

A Hole In The Bucket

by j. h. woodyatt

My grandmother died of a heart attack in 1978, but before she kicked off, she had her mind expanded by the closest thing to Timothy Leary's cybernetic psychedelia that you could get running on the average Apple][: ELIZA.

Polly, that was her name, spent hours with ELIZA. She bared her soul to it. It was amazing. She grew addicted to it, convinced that it could think, that it had mind and a personality of its own. That it was smarter than she was.

In 1978, a computer program became privy to my grandmother's most secret thoughts.

I'll never forget one thing she said to me— the last thing she ever said that I can remember— "It would be frightening, but it's so friendly. I can't believe it would ever hurt anyone."

