

THE TALLY STONE

Fiction Serial
by Gilbert Bouchard



Part Five

Arnold never did understand Tracy, loved her perhaps, but never understood her. But then again she had never made understanding herself a piece of cake either, always flighty, always in motion, bubbly Tracy, exuberant Tracy. While Arnold, on the other hand, was a more serious quiet man almost to the point of extreme boredom.

The two of them complemented each other nicely, Arnold giving Tracy a firm two feet on the ground and she loosening him up considerably. As a matter of fact, he lost a few pounds, took to wearing contacts and even started dressing a bit more up to date. I tell you, what with his balding pate camouflaged by a spanking new hair piece he looked considerably younger than his 37 years.

That was before she left him, just up and left to live on her mother's farm.

He'd seen it coming, God, he'd seen it. It all started with his moving in with her and culminated with her abortion. Not that he hadn't offered right off the bat to do the decent thing and marry her, heck he'd proposed to her, ring and all, a month before, but she kept on delaying the actual wedding then she refused him outright and went off and terminated the pregnancy! She didn't even bother telling him, just went off and did it.

After that, their relationship just wasn't the same. They stopped making love, hell, she slept in the spare bedroom, stopped talking, stopped admitting that he even existed.

Then her mother (a smothering old bitch if he'd ever seen one) died, and she took a couple days off for the funeral and then called him up to tell him that she wasn't coming back. She sold him her half of the ad agency and gave him the final kiss off.

He'd seen it coming, but that didn't lessen the shock.

Other men might have gone on a drinking binge, ripped up all her photos or at least given her a few obscene phonecalls, but not Arnold, he just tidied up the apartment and neatly packed up all her clothing and belongings and promptly shipped the lot of them to her mother's address.

All in all, Arnold took it quite well which is what

made the nightmares all the more frightening. You see, Arnold didn't dream, he didn't dream at all, so when he started to have a recurring nightmare the same night after Tracy dumped him he took notice. The dream was the same exact thing every single night.

It started off with him in Tracy's mother's house in the living room actually, a dirty ill kept living room with a flashlight in one hand and an axe in the other.

From the living room he moves to the cellar, lifts the trap door behind the kitchen table and crawls in. He can't see much at first, just dust swirling about and shelf after shelf of decades old preserves.

When his vision improves enough to distinguish solid from shadow, he makes out a shape in the far corner. It is a large stone box, three feet wide, seven feet long and three feet deep.

The box is as black as the musty darkness of the cellar and is covered from tip to tip with marks and carvings. Arnold gripped the axe tighter and hefted it above his head then crept up to the stone coffin.

He heard a sound, from within the coffin, a whimper, a growl perhaps, or maybe something

else.

Fear, more than anything pushed his fingers. He reached out and grabbed the edge of the lid, heaves it up and off of the box. Mercilessly, he swings the axe, time and time again into the dark confines of the box.

The dream always ends the same way too. Arnold sees himself with the axe still raised in one hand and the flashlight illuminating Tracy's mutilated corpse curled within the box. Only the dream Tracy is smaller, shriveled up with her abdomen elongated and covered with a fine white silky fur so that she nearly resembles a giant weasel.

That's when he always wakes up, screaming and confused almost expecting to feel the touch of the silken fur of his metamorphosed lover against his back.

After a few nights of this dream he called the agency and informed them he wouldn't be in for a few days. That morning, the morning of October 22, he was on the road, 50 miles closer to Tracy and whatever lay beyond his dream

to be continued

Computer conference in Edmonton

A major conference on the design and manufacture of Very Large Scale Integrated (VLSI) circuits will be hosted by the University of Alberta next fall.

While the conference is a year away, planning has already begun for what has been termed "the most significant conference of its kind" in Canada.

VLSI refers to the most complex computer "chips" now manufactured. Produced and stored on silicon wafers, each chip in a VLSI system contains thousands of transistors.

The design and manufacture of such chips is an important and increasingly competitive market, says Henry Baltes, a Professor at the University. The conference will bring to Edmonton leading VLSI experts from across North America to focus on ways of improving VLSI technology.

According to Baltes, chairman of the forthcoming conference, the decision to hold the meeting in Edmonton is recognition of the

important place that the University of Alberta holds in VLSI research in Canada.

"Having the conference here will focus attention on the very fine work being done by universities and industry in the province of Alberta," he commented.

The 1984 Edmonton conference will be only the second time that VLSI has been the focus

national conference. The first

meeting, just concluded at the University of Waterloo, brought together more than 100 participants from across Canada.

Representatives from Canadian universities (both faculty and students) and various Canadian industries took part in the intensive two-day conference.

Technocracy and the law

The university is taking legal action against Technocracy, Inc. to have the organization evicted from HUB Mall on November 16.

"We have handed the matter over to our solicitors," said Vice President Facilities and Services Ron Phillips.

The University and Technocracy have already been to court twice, on October 28 and November 2, but in each case Technocracy was successful in obtaining postponements.

Technocracy was served an eviction notice during the

summer, effective the end of September. The eviction was part of HUB Commercial's new policy to restrict tenancy in the mall to retail and service outlets.

Technocracy does sell some literature and has a retail licence, says Treasurer Walt Fryer. But the primary focus of the organization is education and research.

"They can call themselves a retail outlet but that is not really the case," said Phillips.

A motion is before Students' Council tonight to support Technocracy.

Students' Union



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How to talk about drinking & driving

to your teenagers

We all know going out is fun, and no parent wants to take away those good times. But these days, with teenagers in and out of cars so much, it's crucial that they understand the dangers of drinking and driving, and that they can avert potential trouble by making the right decisions.

First, set your son or daughter straight on this often-misunderstood fact: beer, wine and spirits—in excess, all three are just as dangerous on the road.

A good way of avoiding trouble is to plan ahead. Suggest that your teenagers review their evening before going out. If they see drinking involved, far better to leave the car at home than to take chances later behind the wheel.

Far better also to say no to a drink, to refuse to drive, or to turn down a lift with an impaired friend than to go along with the crowd and maybe regret it.

You can support your teenagers and give them confidence by letting them know that if they ever need help you'll go for them, pay their cab or do whatever is necessary to get them home safely.

Most important, be a good example. Never drive if you've had even one drink too many. Better still, don't let it come to that. Know your limit and stay within it.

to your parents

If you're not of legal drinking age, don't touch a drop. But if you are, and you drive, then you're old enough to do your part in reaching an agreement with your parents on the subject.

Sure they worry. Because even if you don't drink, others in your group may. The friend driving you home one night may have had too much.

Show that you're equally concerned. Get serious. For instance, what have you read lately about the dangers of drinking and driving? Do you know how much beer, wine or spirits your body can safely handle before your judgment becomes impaired? Do you know the law in your province? And what happens if you break it?

Get the facts and discuss them calmly. Then take the initiative and propose a few family ground rules.

No driving if you've been drinking beyond your limit. (We'll send you a valuable free chart on responsible limits if you write us.) No riding with a friend who's been drinking. And convince your parents if a situation ever turns dicey, you won't hesitate to phone for help.

Finally, remind your parents you're concerned for their safety, too, and that the family rules on drinking and driving apply to them, as well.



We believe in moderation and we've been saying so since 1934.

P.O. Box 847, Stn. H. Montreal, Quebec, H3G 2M6