

OUT ON THE TOWN WITH LIZ & SYDNEY

SYDNEY: It's 4 am, and your mind is hazy. After an evening where dancing in the disco heat has transported you to levels of heightened awareness, you feel invigorated and restless as you ponder the state of after-hours nightlife—Save the Robots, Sound Factory or sex clubs. While all three offer varied entertainment possibilities, there is also one large drawback—you are guaranteed to run into at least one friend—or the dreaded friend of a friend—or worse yet, **Rick X** may be there taping for his *Closet Case Show*, and your lower torso will end up all over Channel V. Rather than lose friends—and because of my need to answer nature's call to sleep—I chose to regularly avoid such dives. However, on those occasional times when I have an overwhelming need to see the sun rise or am just not ready for rest, my new favorite after-hours activity is shopping. That's right, come 4 am, Liz and I pile in a taxi and go to the *A&P Food Bazaar* at 14th Street where the only thing that will talk later are the Rice Krispies that I just purchased.

LIZ: One of the multitude of reasons I am in the minority of New Yorkers who do not want to run screaming from this city is that I know that if necessary, I am assured of being able to buy scalloped potatoes, a mop and low-grade reading material at 3 am without having to go to more than one store (that, and the fact that you can run around these stores, shooting pictures of the meat department and staring into customer's carts, and no one says a word to you).

It seems that many queerfolk do their grocery shopping at odd hours. We may have jobs that give us leisure time at unreasonable hours. Or we may just have insomnia. So small delis or even large chain stores begin to acquire the reputation of being a "queer shopping center." Rumors begin to fly, and soon "picking up something on the way home" takes on a whole new realm of possibility. Nonetheless, on this fact-finding mission, Sydney and I took different approaches.

Are you bummed out by Sandy?
Think Ms. Bernhard has sold us out?
Tired of her dyke-bashing from the
celebrity closet?

Sandy ZAP

Here's what we suggest: Give it all back! Send all your Sandra Bernhard albums, cassettes, CDs, copies of *Confessions of a Pretty Lady* and that stupid "I'm one of the Initiated" pin they gave out at her film, back to her. Let her know that we don't think she's funny anymore. Or just send her a note.

Mail your items to:
Send It Back to Sandy
11233 Blix St.
North Hollywood, CA 91602

(This is no joke—it's for real. Do it!)

—Liz & Sydney



By Liz Tracey &
Sydney Pokorny

SYDNEY: In my fragile mindset, the A&P is jarring. The lights are far too bright, metal glimmers, and day-glo food-packaging shimmers in a yellow fluorescent bath. House music blares over the intercom system as the night shift restocks the shelves for all those industrious people who do their marketing at respectable hours. The vulgar richness of our consumer culture confronts me. I feel inadequate as I stand before seemingly endless rows of merchandise because whatever I choose, I know that I left too many options unexplored. Stopping in front of the dairy case, it takes me 20 minutes to pick out one block of cheese. Amazingly, there are at least 30 types, and each one is a different shade of fluorescent yellow-orange.

In my indecision, I notice that the music is interrupted by several public service announcements. Placed between today's specials, each bit of public information is always in the form of a question: "Are you interested in a rewarding career in the food industry?" "Are you thinning your blood with aspirin?" and "Have you wondered about your cravings?" The last tidbit included a warning about chronic thirst and diabetes—like I am really going to run out to my doctor at 4 am for a blood test. No, instead I'm going to become paranoid, lose sleep, drink too many glasses of water and worry that maybe I should be thinning my blood. As my nerves become more rattled, I get angry—what kind of pop medicine (mis)information is this anyway? I have whipped myself into a postindustrial consumptive frenzy and, as I careen toward the check-out, I almost hit a trio of ultra-vivid orange-and-magenta-clad straight people with my cart.

LIZ: While Sydney was having a quasi-spiritual experience in the cereal aisle, I instead ran around, spying in the shopping carts of the queer nation. Here's what I found:

1. Two gay men, mid-30s: Tortellini, bacon, heavy cream and two one-liter bottles of seltzer.

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LIZ: I heard Madonna threatened to spank anyone who doesn't vote.

