
Subject: Greetings-and a pitch!

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To: Sperry@leftcoastmonthly.com

Hi Jane,

It's hard to believe that it's been more than thirty years since we used to perch on the Wall on College Avenue, smoking a joint after one of Dr. B's lectures on Law and Ethics and giggling at the parade of absurdity that was Penn State circa 1972. Remember those all-nighters at the Collegian when you, Tom and I would be trying to put the paper to bed, arguing over every word as if a misplaced comma would prolong the war?

Last time we spoke was at Dr. B's retirement ceremony in the summer of 1979--you were with a charming Englishman and Peter and I were newlyweds--but I've been following your career in *The Penn Stater* and am really proud of what you've achieved. A bookstore here in Toronto started carrying *Left Coast* a couple of years ago and I haven't missed an issue. The piece you guys did on the Reno murder was spellbinding, particularly the way the writer worked backwards from the murder. Definitely deserved the National Magazine Award.

Peter's well. He's a partner in an international construction company that specializes in resort development. The business is booming but his travel schedule is brutal. The last few years he's basically been commuting to Bangkok--his firm was building a resort in Phuket--and now he's in Moscow bidding on a development in the Caucasus. I'm not sure we'd ever see each other if he wasn't committed to the neighborhood dry cleaner.

We have a son, Max, who is now a freshman in college. He goes to Wilfrid Laurier University, which is about an hour west of here, where he's majoring in his girlfriend, a Chinese girl named Amy. I have to confess I'm not thrilled about this--Amy's very sweet, and she's absolutely gorgeous--but she's 25 years old, and this is my baby we're talking about. Peter pretends to sympathize but he's secretly proud, as if this somehow confirms the outstanding genetic legacy he's bequeathed to Max.

After Max was born, I started working freelance for a few trade publications, mainly filing reports about the latest information technology developments. It wasn't exactly stimulating but the flexibility of working from home was great while Max was growing up. Now that I don't have to sit around cold, drafty hockey arenas at six in the morning--a prerequisite for obtaining Canadian citizenship--or help Max with his homework, I've got time to take on more ambitious journalistic projects, which is my second reason for sending you this e-mail. I want to pitch a story that I think is perfect for *Left Coast*.

I just met with the father of one of Max's old hockey teammates. He was in a panic because his daughter has dropped out of school and joined a cult in Marin County called *The Daughters of Freya*. It's an all-female cult and is run by a woman, which to me sounds newsworthy in itself. But what really got me intrigued was his description of the cult's philosophy. Apparently--and this sort of thing would never fly in Toronto--these women have decided to devote themselves to bringing sexual fulfillment to the world.

According to their 'spiritual guide', a woman named Simone Jorgensen, our deep-rooted feelings of inadequacy manifest themselves in the destructive behavior that leads to war, hunger, crime etc. In order to heal our damaged psyches and bring about heaven on earth, Simone has persuaded her acolytes to have sex with strangers. I'm not making this up!

I did a Google search and there is plenty of material about Freya--she's the Norse goddess of sexuality--but nothing on this group. There were a few Simone Jorgensens--a retired high school teacher from Minnesota, a high-tech exec from Silicon Valley and the 11 year-old winner of a spelling bee in Seattle--but no cult leader.

Are you interested in an article about this cult? Thought I'd offer it to you first before going elsewhere with it. Let me know if you think there's something here for you. And what you're up to. Did you ever hear any news about Tom? And what happened to the Englishman?

Sam
