

Tales from the fictionaut Fave Side

by Larry Strattner

"What's all that gobbledygook?" Bumpy asked. The room shimmered in a faint green glow of Excel spreadsheet as Melvyn's fingers danced on the keyboard.

"It's a program I wrote in Excel."

"There's enough of the goddamn thing."

"It's a funnel program. A lot of data on the front end."

"What the hell's a funnel program?"

"Just what it sounds like. You pour a bunch of shit into the top of the funnel and it squeezes it out into a little stream at the bottom. Then there's a sorter for the stream. I put the sorted data through a couple of filters and eventually I get down to what I'm looking for."

"What are you looking for?"

"A wife."

"A wife? A wife from a fucking Excel spreadsheet? What kind of wife are you going to get from an Excel spreadsheet?"

"A fictionaut wife. A kind of eHarmony-writer wife. Somebody who thinks like I do, is compatible, understands short, high intensity bursts of emotion. Preferably somebody who also yells during orgasm."

"You are the nuttiest fruitcake in this stack of tins. Where is your good wife going to come from, out of that green stack of shit?"

"Simple. I piled up all the names from fictionaut and then designed a program to count all of their faves, compared everybody's individual pile of total faves and ran the biggest piles through a couple of keyword screens. Voilà! Out pops my marriage candidate."

"What if it's a guy?"

"What if? I'm flexible. What's important here is timeless literature in 500 words or less. Sexual preferences are secondary."

Important maybe, but secondary. I'll work around that problem if I come to it. Odds are heavy on the selection being a woman. They seem to get way bigger piles of faves than the guys."

"You are a certifiable idiot. You've been married five goddamn times and it never works out. What are you going to do if this stupid fictionaut fave relationship thing doesn't go the way you want it to?"

"They never found three of the first five did they? There you have it, in 500 words or less."

