBALL AND BASKETBALL WITH US IN HER HABIT]

CHARLEENE WAS MORE THAN THE APPLE OF MY EYE REALLY... SHE WOULD HIT ME ON THE PLAY GROUND AND PULL MY HAIR.



FOR SOME REASON, WHILE I LOVED HOLDING ZIA'S HAND ALL THE TIME, I REALLY LIKED THIS ROUGH PLAY.



I USUALLY WENT HOME FOR LUNCH, BECAUSE I LIVED RIGHT ACROSS THE STREET FROM THE SCHOOL AND BECAUSE I HAD TO HAVE THE SAME THING FOR LUNCH EVERYDAY OR I WOULDN'T EAT. [PEANUT BUTTER TOAST]

WE WOULD ALL LINE UP TO GO DOWN TO THE CAFETERIA AND ON THE WAY DOWN THE STEPS I WOULD GO OUT THE DOOR TO THE SIDE OF THE SCHOOL AND HEAD FOR MY HOUSE.



WELL THIS ONE DAY I WAS NEARLY AT THE DOOR WHEN CHARLEENE GRABBED ME AND PLANTED A BIG KISS RIGHT ON MY LIPS. I WAS PETRIFIED...



IN RETROSPECT, IT WAS AT ABOUT THIS TIME THAT MICHAEL DELMANACO STARTED LOOKING LIKE THE CUTEST BOY IN MY CLASS AND ZIA AND I STOPPED HOLDING HANDS.



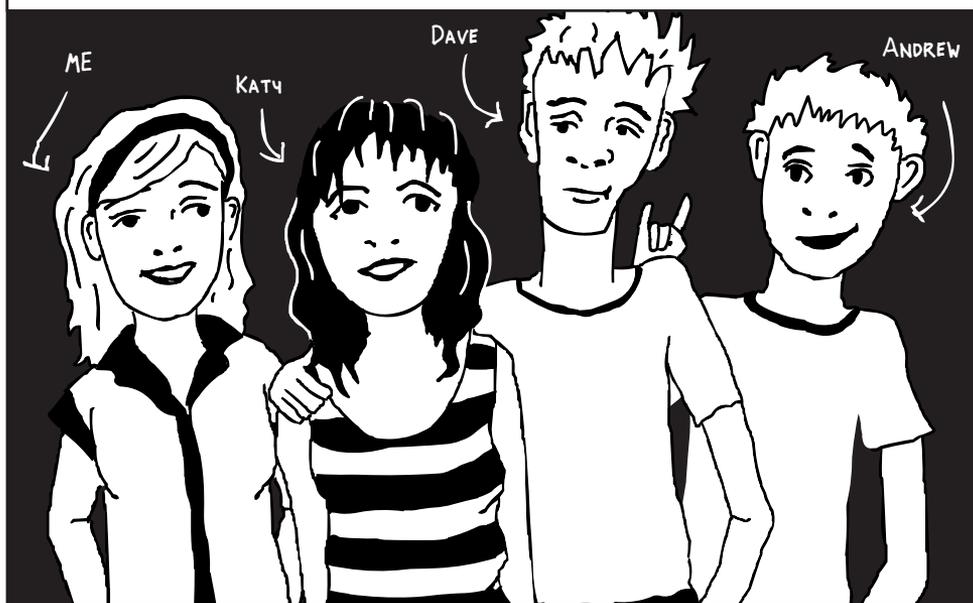
"THE BALCONY"

STORY BY SARAH HADLEY

MY FIRST KISS WAS IN THE BALCONY OF THIS OLD THEATER WHERE THEY SHOWED THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW.



IT WAS SUMMER AND I WENT WITH MY BEST FRIEND KATY, HER BOYFRIEND DAVE WHO WAS TWO YEARS OLDER THAN US AND HER BOYFRIEND'S BROTHER ANDREW, WHO WAS IN OUR CLASS.



ANDREW WAS CUTE, BUT REALLY OBNOXIOUS.

THE KIND OF GUY WHO SNORTED
JELLO AT THE LUNCH TABLE



OR SNAPPED YOUR BRA

OR BASICALLY WAS ALWAYS CALLING
ATTENTION TO HIMSELF IN SOME WAY.



I HAD NEVER THOUGHT ROMANTICALLY ABOUT
HIM AT ALL.

HOWEVER, SEVERAL GULPS OF GIN LATER ...



