

Romper Room with Beer

by Jerry Ratch

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We go out for a thin New York Pizza at Lanesplitter's over on Telegraph and watch the drunks staggering out of the bar across the street to have a smoke on the sidewalk, since you can't smoke inside bars anymore. They gather on the sidewalk in front like a pack of hungry wolves, eying everything that crosses their path, hooting as a girl walks by with her skirt hiked up.

Lanesplitter's Pizza is where the punk moms and dads go with their kids and it gets real loud in there and everybody's lapping up beer by the pitcher and the kids are running all over the place, sometimes right out the front door, almost into traffic before they can snag the little urchins by their tee-shirt or their little red jacket.

And nobody seems to notice or give it much thought and they go out on the sidewalk in front and grab a smoke, looking over at the lonely childless drunks across the street at the bar where the hookers go strolling by.

While the crowd at Lanesplitter's Pizza wavers to loud rock like human seaweed and the kids swirl in a smaller school of their own fish, and it's like Romper Room with beer.

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