SYDNEY: Well, that's stupid, nobody will vote now...

Rock and Roll Fag Bar reopened at the "new" World last week. The World was closed less than a week later due to building violations.

SYDNEY: There was no air. "Hi! This is a coffin, and it's airtight." So everyone was dazed, and that god-awful music was on. What was that? Aerosmith?

LIZ: AC/DC.

SYDNEY: So I wanted to look out from the balcony, and you said, "I'm not going up there."

LIZ: Well, I was scared. That thing has never been sturdy.

SYDNEY: There were millions of people up there. Two more isn't going to make a big difference. If it was going to fall, it would have fallen before.

LIZ: That's not true. That gap I fell into [between the floor and the wall] last year is still there, and it's grown...

SYDNEY: So you were measuring the gap, and then we left. No, wait. Chi Chi Valenti¹ walked by, and you were going, "Hey, Chi Chi..."

LIZ: Was not.

SYDNEY: You were too.

LIZ: Dean [Johnson] read Chi Chi's poem while we were leaving.

SYDNEY: Well, seeing it was...

LIZ: ...the third time we heard it that week, I think we were allowed to leave.

SYDNEY: It's getting a lot of exposure, making the rounds of downtown and all. It's as fresh as Fag Bar. *Take Back the Night* by Chi Chi Valenti, now at a club near you!

LIZ: Special performance by Johnny Dynell and the Dynelles—no, wait, they're the Dynelletes.²

SYDNEY: "Take back the night from gay-bashers and gay supremacists alike..."

LIZ: I was a bit offended by that bit.

SYDNEY: That's all we can remember, but there's more: "Take back the night from corporate America...from yuppies and thieves..."

LIZ: It's an epic poem being passed down from generation to generation to generation. It's the epic of night life...

SYDNEY: About the trials and tribulations of night life in this city.

LIZ: "Take back the night, you little ones..."

SYDNEY: "Children, take back the

night." The words of the "wise."

Out of Control was a party at 6 Bond St. that had planned to happen weekly.

SYDNEY: Out of Control was...

LIZ: Out of control.

SYDNEY: You have to admit the funniest part was when the promoter³ said, "OK, I want everybody to leave", and Michael [Musto] said, "Oh, my God, I just got drink tickets," and Doris Klostner⁴, who came out of nowhere, goes, "I'll take one!" and runs to the bar. If the world were going to end, and she knew the atom bomb was coming in ten minutes, she would say, "Wait, I'm going to get a drink."

LIZ: I liked the fact that everyone then just stood around to see if the promoter was going to be bounced down the stairs by the owner.

SYDNEY: And couldn't figure out what to do with themselves.

LIZ: Some of these people forget they have homes to go to. You have to force them there and make them lie down without strobe lights or house music and just say, "Stop being fabulous. Get some sleep."

Palladium has made a stab at attracting a gay crowd by holding a British house music party on Fridays, and Dance Patrol ("It's fun to be OUT late") on Saturdays.

LIZ: Here's a club that's trying to get a gay audience and ends up inviting SNAP! to perform? You might as well have a Guns 'n' Roses festival. That "E is for Everybody"⁵ caused me a great deal of psychic pain. It did nothing to improve my relations with the heterosexual world, either. This was one of the few clubs in New York where people who do go out a lot felt threatened.

SYDNEY: The smell coming from those girls...What is that? Love's Baby Soft? And the hair...

LIZ: Well, you can say the same thing about those "guys," too. It's a very heavily cologned crowd.

SYDNEY: ...even Heather Locklear, even Farrab Fawcett don't have big hair anymore.

LIZ: It's a different world out there.

SYDNEY: Thank you for that enlightening remark.... Saturday? We were there long enough for France Joli to go on, and we left.

LIZ: The club was packed on their "gay night," and there were no gay people there. No, that's a lie—I saw two.



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