Cheating at Strip Poker

by Jerry Ratch

I remember one time when we played strip poker in the basement of your house on Euclid Avenue, me, Terry, you and Andy. And I remember drinking lots of wine and fixing the deck so that you kept losing and having to take off all your clothes, and still you kept losing and we made you get up and do a little naked dance (like The Little Dancer of Degas, except without a tutu or much of anything) and you were still thin then (and legal finally!) Terry was so Catholic that when it came time for her to take off her panties, she made us turn out the lights before she would get up to do her little dance. Andy and I were laughing! We had rigged the cards and neither of you knew enough about poker anyway.

And when the lights went out, I remember starting up with Terry. I'm not sure what happened between you and Andy, if anything. (Poor Andy!) I don't remember hearing anything. That had to be sometime in the fall of 1966, when I was still with Terry. It didn't last that long with her, really, because everything got so explosive between us, when she told me she wanted to have my baby. I guess you could say that scared me to the core! I knew I wanted to go to school somewhere, maybe back out to California, and become a writer. That was about all I knew for sure. But babies, uh-uh, that wasn't in the cards at all!

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