

February 25, 1967

Fly Trans-Love Airways

O N A LITTLE PATCH OF LAND

just outside the city limits of Los Angeles, on that portion of Sunset Boulevard which is called Sunset Strip, there is a large billboard that advertises a casino in Las Vegas. Set on top of the billboard, dressed in red boots, long red gloves, and black-and-white striped panties attached across the midriff to a red bikini top, is an immense, pink plaster chorus girl. One of her arms is bent, hand slightly forward and upraised, at the elbow. Her other arm extends, fingers outstretched, behind. One of her knees is raised. The other leg is the one she stands on, slowly, continuously rotates on. Diagonally southwest across the street from the girl, much nearer the ground, on a little pedestal, another figure in red gloves, striped panties, and red top rotates in a similar pose. It is Bullwinkle the Moose. Somewhere west of the girl and east of the moose, the jurisdiction of the Los Angeles

Police Department ends and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's territory begins. Since the Strip was for a good part of its history a center of gambling and prostitution, it has always remained part of the "county island" of West Hollywood, and resisted incorporation into the City of Los Angeles. For tax reasons, and perhaps because of rumors that the gambling, at least, will be allowed to return, it resists incorporation now. Very near this border outpost, on a recent Saturday night, a small band of Dickensian characters—two tall, pale women with thin, reddish hair; one short, stout, bustling brunette; and four men, rather unsteady on their feet—set up a portable loud-speaker system on the sidewalk and began to preach. Several boys and girls who had been sitting quietly on two of the benches that line the Strip at bus stops, and several others, who had been leaning against the white picket fence that surrounds a small pink-and-yellow café called Pandora's Box—closed, like several other rock-'n'-roll and cherry-Coke establishments, by the police, on account of some recent disturbances—gathered around to watch. One of them wore a kind of harlequin cap with many floppy, green ear-like appendages, from each of which there hung a silver bell. Another wore blue jeans, a suede jacket, an undershirt, a mauve tie, and a top hat. Two wore gray Confederate jackets. Several wore wooly vests over shirts with leather laces at the collar—open to reveal striped turtleneck jerseys underneath. Nearly all wore slacks cut quite low at the hips, and one wore a lumber-jacket. Although the night was quite cold, three were barefoot, and one had on apparently homemade red-and-black slippers turned up at the toes. The rest wore boots. All of them stood in a loose but attentive cluster a bit to one side of the preaching band.

"My happiest moment," a man who was missing a front tooth was saying, with a practiced homiletic quaver, into the microphone, "was when I saw myself a sinner. I traded in my sins for Jesus, and, believe me, I got the best of the deal." The teen-agers drifted a short way off, and the speaker raised his voice. "I know you young people," he said. "You talk dirty and your minds are dirty. You don't want no one to have a claim on you. You don't want to be obligated. But you're obligated, sinners, because there is a God above."

"How do you know?" asked the boy in the top hat.

"Because I love God," the man said hoarsely; and as he continued to preach, one of the tall, pale women went about nudging the teen-agers and offering them inspirational tracts—among them a green one entitled "7 Communists Go Singing Into Heaven."

A Los Angeles patrol car, containing two helmeted policemen staring straight ahead, cruised by.

"Why don't they ask these hypocrites to move along?" a barefoot girl in a shaggy sweater, slacks, and yachting cap said, in a bitter voice. "They're blocking the sidewalk. They're trying to incite us to riot. They're obviously winos. How come The Man never hassles anyone but the longhairs?"

"I want to listen to this," said a short, plump girl beside her. "I haven't had such a treat in years." Suddenly, she slung her large leather purse over her shoulder, pulled a few strands of hair over one eye, and, raising the other eyebrow, began to walk slowly and suggestively back and forth in front of the speaker, who turned sideways.

"This bearded sinner tells me he is Jewish," the speaker said, pointing to a young man wearing black slacks and a black shirt, with a pair of what appeared to be calipers hung on a string around his neck. "Well, I want to tell you about the greatest Jew that ever walked the earth. . . ."

"Yodel, Billy," the barefoot girl in the yachting cap said to the young man in black. He began to yodel. The gap-toothed man continued to preach. The tall, pale woman continued to distribute pamphlets. The short, plump girl continued to walk back and forth. A bus pulled up in front of the benches, and a gray-haired, stolid-looking couple, evidently tourists, got laboriously out.

"O Lord, O Lord, O Lord, here they are, Henry, will you look at them," the lady said, smoothing down the skirt of her dress and looking directly at the girl in the yachting cap. "I'm glad I raised mine right."

"What are you looking at, you old bag?" the short, plump girl asked, standing still for a moment.

The couple began to walk away.

"It's Sonny and Chèr," the boy in the top hat said as they passed him. "I'd know them anywhere."

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and was now addressing the group in a rather intimate tone about "your dirty, filthy sins and your unclean habits."