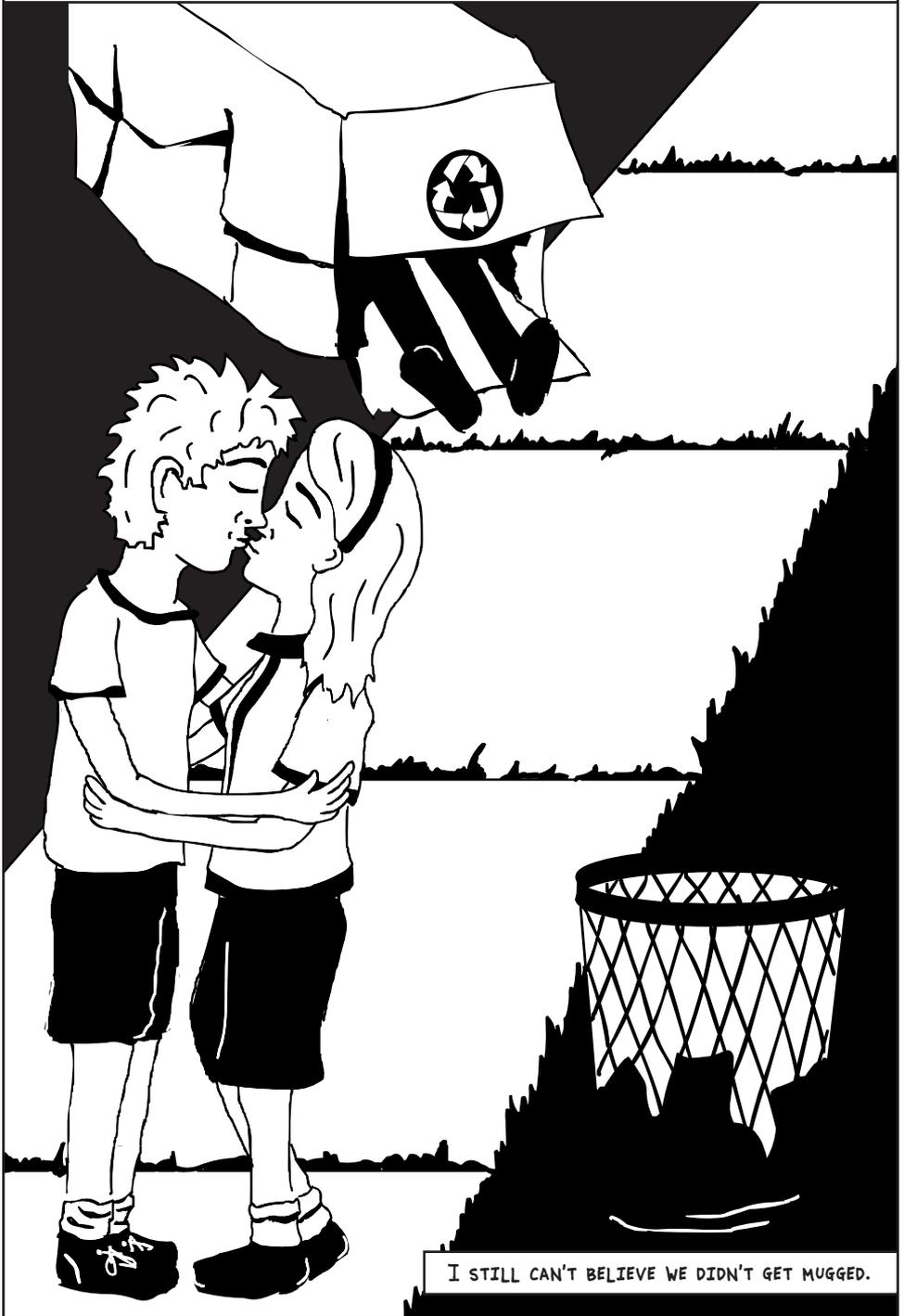
HE LEAD ME TO THE BALCONY



WHERE WE STARTED KISSING.



HE WAS ACTUALLY QUITE SWEET AND ROMANTIC AND LATER WE WALKED HOME TO HIS HOUSE THROUGH BOSTON AT 3 O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING AND KISSED ON SEVERAL PARK BENCHES.



I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE WE DIDN'T GET MUGGED.

"GETTING READY FOR LISA"

STORY BY MATTHEW BELANGER

I WAS RECENTLY READING THROUGH MY BABY ALBUM. THERE ARE SOME FUNNY BITS IN THERE. MY MOTHER WROTE ABOUT ONE TIME WHEN I WAS SIX...

ONE DAY YOU WERE IN THE BATHROOM A LONG TIME. FINALLY YOU CAME OUT WITH DEODORANT ON AND SAID ...

MOM, YOU HAVEN'T GIVEN ME A BATH SINCE JESUS WAS BORN.



YOU HAD YOUR HAIR SLICKED BACK TO THE SIDE WITH WATER - A COMB IN YOUR SHIRT POCKET.

YOU HAD ME CHECK YOUR BREATH.



AND SAID ...

I HAVE TO BE READY
FOR LISA.



LISA COPPING WAS MY FIRST SERIOUS CRUSH.



