

On Being Hailed by the Former Head Cheerleader of One's Midwestern High School Whilst Crossing Boston Common

by Con Chapman

On Boston Common, one fine Sabbath
A horrid sound heard I;
It caused all but the stony deaf
To turn their heads to spy
From whence it came, and why.

And only I could answer that
As my name thus was hurled
By a shaker of pom-poms with eclat
When she was but a girl
Who wore her hair in curls.



I turned and gaped--
In horror gasped--
There was no clear escape.
Down Winter Street, up Park perhaps?
Too late-she had me in her grasp.

"Remember me?" she yelled, "It's Sal!"
"Of course!" (Had I a choice?)
"Your very favorite high school gal!"
(Boom boxes would admire the noise
produced by that resounding voice.)



By gestures fine and subdued tones
I tried to quiet her skirl.
But she was launched into that zone
Where cartwheels whirl
And flags unfurl.

"How's your sister, how're your folks?"
"Just fine and how are yours?"
"They're great!" she cried.
The dead awoke,

Left their coffins, came outdoors
And marched towards us, four-by-four.



"She who disturbs the day of rest,"
The Puritan shades decreed,
"Shall wear a letter on her chest
To signify her loathsome deed,
Size large, so those who run may read."



"Let's see," said she, "I'll take an S,
a U, two C's, an E,
then two more S's on my dress-
That's really all I'll need,
A penitential life to lead."

This cryptogram so mystified
The souls of the living dead
They sought to have her clarify,
After scratching diaphanous heads.

"We're wondering," at last one said,
"What meaning do these symbols bear?
What object do they address?"
"It's simple! These letters I will wear
" 'cause 'S-u-c-c-e-s-s'--
That's the way we spell SUCCESS!"