The boy in the lumberjacket, who had been looking for some time at the girl in the yachting cap, suddenly walked over and took her hand. He led her wordlessly to a point directly in front of the man who was speaking, and kissed her. When, after several minutes, they looked up, the gap-toothed man (although he watched them with apparent fascination) was still preaching, so they kissed again and remained in each other's arms until the sound of a guitar farther down the street—in front of a café called the Fifth Estate—caused the teen-age group to disperse and drift toward the music.

"Before you go to bed this very night . . ." the speaker was saying, as the young longhairs walked away. And several of them tried—with such phrases as "turn on," "freak out," and "take the pill"—to complete his sentence for him.

What seems to have brought the Strip to its present impasse—it is practically deserted but for these little evangelical bands of elderly squares and young longhairs, bent on mutual conversion—was an economic battle with, and over, teen-agers; and what apparently drew the teen-agers to the Strip in the first place was a musical development. In the late fifties and early sixties, by all accounts, the Strip was dull. The old, expensive restaurants, left over from the golden days of Hollywood, were in a steep decline. Near the middle of the Strip, there was (and still is) an attractive stretch of clothing and antique shops called Sunset Plaza, but the rest was lined (and is) with hot-dog stands, car-rental agencies, and billboards—changed with the rapidity of flash cards—advertising casinos, airlines, films, and mortuaries.

Then, in 1963, a southern California surf-rock group, the Beach Boys, acquired a national reputation, and, beginning in 1964, the Los Angeles area—with Sonny and Chèr, the Byrds, the Mama's and the Papa's, the Lovin' Spoonful, and such indigenous and locally popular groups as the Love, the Seeds, the Iron Butterfly, and the Buffalo Springfield—became a center for all kinds of rock. Phil Spector, the record producer, set up offices on the Strip; a huge teen dance hall called the Hullabaloo opened down the boulevard; and a number of night clubs on the Strip

went rock. This drew—in addition to the teen-age clientele—some established, serious longhairs from the two-car bohemia in the canyons above the boulevard, more serious longhairs from the less affluent bohemias of Venice and Long Beach, and some motorcycle groups. The motorcycle groups were soon dispersed; a hint from a Sunset Plaza merchants' association caused red no-parking lines to be painted all along the curb where the motorcyclists were accustomed to park, and a hot-dog stand called the Plush Pup put up a sign announcing that complaints from neighbors had made it impossible for the place to welcome guests on motorcycles. The serious longhairs were soon made uncomfortable, too; some of their favorite haunts, like the Trip and the Action, were closed for various reasons, and the Strip itself became a very difficult place for the marijuana, drug, or LSD users among them to make a connection.

The serious longhairs returned—temporarily, at least—to their beaches and canyons; the teen-agers, however, remained awhile. The notorious sprawl of Los Angeles—where, for example, it may take a maid two and a half hours to make her way by bus from Watts to Beverly Hills—leaves the city at night diffused and lifeless. The Strip became a kind of Main Street where the young (who drove or hitched a ride from the surrounding area) could spend their time. They soon came in such numbers that they brought traffic nearly to a halt. Restaurant proprietors on the Strip, who saw their business dwindling even further, took steps. All last summer, invoking an old city-and-county curfew law that prohibits people under eighteen from lingering on the street after 10 p.m., the sheriff's men were stopping people with long hair or wearing unusual clothes to demand identification (draft cards, driver's licenses), as proof of age. In addition, a number of ad-hoc ordinances were put into effect. Twenty-one is the legal drinking age in California, but people eighteen and over had for years been welcome to dance at rock establishments with liquor licenses, where the minors got Cokes, while drinks were served to their elders; under a new ordinance, no one under twenty-one was permitted to dance in a place where liquor was served.

The Whisky a Go Go, once an important center for West Coast rock and one of the few places on the Strip to survive this legal maneuver, tried several solutions, in series. First, it con-

tinued serving liquor and put minors on benches in the balcony, but the young customers, who wanted to dance, went elsewhere. Then it stopped serving liquor and raised its admission price from two dollars to three; the minors came back, but the attractive liquor profits were lost. A few weeks ago, the Whisky enlarged its stage to occupy the entire dance floor, which means that there is no room to dance while a live performance is on. It also raised the price of admission to three-fifty, started serving liquor again, and required guests between eighteen and twenty-one to have their hands marked with an ultraviolet stamp, so that they would be easily identifiable as below drinking and dancing age. At the same time, the Whisky's entertainment went *Motown*—a change that the teen-agers, for complicated reasons of their own, associate with the return of the Mafia and Las Vegas interests to the Strip. (Young longhairs are almost unanimous in their conviction that they were cleared off the Strip to make room for more serious, less conspicuous forms of vice than lingering after curfew.) In any case, the Whisky's action could only make teen-agers feel less welcome there. Throughout the spring and summer, licenses permitting minors to be served anything at all were revoked at one place after another; several of these places reluctantly went adult and topless—a change that seemed to cause the authorities no distress. Gradually, the campaign worked. Few but the hardiest or most lost teen-agers cared to risk the "hassle" that awaited them on the Strip.