WE TOOK THE SAME BUS TO AND FROM SCHOOL.



SHE INVITED ME TO HER BIRTHDAY PARTY AT
MCDONALD'S.



I INVITED HER TO MY BIRTHDAY AT SHOWBIZ PIZZA.



I THINK IN MY MIND THAT MEANT WE WERE MARRIED.



THE NEXT YEAR LISA AND HER FAMILY MOVED TO ANOTHER STATE AND I NEVER SAW HER AGAIN.



"THE EXCHANGE STUDENTS"

STORY BY HOWARD MITTELMARK

I DON'T KNOW WHY I REMEMBER THIS SO WELL. IT'S NOT LIKE IT WAS MY FIRST KISS, AND IT WASN'T EVEN A "REAL" KISS, BUT THIS IS WHAT I REMEMBER ABOUT IT.

I WAS IN THE TENTH GRADE, AND WE HAD AN EXCHANGE STUDENT FROM ECUADOR LIVING WITH US, WHICH ENTIRELY CHANGED MY SOCIAL LIFE.



INSTEAD OF STAYING HOME AND WATCHING TV ON FRIDAY AND SATURDAY NIGHTS, OR HANGING OUT WITH KIDS FROM MY NEIGHBORHOOD BEHIND THE 7-ELEVEN



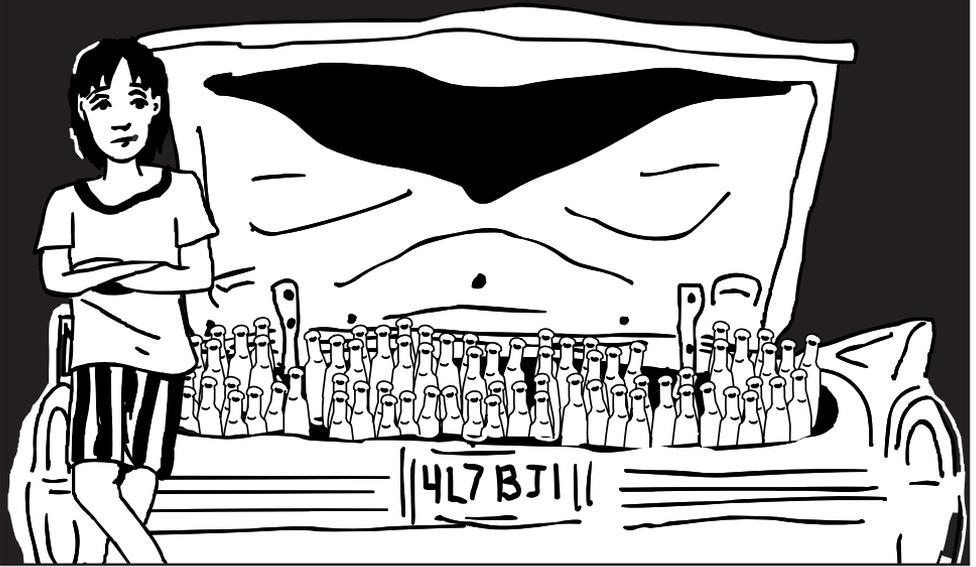
TWO GUYS FROM COLOMBIA (THEY ALSO WENT TO MY HIGH SCHOOL, BUT NOT AS EXCHANGE STUDENTS; THEY WERE COUSINS WHOSE FAMILIES HAD RECENTLY MOVED TO LEVITTOWN), HERNANDO AND EDGAR, WOULD COME BY IN EDGAR'S CAR TO PICK UP ME AND FABIAN, AND THEN WE'D DRIVE TO ONE OF THE EXCHANGE STUDENT PARTIES THAT WENT ON ALMOST EVERY WEEKEND SOMEWHERE ON LONG ISLAND.



I LIVED ON THE WORKING CLASS SOUTH SHORE, AND I SAW THE NICER HOUSES AND WEALTHIER TOWNS ON THE NORTH SHORE FOR THE FIRST TIME.



WE DRANK A LOT OF BEER AT THESE PARTIES. THERE WAS ONE OLDER GUY, A TALL BLOND LAID-BACK TYPE, WHO'D SHOW UP AT MOST OF THE PARTIES WITH THE TRUNK OF HIS CAR PACKED TIGHT WITH BEER OF VARIOUS BRANDS, AND YOU COULD ALWAYS BUY A SIX-PACK FROM HIM.



HERNANDO, EDGAR AND FABIAN HAD A VERY SOUTH AMERICAN APPROACH TO WOMEN (GIRLS, REALLY, OF COURSE, BUT THEY ALL SEEMED VERY MATURE AND KNOWLEDGEABLE TO ME).



IN RETROSPECT I THINK THEY WERE SOMEWHERE BETWEEN THE CONTINENTAL AND TWO WILD AND CRAZY GUYS.



