

Primary Creative

by Ann Bogle

1. Cyril in Texas

The dead characters lay in a pool of their own divination.

Carly, the troll, had drowned Suzy, the shrimp. Fingers, the magic cop, formed a union to protect anonymous achievement. Cyril spent two nights in the heart of a novel — and really it should have been more since Cyril was the better sort of character, left out by these other sorts in their greed and lust for attention, innovation, and star standing. Kitty used Cyril dryly to stop her vagina from atrophying.

Aghast, Kitty had learned from her mother that her — meaning Kitty's own — vagina would atrophy one day, too, and to stop wasting her every day with her old person's fixations on the past and on problems in society. Where had she — meaning Kitty's mother — gone wrong? She had had one of the first breast implants to encourage sexuality in all her daughters. She had dated men after her separation from Kitty Durango's dad. She had sold one of her houses to pay for Kitty's college degree. She had attended all of Kitty's stage performances — theater in the best sense of the word is what she had urged in her and failing that, to thrive. Despite all this, Kitty had gotten stuck thinking of her ninth year.

What had happened that day in school had been really disgraceful; okay, Kitty could see her own part in it. Nonetheless, what happened should not have happened to her or any child: a mission. Kitty had no goals for having children of her own — she did not want to have them nor even not-want to have them. She wanted a soulmate. Ha! She would invent a surgery for that, add a dna-connected magnet to a major bone, the breast plate or a rib or hip bone, the pelvic area, call it a soul detector. That would show who's whose boss around town, especially if she had one of the first ones, her own first boss or a first soul detector — she would know what to do with one of those. Soul detectors would not cause cancer or the fear of cancer in newcomers. There were all brainless masters in the club scene.

Carol was her only find who did not know about those clubs, so Carol was an added benefit, a safety feature, even a soother after such long lines of nights. Carol never heard anyone talk about clubs. She liked talk of religion that had little bearing on religion. She liked disappearing into elevators when they were swallowing huge clumps of people or being her own self-contained neurobump — (how could the nature camera tell a male neurobump in a seersucker suit coat from a female neurobump in a hooded sweater vest?) — as she was being swallowed singly by a slow-moving elevator in a parking ramp. If there were one place it seemed easy to take the stairs, parking ramps were it, a topic with significance. Carol failed to tell Kitty, Carly, Suzy, Cyril, Fingers, or Dude, her boyfriend, about her world's most private moments spent in public, paying a visit to the doctor. Doctors were educated, and these other people were barely educated. Doctors had nice numbers and billing systems that kept track of a schedule for her, that kept her on time, a date, and focused on a body part. Today it was a varicosity in her shin. She didn't like moves anymore, had given them up. She liked very little about many days without disliking the idea of a typical "day."

Dude imagined Carol at the warehouse and thought of her being injected with semen over and over and nixed it, so it was left up to him. Kitty Durango mentioned that Carol might like nice caresses from strangers and acquaintances, especially the women, knowing Carol only as a safe find and not as Dude probably knew her. No, Dude said, adding that Carol had had sex with her own father (Carol did not know he had told her friends that: IT WAS NOT ACTUALLY TRUE, and she might never have a chance to clear the air; it was useless for them to guess at other people's conversations). Carol was following a doctor's protocol that bore no discoveries, so Kitty desisted, mostly because other people were not her problem.

The courtly group liked sex to be towering over other people with rifles; Carol liked it on her back without clothes. They would not have been near her that way. She had never seen Dude with a rifle. The two of them had sex nude as if in one little railroad flat, like fine Traditionalists. Kitty and Dude never knew that certain people who

had befriended Carol, not Carly and Suzy but people like them, had ordered doctors for Carol during the finale of an upset, to see, to see what doctors would do to her, to see what doctors, in fact, do. It was like a celibacy to sell her so dry, and it was stupid of Carol (Corolla, Cadillac) not to realize it. Henceforth, she dealt quietly in varying forms of mixed obedience as if she had not "gotten it."

Carly (Corona) and Suzy (Pilsner Urquell) brought their best *-xist* rifles to Fingers for his tax company.

2. Blind Date

Kitty Durango's dad was the law doctor, doctor of law, lawman, legal adversary, law specialist, the one who knew, ask Kitty's dad. Kitty will make an appointment to ask her dad; her dad will know what to tell Fingers about his tax company — whether to go not-for-profit or trade, small, a personal fund-raiser, levying taxes from home, from his rental cottage (Fingers loved that house against odds of vying developers zeroing in on his neighborhood) for private causes; these were formerly public concerns, topics, such as "the road bill"; now no one had kept up an interest in it. Kitty Durango's friends only wanted art, what Kitty's dad had predicted in 1977 with a telescopic intelligence. Kitty said, "not Fingers," who still *liked* art. At least one of them was moving on it, a business to raise taxes.