Then, just before Halloween, two high-school students mimeographed a hundred leaflets announcing a "demonstration" for the evening of November 12, 1966, in front of Pandora's Box, to protest "Police Mistreatment of Youth," and Al Mitchell, a former seaman in the merchant marine who runs the Fifth Estate, gave them the money to print a few thousand more. Mitchell, a moderate-looking man in his middle forties, had shot a film about the striking grape pickers of California, and he was preparing *Blue Fascism*, a documentary about the Los Angeles Police Department, at the time the leaflets were put out. On November 12, a crowd of thousands—high-school students, drop-outs, New Left university students, parolees from a nearby reform school, serious longhairs, squares, runaways, sympathizers, passersby, and the merely curious—gathered in front of Pandora's Box, and Mitchell got more footage than he had antici-

pated. The crowd, through its sheer size, stopped traffic for a considerable period, and a few of its members caused a total of a hundred and fifty-eight dollars' worth of damage to a bus and a liquor store. (In a demonstration some weeks before, several U.C.L.A. football fans—disappointed that U.S.C. rather than their own team had been invited to the Rose Bowl—stopped every single car on the San Diego Freeway, ostensibly to see whether there were any U.S.C. students inside; the U.C.L.A. fans probably caused more damage, and certainly caused less outrage, than the crowd outside Pandora's Box.)

The Los Angeles police began to attack the crowd with billy clubs from the eastern side, driving them westward along the Strip. The sheriff's men, standing across the county line, saw what they thought was a hostile crowd of longhairs advancing on them and took action. Several people were hurt, others arrested. Later that night, when a group of teen-agers were gathered in Pandora's Box listening to a shy and talented group called the World War III, the police surrounded the building and ordered the management to close in seven minutes. A police bus pulled up and policemen pounded on the walls of Pandora's Box and ordered the occupants out—to arrest them for loitering after 10 P.M. William Tilden, a soft-spoken man in his thirties, who has managed Pandora's Box for seven years, let the teenagers telephone their homes for permission to stay overnight. They finally left when the police were called off, about three in the morning. In the following weeks, Tilden was arrested on a felony charge—alleged assault on two police officers—for which he has yet to stand trial, Pandora's Box was closed and condemned, and a highway project that was to have demolished the place in 1969 was accelerated.

Since a teen-age establishment under suspension of license may legally open on holidays, Tilden opened his place on New Year's Eve. There was not room enough inside to dance, but the World War III played for several hours to a colorful, quiet audience. Tilden himself stood rather sadly outside, replying to a question posed by several young longhairs—whether he might open the place one day as a private club. He did not know; it depended on the outcome of his trial. There was an elegiac air to the occasion, and something incongruous: like a scene from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* taking place in a bomb shelter. On

other evenings, there had been some demonstrations with which Al Mitchell was not involved, and two (on November 26th and on December 10th) with which he was. (He had asked Tilden to join him, but Tilden declined.) By this time, however, Mitchell had founded RAMCOM (the Rights of Assembly and Movement Committee), and he had been joined by an organization called CAFF (Community Action for Facts and Freedom), which included, among others, Lance Reventlow and the managers of the Beach Boys and the Byrds; by various unaffiliated parents, clergymen, and concerned adults in the community at large; and, indirectly, by the Provos, an anonymous anarchical group (whose original branch was formed in Holland), who complicated matters delightfully by singing Christmas carols on the Strip before Christmas, and on several occasions after. In mid-December, RAMCOM and CAFF negotiated a truce with the police—a truce that despite RAMCOM posters reading "Police Capitulate," has so far consisted only of a ban on demonstrations from the teen-age side.

All this profusion of issues and organizations seems to have bred a special California variety of cause-dilettante—hobby-activists who spend their leisure hours no longer even picketing but simply milling about on behalf of something until the police arrive and hit someone. The Strip demonstrations brought together yet again, under the general heading of Protest, those familiar adult co-demonstrators—New Radicals, Zen mystics, aesthetic avant-gardists, and drug proselytizers—already so strangely easy in each other's company. They also brought police, wielding clubs on behalf of specific economic interests. The teenagers (whom the police harassed, and on whose account the demonstrations were held) saw two life styles not so much in conflict as freezing each other into attitudes: on the one hand, the constellation that is longhair, bohemia, the New Left, individualism, sexual freedom, the East, drugs, the arts; on the other, arms, uniforms, conformity, the Right, convention, Red-baiting, authority, the System.

Some middle-hairs who were previously uncommitted made their choice—and thereby made more acute a division that had already existed between them. At Palisades High School, in a high-income suburb of Los Angeles, members of the football team shaved their heads by way of counter-protest to the incur-

sions of the longhairs. The longhairs, meanwhile, withdrew from the competitive life of what they refer to as the Yahoos—sports, grades, class elections, popularity contests—to devote themselves to music, poetry, and contemplation. It is not unlikely that a prosperous, more automated economy will make it possible for this split to persist into adult life: the Yahoos, on an essentially military model, occupying jobs; the longhairs, on an artistic model, devising ways of spending leisure time. At the moment, however, there is a growing fringe of waifs, vaguely committed to a moral drift that emerged for them from the confrontations on the Strip and from the general climate of events. The drift is Love; and the word, as it is now used among the teen-agers of California (and as it appears in the lyrics of their songs), embodies dreams of sexual liberation, sweetness, peace on earth, equality—and, strangely, drugs.

