

OUT ON THE TOWN WITH LIZ & SYDNEY

Facing a world at war and a lack of sleep from watching CNN correspondents develop bags under their eyes the size of Samsonites, *Liz and Sydney* have retreated into a private world where Charles Jaco¹ takes on Oprah Winfrey-like qualities, and where newscasters are prone to assuming terrorist attacks when one of them isn't where they should be. Nonetheless, our brave dyke duo go on with the mundane rituals of life, if only to forget. And for the first time in their lifetimes, they are now confronted with the paradox of (night)life during wartime.

LIZ: (*Entering Big City Diner.*)²
It's the end of the world as we know it...and I feel fine.

SYDNEY: Yeah, well, this is the place to be if the world does end. They hid the dance floor in the basement. This club is the closest thing to a bomb shelter that the city has.

Liz: I hope the Civil Defense is reading this.

Sydney: Actually, it's not big enough to use. People would get hurt just trying to find it. I wouldn't want to cause an ugly riot by yelling "Scud!" in a crowded club or anything.

Liz: Knowing some of these people, they'd be holding an open bar on the roof so we could watch the Patriots intercept them.

Sydney: Maybe someone can sample Martha Wash³ for a record for the occasion. "It's raining Scuds, Hallelujah..."

Liz: I have only one request to make: Please don't let me die in a nightclub. My family would be so embarrassed.

Sydney: Liz, why did you bring me here?

Liz: For the free Burger Buddies. These Hollywood movie people really know how to feed hungry, paranoid New Yorkers.

Sydney: You said this was a party for a movie.⁴ You promised me celebrities. I don't see anybody famous.

Liz: That's because Glenn Close is too busy passing out food to socialize. What's John Malkovich doing here?

Sydney: Did you actually see Glenn Close serving guests? Manners. Etiquette. Something you're not familiar with.

Liz: No, she was sitting behind some plastic chains and a very overzealous security boy: "Please do not feed the celebrities."

Sydney: Pretty interesting, isn't it? They could only get the stars from the director's last film to show up.

Liz: I think these parties are so...elitist. At least at the Outlaw Party,⁵ everyone's equal.

Sydney: Well, they're all equally subject to arrest. And no one needs a drink ticket. Just show up early and bring a glass.

Liz: Talk about a mixed crowd. Even the subway workers were there.

Sydney: Yeah, and with everyone standing around holding their cups out, it looked like an



(NIGHT)LIFE DURING WARTIME...

underground methadone clinic.

Liz: It's one of the few parties where marshal-training pays off. You can lead people to the available exits, as opposed to having them trap themselves against subway gates.

Sydney: Yeah, I would have liked to marshal those kids waving the American flag and screaming "Fuck Iraq" right onto the third rail.

Liz: Remember, the United States has gone to war to protect a country which won't let women drive.

Sydney: I don't think that means a great deal to those kids. They were more concerned with dancing on top of that car and making it to Lime-light in time for the open bar.

Liz: I just don't understand these kids today.

Sydney: Maybe New York City can hire them for their Tactical After-Hours Strike Force.

Liz: I don't think these guys need any help.

Maybe the US government will send them to the Gulf and then we can all go out again.

Sydney: I don't think I can take another night of hiding in our stairwell waiting for the cops to leave Save the Robots.

Liz: Robots is always a sure sign of desperation. We only meant to go there after they closed Sound Factory and the Warehouse within ten seconds of each other.

Sydney: No one should have to hide in their own building, but that girl was driving me crazy.

Liz: Someone should tell people it's not nice to stand outside after-hours clubs begging people who live next-door to use their bathroom, and then try and force your way into the building.

Sydney: Some people have no couth.

Liz: Couth?

Liz: I'm plenty couth. (*She burps.*) How about these American Music Awards?

Sydney: I wanted MC Hammer to win Best New Country Artist-Female.

Liz: He won everything else, didn't he?

Sydney: Yes, well, this is the "new world order."

Liz: Really? I didn't even notice. ▼

NOTES:

1. CNN correspondent stationed in Saudi Arabia who reports from the same palm tree every time and has a tendency to run off to bomb shelters in the middle of his reports.

2. Formerly the Market Diner, now a restaurant/club with a decidedly "uptown-gone-slumming" feel to it. On its gay night, it's called Big Sissy Diner.

3. One half of the *Weather Girls*. Wash has been the voice behind such groups as Black Box, C+C Music Factory, etc.

4. *The Grifters*, starring Annette Benning, John Cusack and Angelica Huston.

5. Parties held in marginal public spaces (e.g., underneath the Brooklyn Bridge). Most recently, one happened in the subway station at 16th Street and 8th Avenue.



By LIZ TRACEY &
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