

OUT ON THE TOWN WITH LIZ & SYDNEY

SYDNEY: It started off great. Five minutes before we left the house, you started whooping your cookies in the bathroom. I thought I'd have to go out alone and would never make it back.

LIZ: No more bad Chinese food for me. I was just afraid we wouldn't get a cab.

Sydney: Everybody who stayed in said, "Oh, you can never get a cab on Halloween."

Liz: We got one to Palladium, and boy, was it mobbed.

Sydney: That's what happens when door people spend all their time schmoozing.

Liz: That poor man who does Club MTV's fashion tips couldn't get in.

Sydney: Please! He was nasty and pushed everybody out of his way. The security people finally *bad* to let him in: "*Without Julie, You're Nothing*."¹ Then you walked in the door and hit all these TV cameras filming **Suzanne Bartsch**² and company doing her makeup in the front lobby.

Liz: It was a demonstration of the truth behind the illusion.

Sydney: Oh, excuse me. I didn't realize it was high theater...sorry. It's not just a Halloween party. It's a dramatic experience.

Liz: The main floor...

Sydney:...looked a whole lot like Copa. It was like a big drag wedding cake, with glitter and split levels, Vegas night at an Elks Club.

Liz: The dancing leathermen were my favorites. The jugglers, the—

Sydney: The sword-swallower! **Dianne Brill**³ kept asking her, "Do you really swallow those?"

Liz: Oh, I'm sorry, Ms. Brill had the coup of the evening. Only she would have enough guts to come as her estranged husband's new girlfriend.⁴

Sydney: Yes, but **Toni [Senecal]** came as Diane, too.

Liz: Yes, and **Rudolf** came as himself, without either one of them. At least they have each other. But how come *we* didn't wear costumes this year?

Sydney: Because you were throwing up before we left. I was going to yank you out of the bathroom and force you to put on a dress?

Liz: I knew we should have gone as each other. "Hi..." (*she flips her hair.*)

Sydney: I'd have to find some girl and start making out with her and then ask her who she is. That's the quin-

tesential Liz Tracey experience.

A week or so later, our fearless duo shows up somewhere perhaps equally as frightening—the Mr. Spike Contest at that bastion of hypermasculinity of the same name. (The emcee announces that there is no contestant number-six. He is late.)

Sydney: Damn! They sure are picky. "Those tardy will not receive fruit cup."⁵ If this were a house ball, we'd still be waiting....

Liz: Oh look, they have a sign interpreter.

Sydney: That's very concious of them. But I need a hankie interpreter. What does a black hankie on the left mean? Why did everyone seems shocked at that brown one?

Liz: Well, if you wear it on your left, it means...

A witty leatherman: Must be ladies' night.

Sydney: Very funny. Go away before I spray you with my perfume.

Liz: At least you don't have three men following you around, saying "Hey, guy, how's it hanging?" (It doesn't. Get it, buster?)

Sydney: What are they being judged on? Best phone-sex demeanor?

Liz: That's later. They dress up in full gear and talk about what turns them on.

Sydney: (*looking back to the stage*) A contestant named **Johnny Rod**. How subtle.

Liz: I think he's going to win. As a matter of fact, I know he will.

Sydney: How do you know?

Liz: Trust me. As much as these pageants are touted as personality contests, the judges will still end up voting with their fleshy appendages.⁶

(The amount of leather has heated up the room to an uncomfortable degree.)

Sydney: I can't take this macho stuff anymore. I have to do something frivolous. I'm going home to do my hair.

A friend: How long can that take you, a half-hour?

Sydney: Try two and a half. Look, excuse me for being a girl, but I enjoy it. See you.

(Liz is left alone to watch the rest of the contest.)

Liz: (to herself) Jesus, another



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