The way the drugs came into Love seems to be this: As the waifs abandoned the social mystique of their elders (work, repression, the power struggle), they looked for new magic and new mysteries. And the prophets of chemical insight, who claimed the same devotion to Love and the same lack of interest in the power struggle as the waifs, were only too glad to supply them. Allen Ginsberg, in an article entitled "Renaissance or Die," which appeared in the *Los Angeles Free Press* (a local New Left newspaper) last December, urged that ". . . everybody who hears my voice, directly or indirectly, try the chemical LSD at least once, every man, woman, and child American in good health over the age of fourteen," and Richard Alpert (the former psychedelic teammate of Timothy Leary), in an article in *Oracle* (a newspaper of the hallucinogenic set), promised, "In about seven or eight years the psychedelic population of the United States will be able to vote anybody into office they want to, right? Through purely legal channels, right?" The new waifs, who, like many others in an age of ambiguities, are drawn to any expression of certainty or confidence, any semblance of vitality or inner happiness, have, under pressure and on the strength of such promises, gradually dropped out, in the Leary sense, to the point where they are economically unfit, devoutly bent on powerlessness, and where they can be used. They are used by the Left and the drug cultists to swell their ranks. They are used by politicians of the Right to attack the Left. And they are used by their more

conventional peers just to brighten the landscape and slow down the race a little. The waifs drift about the centers of longhair activism, proselytizing for LSD and Methedrine (with arguments only slightly more extreme than the ones liberals use on behalf of fluoridation), and there is a strong possibility that although they speak of ruling the world with Love, they will simply vanish, like the children of the Children's Crusade, leaving just a trace of color and gentleness in their wake.

The Fifth Estate, a white stucco structure, managed by Mitchell and, until three weeks ago, owned by a publishing house that puts out *Teen*, *Hot Rod*, and *Guns and Ammo* magazines (and whose head, Robert E. Petersen, was, until recently, a city commissioner appointed by Mayor Samuel Yorty), used to be entered through a patio enclosed on two sides by one white and one yellow wall. The white wall, which faces the sidewalk, has been painted with black letters that spell out "WELCOME TO LOS ANGELES: CITY OF BLUE FASCISM." The yellow wall has become little more than a tilted arch over an immense hole and a complicated pile of debris. One Monday morning in January, a motorist veered from the westbound lane of the Strip, crossed the eastbound lane, and drove through the yellow wall, across the patio, through a large picture window, and into a room at the Fifth Estate in which films used to be shown. Since the accident happened at 4:30 A.M., no films were being shown at the time. Police who investigated claim that the driver had fallen asleep at the wheel. But a boy who was sitting in the room on a folding chair when the car drove in believes the man was merely drunk.

The Fifth Estate serves coffee, hot chocolate, Cokes, and sandwiches, but its customers do not normally eat or drink much. They play cards or chess at large, round tables, or they talk. Some of them, who earn their keep by looking after the place, sleep there. (The coffeehouse is, in any case, open until 6 A.M.) Because the Fifth Estate has no entertainment license, no one is permitted to sing or to play the guitar inside, and among writings and sketches covering the walls there is a warning to this effect. (The sheriff's men, equipped with glaring flashlights, run frequent checks in search of addicts and runaways, and to see that no one inside is playing or singing.) What playing or

singing there is occurs outside, in the alleyway or near the painted wall in front.

On the patio of the Fifth Estate, on a recent Thursday night (Al Mitchell, the manager, was in a back room discussing with a young lawyer from the American Civil Liberties Union the possibility of deluging the Los Angeles Police Department with lawsuits, not in any hope of winning them but for nuisance value), a few young longhairs were gathered, more or less waiting around. One of the curious things about the young longhairs on the Strip these days is the special air with which they wait around: they seem already to inhabit some sort of leisure-time frontier, where all social problems have been solved and there remain no injustices but the ones in nature, where there is nothing to do but to wait in some small café for the coming of the Word. On this occasion, the waiting young longhairs (who will be presented here under fictional first names to protect their privacy) were Zak, a twenty-two-year-old, with sideburns, from Chicago; Marie, eighteen, Zak's girl, who lives more or less with her parents in Los Angeles; Dot, another eighteen-year-old girl (wearing a dress made of white lace over burgundy satin, pale burgundy tights, and black ballet slippers, and, around her neck, a string of Indian bells), who lives with the family of another girl, "because my mother and I don't get along"; and Len, a seventeen-year-old waiter and boarder at the Fifth Estate, who had left his home in New Jersey early in October with a friend (who got homesick and hitchhiked back after a week). There was also another longhair, obviously much older than the rest, whose vest was covered with buttons reading "Jesus Pleases," "Come to Middle Earth," and "At Least George Murphy Could Dance," among other things, and who was reading a copy of the *Free Press*.

