

Literary Intercourse

by Larry Strattner

"How much is the vodka we liked? The local stuff they were serving at the party last Friday?"

"Oh, you mean Liquid Wrench?"

"Yeah. Can't they get in trouble for the name?"

"For the what?"

"Using a name of something already named the same."

"I don't know, if the new name isn't for something doing the same thing, or it's not in the category. You know what I mean? Call a lawyer. Anyway, Venus said Wrench was only fifteen bucks a bottle. Why?"

"Because my royalties at Amazon add up to sixteen bucks, plus two of a funny looking letter in England, pence, or whence, or pounds, whatever. I was thinking I could get something with the money."

"Don't think so. Those royalties don't get paid until you have a hundred bucks on account. And forget the two of whatever is on account in England. The people who live there don't know what they are either. They'll just tell you to mind your gap or something."

"A hundred bucks? I'll never get to a hundred bucks. It took me a year to get sixteen. I've written five novels and a short story collection and sold two of each. It'll take me another ten months to make it to a hundred."

"I've got a condom left. We could get busy and forget ourselves in the moment."

"What're you nuts? The moment is just a moment unless we relax, have a smoke after and fall asleep. I'm out of cigarettes. Things are not looking good for our relationship."

"What relationship? You're in a little room writing crap for hours on end and you never have a buck to your name and you wait for me to come up with the drugs and alcohol. Why don't I give you the condom and you can go screw yourself."

"Yeah? Well I like to write and I like my stories. Why don't you take a few of the books downtown and put them in the bookstores? Make yourself useful."

"I work eight to five, five days a week. I'm already useful enough. I'm not going around like some hot dog vendor with your goddamn books. Why don't you write something more than two people want to read?"

"I don't do S&M, Zombies, Vampires or porno. I'm looking for meaning, something to sustain people. Meaning is harder to sell, unless it's an analysis of why there is a Justin Bieber."

"How about making enough for us to have a drink and dinner? Dinner would go a long way to sustain me. It might even ameliorate the shuck and give you call our relationship."

"I'm gonna' go down and get a bottle of that Wrench stuff. I'll tell Anthony's Liquor to bill Amazon. Charge the juice to Jeff Bezos-Bozo."

"Clever. At least you'll be drunk when Anthony sends his brother Guido over to stomp the shit out of you after he figures out the billing scam, or Bezos sends one of his delivery drones to put a rocket in your author aerie. I'll bet you won't get half the bottle down before one or another Armageddon scenario catches up to you. You are a real piece of work."

"Wait! Shut up! I got it! I got it."

"What? What's it? What've you got? What're you doing?"

"I've had enough nothing. Now it's bestseller time. I'm outlining some characters. I see the book already, "Strapped to the Wall in Steel Bracelets with an Enormous Twelve Hour Erection awaiting the Zaftig Zombie with 42 Cs." Have to figure out a way to get the complete title on the cover. We'll be able to buy a bottle of Macallan 25. Forget the Ratchett crap. I'm sick of these birdseed royalties. Time to get with the million dollar boys."

"Yeah! All right. Sounds like it might work. Genre sounds good. You have a plan. I'll proofread. I'll pose for positions too. You know. Give you a new perspective for the cover art."

"My God! You're not going to indelibly expose yourself in public, on a book cover?"

"Just enough of me to sell some books. Don't get all moral on me. You're a goddamn writer aren't you?"

"It saves me from the sin and inconvenience of violence."

"And the taint of filthy lucre. Let's get started on the good parts. Shall I begin by calling you Bram?"