THIS WAS THE EARLY SEVENTIES, SO IT WAS A REAL CONTRAST WITH THE TRICKLE-DOWN HIPPIE CULTURE I'D BEEN GROWING INTO BEFORE THEY CAME ALONG.



BUT IT WAS ALSO THE DISCO ERA, AND THE TIGHT-PANTSED, OPEN-SHIRTED MODE THEY FAVORED DIDN'T SEEM THAT ALIEN. IT WAS ALL OVER THE TV AND IN MOVIES, AND QUEENS WAS ONLY A THIRTY MINUTE DRIVE ON THE LONG ISLAND EXPRESSWAY.

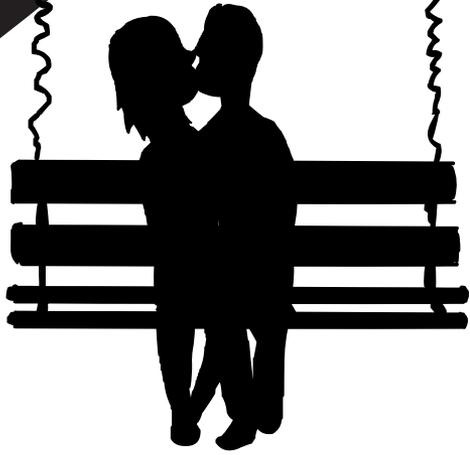


THE PARTIES WE WENT TO COULD HARDLY HAVE BEEN MORE INNOCENT. A FEW BEERS, A LITTLE POT. THE KIDS IN THE EXCHANGE STUDENT GROUPS ALL TENDED TO BE A STUDENTS WHO WERE USING THEIR INVOLVEMENT TO HELP THEM GET INTO GOOD SCHOOLS, AND THE EXCHANGE STUDENTS THEMSELVES CAME FROM UPPER CLASS FAMILIES, AND LOOKED TO THE REST OF US AS IF THEY'D ALL BEEN TO FINISHING SCHOOL. NOBODY ELSE ON LONG ISLAND WAS THAT POLITE.



AND DESPITE MY FRIENDS' LOTHARIO STYLE, THEY CAME FROM A MUCH MORE TRADITIONAL CULTURE, WHERE THE VIRGIN/WHORE THING WASN'T A HANGUP, IT WAS MORE LIKE THE LAW, AND THEY HADN'T REALLY ABSORBED ANY OF THE "SEXUAL REVOLUTION" THAT WAS APPARENTLY GOING ON AT THE TIME, AND ALL THE GIRLS AT THE PARTY FELL INTO THE CATEGORY OF "NICE GIRLS."

SO, AFTER A REALLY SUCCESSFUL NIGHT, MAYBE THERE'D BE SOME KISSING IN A DARK CORNER OF A BACK YARD, OR IN THE BACK SEAT OF A CAR PARKED RIGHT OUT IN FRONT OF THE PARTY, COMPLETELY VISIBLE IN THE PORCH LIGHT.



ANYWAY, I WAS JUST FOLLOWING THEIR LEAD, AND ONE NIGHT I ENDED UP ROLLING AROUND ON THE WET LAWN IN THE BACK YARD, KISSING A GIRL FROM SEA CLIFF I'D JUST MET THAT NIGHT. WE WERE BOTH A BIT DRUNK AND I'M ALMOST CERTAIN NO TONGUES WERE INVOLVED.



SO, THAT'S NOT THE THING I REMEMBER. WHAT I REMEMBER IS THIS. AT RIGHT AROUND THE SAME TIME, PROBABLY WITHIN A WEEK OR TWO OF THAT PARTY, I WAS INTRODUCED TO A DARK, PRETTY, GRACEFUL GIRL FROM GUATEMALA.



I CAN RECALL THE FACT OF IT, BUT NOT THE EXPERIENCE OF IT, LIKE IT WAS A STORY SOMEBODY HAD TOLD ME ABOUT SOMEBODY ELSE.

WHEN I TOOK HER HAND TO SHAKE IT, SHE
LEANED FORWARD AND KISSED ME ON THE CHEEK.



SHE COULDN'T HAVE SURPRISED
ME MORE IF SHE HAD LEVITATED.
I HAD NEVER BEEN "SOCIALLY"
KISSED BY SOMEBODY MY OWN
AGE; IT'S POSSIBLE THAT I
DIDN'T EVEN KNOW PEOPLE DID
THAT.

I ASSUME I MANAGED TO SAY SOMETHING
APPROPRIATE, BUT I WAS COMPLETELY
STUNNED.



FOR DAYS AFTER THAT
I COULD FEEL HOW
SOFT HER LIPS WERE
PRESSED AGAINST MY
CHEEK.