Len, who said he planned to return home "as soon as they don't need my help out here anymore," expressed sorrow that he had forgotten to write to his eleven-year-old sister on her birthday.

"I never know what to write home," Zak said, scuffing one of his boots on the stones. "What am I going to write? Hello, I'm here, you're there, hello? What else is there to say? It's always a hassle."

Dot said she would be returning to her own house for a few days, to babysit with her younger brother and sister while her parents went on a holiday to Las Vegas. (The frequency with which California teen-agers are asked to care for their younger siblings, or their friends' siblings, creates a thriving nomad-babysitter economy.) She asked Zak and Marie whether they would pick her up the following evening—to go first to the studio of a sculptor named Vito, and later on (from 2 to 6 A.M.) to a rock session called the After Hours at the Hullabaloo.

Zak said he couldn't afford it. He had invested all his money in applying for a license to open a coffeehouse—which, since the name "The Trip" was already taken, he hoped to call The Travel Agency. His application had made no progress at all, and he was waiting for Al Mitchell, who had promised to let him call his coffeehouse, for a time, the Fifth Estate Annex. Marie said she would hitch a ride to Dot's place, without Zak, and she and Dot could hitch a ride to Vito's place together.

A young man, fairly conventionally dressed and coiffed, crossed the patio toward the group. "Has the Man been here tonight?" he asked, speaking low and rapidly.

"No," Zak said.

The young man immediately removed his jacket and tie, and brushed what proved to be an astonishing amount of hair forward from behind his ears. "Out there, I have to think of my job," he said, and slouched against a wall to wait around with the rest.

The *Free Press* recently opened a bookstore on Fairfax Avenue, which intersects Sunset Boulevard a few yards from the eastern end of the Strip. The store is right across the street from Canter's Restaurant, a large delicatessen, inside and in front of which, for some months now, the longhairs—old and young, and of every persuasion—have been gathering at two every morning. The reaction of the restaurant's manager to the types who now frequent his place is less than hospitable; he comments, as they pass to their tables, "What a sight!" and "Why don't they wash?" and he stands, vigilant, at the cash register to block the entrance of anyone who is not wearing shoes. (A policeman outside tries to keep the crowd there from blocking the sidewalk and from engaging in traffic in marijuana or drugs.) The *Free Press* bookstore, called the Kazoo, is open from ten in the morning until 2

A.M. In addition to a very wide and good selection of paperbacks, it sells many books and pamphlets about the assassination of President Kennedy, innumerable little magazines and obscure works (including a six-page poem, "The Love Book," by Lenore Kandel, which was recently confiscated on grounds of obscenity in San Francisco), many works on drugs and hallucinogens, and some works on religions of the East (including one called *Practical Mysticism*). There is also a counter at which the shop sells objets d'art, buttons ("Ronald Reagan for Fuehrer," "Be Creative, Invent a Sexual Perversion," "Visit Your Mother Today. Maybe She Hasn't Had Any Problems Lately"), posters of movie stars, psychedelic (systematically distorted and ballooning) posters for rock groups, pastel cigarette papers, and holders, called "roach clips," for conserving the last drag on marijuana butts.

At 1 A.M. on the Friday when Marie and Dot were to hitch a ride to Vito's, John Hammond, a bearded clerk at the Kazoo, was consoling a teen-age girl who had walked into the store in tears. "A little LSD therapy is O.K., but nothing with needles," he was saying. "You want to open yourself up, not close yourself down. Find the easiest way to go, and if it's functional, that's beautiful." Some of the other clerks were knocking down walls to make room for a bookshelf, and Mrs. Art Kunkin, wife of the editor and publisher of the *Free Press*, was talking with two young entrepreneurs who were earning part of their way through college by distributing—to order—posters, bumper stickers, decals for sweat shirts, flutes, and buttons. It turned out they could supply, in particular, some highly coveted Lenny Bruce posters, and Mrs. Kunkin asked whether they could deliver a few dozen right away. She sighed as they went out the door. "It's always nice to have a brush with the ultimate success," she said.

That same morning, farther up Fairfax Avenue, in front of a coffeehouse called the Blue Grotto, whose customers generally sit about in semi-darkness in a kind of gentle half sleep, the police arrested two young longhairs on suspicion of armed robbery.

At eleven-thirty that Friday night, when Dot (still wearing the dress of white lace over burgundy satin and the string of Indian bells, but now with white net stockings and black buckled shoes) and Marie (wearing a pale-green dress, white

net stockings, and brown buckled shoes) entered the home and sculpture school of Vito Paulekas—a storefront and three floors, known to all simply as Vito's place—the entryway was dark, but the pale bare feet of a young man slouched on a chair against the wall were visible. Vito called to the girls from the top of a flight of stairs to go down and see the sculptures in the basement. They went down. The sculpture class for the evening was over, but several people were still at work on red clay nudes, supported by dowels and wire armatures. The basement walls were covered with signs, among them a thinly lettered one reading, "Dear President Johnson. Being spring, I would prefer more flowers."