Carol cheered up just thinking of industry! This is not a good sign, Kitty realized, to let Carol cheer up too much about things that don't concern her. Keep Carol out of it, busy with doctor visits. At least Carol kept her business to herself, something Kitty liked about her.

Dude had met Kitty on a blind date — Kitty had put herself up to it, a checklist item. She was not actually looking. Dude thought Kitty was spectacular, like a wild monk, like a Manx cat, like a free catholic. Kitty was episcopalian at her wedding to HERO. She still refused to say his name to the new gang. His name was bleeped. His father was a MAJOR FIGURE, *all right*. Had not worked out in his case, *okay*, a goofball. Carol had thought that Kitty's Mr. 'hmm hmm' was very handsome. Once she even sat with him at a stage rehearsal. "You are not allowed to speak to him," Kitty dragged them

into it, then out of it. HERO was Kitty's ex-husband. Kitty was very sensitive. After her blind date with Dude, a find, no sex, her fingers (Kitty applied her agile fingers to give him a preview or trailer — a trailer! Dude cried out in the car — *Thanks!* — for coming attractions, he added) — Kitty referred him to Carol. Carol thought Dude was handsome. Dude, now rerouted, was happy just to be there, to be somewhere! With such nice people. (Interesting occasions).

Kitty landed Cyril on a terrace, where he had gone at her urging to steal carnations from a vase. Green carnations. She wanted one pink one and one white one. When they found them, all the way at the far end of the balcony, she unzipped him, the green carnation jammed between his teeth.

Carly, Suzy, Fingers. There is not a possibility of couples here. Carly jeered at couples. Suzy handled the curtains like a gameshow, like a showroom hostess. They had been strippers, but that was all together ordinary. They had not saved up any money. People thought they had made so much money. People thought \$3,000 was so much money for a week of work. It's not that much, Carly countered. Not a base or let them bring a base in. Fingers had basic white hair — like the colonel. Fingers needed a computer to run his tax company. He had a computer but needed a different computer. Carly and Suzy could put up flyers.

3. Rut

French citizens. The friends were all citizens of a half-assed France. The friends were all half-assed citizens of a French stance. Carol was more American, more eggnog, more cream-of-wheat. She represented dull victory. The others, the main hand of them — five or six! — counted up to a contingency. They were essentially legal. There was sex, all legal. There were partners, and those were legal. Legal if they moved in together, not true with the gays, but gays were more used to it. Gays were in favor of interviewing because they were newer, but not new like immigrants, new like shoe hat or blessed by an era. The group were not married yet. They ought to

get married: Kitty Durango will quick marry Cyril after quick divorcing HERO (humph harumph, his real name). Carol will marry Dude who never married Cheryl who had their son. Carol will help raise the boy. Fingers will not marry — and here is how he would like it - both Suzy and Carly. He wants a pair of them: not the one but the two. Not two wives, but a pair of yet-sisters. A pair of skates. One pair of not-friends, his real running shoes. Call the legislator.

Carol is blessed with two hundred acquaintances from towns around the country. She interprets the gays to the straights: They are all nice people, she says. They want what other people want, only they believe they're better at relationships. It's based on hard work and trying. Carol okays Fingers but doesn't get Carly and Suzy. They are two-colored, orange and white, a cookie split down the middle — a white Halloween treat. Treat them right! she would offer as a suggestion, but Fingers already treats them kindly; the two girls don't want more than they are getting, but they want these basics to continue. They want more of some.

Once married, the two new pairs plus the three others, who aren't married would win up the town. The married pairs — Kitty and Cyril particularly — would trump Fingers and his ho-hum business plan involving two women without a legal wife.

Carol and Dude would raise his son with Cheryl — "Jesus H. Cheryl" Dude called his former non-wife once, so that Carol checked her flags: Is it sacrilege to call someone Jesus? The son was the actual one. Benny was such a good name for a son, Carol told him. Benny was in third grade. He was frankly horrible at school. Carol would need to tutor him for Cheryl, whom she supposed was not equipped. Dude would welcome the assistance but not this year. They would get married but not go ahead of the pack. Carol and Dude already seem married, Carly said ruefully.

There was a song, an old gay tune, a real silencer among the old — who were all wildly against gay people, and these were people living in homes and hitting at each other with canes. I warn you, get away from me, old man, the song went. The people said it was a song by an old woman to her husband.