A woman in a canvas shirt, burlap slacks, and boots, who was modelling a large bust of a man, asked Dot to come over and look. "What does he look like to you?" she asked. "I mean, what sort of person?"

"He looks like a groovy guy," Dot said.

"I mean, what sort of impression does he make? Does he attract you physically?" the woman asked.

Before Dot could answer, a tall, slender girl in a polo shirt and blue jeans—looking about sixteen, and wearing a scalloped horn from an old phonograph on her head—drew Dot away to look at a small erotic sculpture, on a shelf full of small erotic sculptures, all of which (like the lettering on the psychedelic posters at the Kazoo) were distorted, like reflections in a hall of mirrors. "I just made this new one tonight," she said. "What do you think of it? It's Vito and Sue. Isn't it groovy?" (Sue is Vito's wife.)

Dot said that the little sculpture was groovy, and the girl led the way upstairs. It turned out that her name was Meg, that her parents brought her to stay at Vito's house every weekend, and that she was twelve.

The second floor of Vito's house is a kind of lair, with Oriental decor, Oriental music piped in from below, and walls hung with tapestries, bits of colored glass, feather dusters, beads, dolls, a dart board, a bamboo screen, a violin, and an armadillo shell. Between two sofas set against opposite walls is a coffee table supported by cinder blocks. On the table that night were a copy of *Time*, several delicately painted tongue depressors, some assorted photographs, a piece of velvet, a branch of pussy will-

low, a copy of *Playboy*, a copy of *Torrid Cinema* (with an article about Vito in it), a half-completed pair of red-and-black leather sandals turned up at the toes, and pot of glue. The young man whose bare feet had been visible in the entryway had followed Dot, Marie, and Meg up the stairs. He immediately picked up the pot of glue and began to sniff.

"Hey, that's for the sandals," Meg said. "You know nobody gets high in Vito's house."

The boy put the gluepot down.

Vito, a man in his early fifties, with a sandy mustache and pale-blue eyes, entered the room and said hello to everyone. He was wearing velvet slacks and a pale embroidered cape. Sue, who was pregnant, followed him in. She was wearing a short dress, tights, and a crocheted poncho, and on her fingers she had eight rings. Vito announced that they were both going to take a nap in preparation for the After Hours at the Hullabaloo. Meg suddenly became very tense, and raced out of the room. "What shall I wear?" she shouted several times to Sue from an adjoining room. "Same thing we wear to the freakouts?" When she reappeared, she had drawn fine interlacing green lines around her eyes and across the bridge of her nose. She was wearing a poncho, completely open at the sides, apparently made out of a fluffy white bedspread, and a pair of slacks, which the poncho did not quite reach, made of the same material, bell-bottomed, and cut low at the hips. Vito and Sue retired for their nap, requesting Meg to wake them at 1 A.M.

Meg sat down next to Dot and Marie, and explained that Vito had arranged for them all to dance at the Hullabaloo as performers, because of a complicated licensing regulation. "They're wiping out the dancing, so everybody's getting zonked out, right?" she said. "As soon as everybody's on one thing, they make it illegal. Some of those kids they arrest on the Strip, you know, they call up the parents and say, 'We've got your kid on suspicion of narcotics.' 'Suspicion of narcotics.' They just don't like the kids and the dancing. They could arrest you on suspicion of being a Martian. They could arrest you for using the wrong deodorant."

"People don't think," Dot said. "It was dead on the Strip without the kids there."

"They're going to be locked in their own houses sooner or

later without us, and they don't even know it," Meg said. "But a whole lot of people are strange. I'm not even sure they're well—are you ready for that? Everybody should dance, and love, and go about their business, right? But those poor cops, those poor screwed-up cops, they don't have the words to yell, so they just scream, you know—they just came down the Strip screaming. They're frightened, right?"

"Nobody had guns," Marie said, referring to the night of November 12th.

"They didn't have guns," Meg said. "They were afraid they'd use them, they were that screwed up."

"They were afraid if they brought guns, the guns would get broken," Marie said. "We would have broken them."

"Man, if you have this hostility, you learn to take it out in loving ways," Meg said. "If you love somebody, you really groove with them, right? I'm writing things down in a book for myself, because my parents—well, they're very beautiful for their own thing, but they just don't know."

"My parents just can't stand it," Marie said. "They can't stand my bare feet. They can't stand to see me sleep all day. They say, 'You ought to find a job. You ought to be self-supporting.' I say, 'Why? All I do is sleep here once in a while. Why can't I have a free life?' My mother worries about the people I hang out with. I can't explain—people aren't what they look like or what they wear. . . ."

"You're judged by the people you run with, right?" Meg said. "I'm adopted, and my parents really love me. And that's too bad, because my real mother was probably some unwed mother that I could have grooved with." She picked up the pussy willow and waved it thoughtfully. "Sometimes I'm so messed up you don't even know," she said. "I'm not even sure if I'm really here."

"I worry about that, too," Marie said. "Sometimes I think I'm dead and I'm hallucinating the whole thing."

Three girls, all dressed in dark-blue skirts and jackets, with dark-blue hats, and with lace handkerchiefs in their jacket pockets, came up the staircase, looked around, and silently went down the stairs again.

Meg, whose slacks were splitting slightly at the seams, took them off, went to get a needle and some thread, and sat down to sew.

"Have you ever had the idea you might be in somebody else's dream?" Dot asked.

"Well, if you're hallucinating the whole thing, you can change it, right?" Meg said, biting off the thread. "It's like when you're having a bad trip—you see what's real, or what you think is real, and you get upset. You've got to say to yourself, 'You're on a drug, it's only a drug.' Sometimes it takes awhile to change it. But can you imagine how creative your mind must be if you're dreaming the whole thing?"

The conversation stayed on metaphysics for another hour, during which the girls in the dark suits appeared twice more and the boy with bare feet never uttered a word. At one point, Dot and Meg began to reminisce about how they had become acquainted—in a juvenile home, where Meg had been sent as a "habitual runaway," and Dot for the vaguer offense of what she described as being "in danger of leading an idle and desolate life." They spoke of a ghost story the Mexican inmates used to tell—about "La Harona," a woman who, crazed by syphilis, killed her children.

"They said if you shouted 'La Harona' five times, she would come to you," Meg said, "and a lot of kids in my unit wanted to test it."

"I was so terrified I cried all night," Dot said. "They said she comes through mirrors." Both girls still seemed terrified at this thought.

"Wouldn't it be funny if you could look at yourself without looking in a mirror?" Meg said. Then she began talking about a boy friend who had first brought her to Vito's. "I was completely freaked out at the time," she said. "Pete just brought me here, and I grooved on the place. He used to wear two belts and wild flowers. Now he plays in a jazz group and wears a suit, but I still love him. The chick he married loves me, too, but I think two's company."

One of the three girls in blue suits now appeared at the top of the stairs again, wearing gold-rimmed glasses and carrying a piece of the red clay. She began to dance by herself.

Dot and Meg spoke of their last day at the juvenile home. They had sculpted a large eye together in an art class, and they had asked for permission to take it with them when they left.

"But the teacher at juvey said, 'You have to finish it,'" Meg

said. "And, of course, we told her it was finished. But she said, 'No, that isn't finished, you have to paint it.'" "So we didn't get to take it," Dot said.

By this time, Vito and Sue were getting up from their nap, and a crowd gradually assembled at the top of the stairs. A fourth girl in dark blue now joined the three others. An Oriental boy in a paisley shirt and suede pants appeared, and then a girl in a scarlet pants suit, and one in a purple pants suit (both wore matching derbies and ties), and a man in what looked like a matador outfit, a man with chaps and a ten-gallon hat, a girl in a piece of silk bordered and tufted with fur, a girl in a fringed deerslayer jacket and orange bell-bottom trousers, a bearded man in a kind of bishop's mantle, and several others in puff hats or floppy hats or with red bows tied all over their hair. The entire group departed in four carloads for Sunset Boulevard, to dance onstage in the After Hours at the Hullabaloo.

At 2 A.M. on Saturday, January 14th, the Hullabaloo, which holds about two thousand people, and which lies directly across the boulevard from the Hollywood Palladium (where, earlier that evening, Lawrence Welk had played for the National Smooth Dancer's Association Ball), was so full that the longhairs waiting outside occupied the entire block, not in any sort of line but extending radially over the area. A parking lot beside the Hullabaloo was full of cars, nearly all with their radios on, so a kind of concert of Donovan, the Beach Boys, Sonny and Chèr, and the Buffalo Springfield ("Fly trans-love airways/Getcha there on time. . . . Gotta keep those a'lovin' vibrations a'happin' with her. . . . The best goes on. . . . Paranoia strikes deep/Into your life it will creep") was rising from the asphalt. Vito led his group in among the cars and around to the back of the building, where, after being questioned only briefly at the entrance, he smuggled them as "performers" up a ramp, and onto the back of the stage. Since the hours before morning had been Friday the thirteenth, thirteen groups were scheduled to play: the Sound Machine, the Mandala, the Peanut Butter Conspiracy, the Smokestack Lightning, the Factory, the Electric Prune, the Yellow Payges, the Sons of Adam, the Coloring Book, the Wild Ones, the Iron Butterfly, the Seeds, and the Love. The stage floor was a rotating platform divided in two by a backdrop curtain, so that while one group was playing the next could be

warming up. (This arrangement created a sound backstage not unlike the one intentionally produced by some of the groups in the course of their normal engagements. The Love, for example, often plays with someone else's record of another song as background music.) The area backstage was full of people in costumes of one sort or another—denims, satins, burlaps, suedes, and one tutu. A lonely troubadour wearing knickers and a ruffled shirt walked around throughout the performances strumming a guitar. No one seemed to know him, and he was not a member of any group.

When the Sound Machine started to play, with a beat so deeply resonant that many members of the audience began to cough, Vito sent some of his group onstage. These included Meg, Dot, the barefoot boy, Vito's pregnant wife, and six others, and from the reaction of the audience—a polite but unsurprised attentiveness—it was obvious that they had seen the group before. Meg raised her arms and began to run quite gracefully about the stage, Dot began to bend at the waist and straighten up with regularity, as though she were keening, Sue began to wave her arms about in the air, pivot, and droop from side to side, and the barefoot boy began to sway quietly in place. The others frugged or improvised. The members of Vito's troupe who had remained backstage soon grew restless, and Vito kept promising them that they could go on at any moment. But the girl in the tutu could bear it no longer; she ran out onstage. A few seconds later, Meg's pants began to split again, and some of the audience started to laugh—though not unkindly—and applaud. Meg, looking rather frantic about the eyes, arrived backstage.

"Fix your pants, baby," Vito said quite calmly, producing what he called a "fraternity button," designed by him. "Just relax." Meg took the button, pinned her pants, and returned onstage.

By 5 A.M., six groups had played, and the Monkees, the Miracles, and the Mama's and the Papa's had joined the audience. Vito's group had been taken offstage earlier when it was announced that all further dancing would be done by two union dancers, in red spangles, on the balconies of the dance hall. Within moments, however, the two union dancers had been supplemented by a dancer in a silver costume and silver boots, who materialized onstage, and since no one seemed to know whether

she was union or not, Vito took this as a cue to send his group back onstage, where they remained. The size of the audience had not diminished in the slightest, nor had the volume of the radio concert in the parking lot. At five, there was a pause, and both the audience and Vito's group seemed tense; everyone was quite sure that it was the Love's turn to play. By five-twenty, when there was still no sign of the Love, the management was trying to divert the crowd with jukebox music. The audience, however, appeared quite accustomed to delays of this sort; the pause seemed to bear out their expectation that the Love would be the next group to go on.

It was. A record was cut off abruptly, the front curtain rose, a group of four whites and three Negroes was revealed, and the lead singer, dressed in a black stocking cap and brown pants and vest, leaned slightly sideways, yawned briefly, and began to sing. The group, with what seemed a kind of driving, electronic desperation, played a song called "I Flash on You." When the song was over, the audience cheered a kind of desperation cheer, as one might cheer an acquittal verdict for a defendant against whom the case looked bad. The group played two more numbers, and then, in the middle of a song called "She Comes in Colors," the lead singer walked off. He did not return for several minutes, but the group played on. Then, when he did return, he ignored the microphone and sat down abruptly on a crate amid the electronic equipment. Several times, as the group still played, he seemed on the point of rising but sat down again. Finally, he rose, walked carefully forward, and, grasping the microphone, leaned forward a few moments, with teeth bared, and began to sing. He sang a long time, then stopped and let the group play several minutes more. Suddenly, in a calm speaking voice, he wished the audience a Merry Christmas and reminded them that Halloween might soon return. The front curtain dropped. The audience cheered again.

There was another extended pause, and then the Seeds appeared. They were greeted with an affection almost as obvious and ardent as the reception given the Love. Shortly after the Seeds had finished, the Peanut Butter Conspiracy began to play. And shortly after that (since the Hullabaloo is permitted to stay open only until 6 A.M.) the police, by unplugging the Conspiracy's electronic equipment and rounding up Vito's obviously ex-

hausted but still enthusiastic dancers, induced the audience to leave. Only eight groups out of the scheduled thirteen had played, but the After Hours at the Hullabaloo was over.

In the early hours of the morning, posters had appeared at the Fifth Estate and the Kazoo and outside the Hullabaloo and Pandora's Box announcing "A Gathering of All Tribes, a Human Be-In," for noon on Saturday, in Los Angeles' Griffith Park—in sympathy with a similar event, with Allen Ginsberg, Timothy Leary, and Dick Gregory, to be held at the same hour in San Francisco. By 1:30 P.M. on Saturday, the park, which is in the canyons above Sunset Boulevard, had the air of a small-town picnic ground, with, instead of friendly interlocking groups from the Lions, Kiwanis, and Rotary, friendly interlocking groups from the drug, New Left, and teen-rock establishments. The Sound Machine was playing once again. Someone was distributing olive branches. Someone else was selling *Oracle*. Someone else was selling colored paper flowers. A fourth person was giving paper flowers away. Several people had brought their children, their dogs, and, in paper bags, their lunch. One young man was lying barefoot on the grass (it was a sunny day) with an Army helmet, painted gold, over his face; he kept running his fingers softly across the top of a lunchbox at his side. A St. Bernard with a paper flower in its collar was licking the young man's toes. Several transistor radios were playing softly. Vito and Meg were there, and so were Marie and Dot, the bearded clerk from the Kazoo and the girl he had consoled, and the boy who had not written to his eleven-year-old sister in New Jersey. A photographer for a fashion-trade publication was unobtrusively taking pictures. There was no police around at all.

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