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OCTOBER 19, 1979
(Arts and Science)

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The untold story

S. Howard Rosen

It was a torturous voyage! Only three of the original party of ten had survived with just a little farther to go. The conditions were extreme: long, wind-swept prairie lands, barren, open ice fields, and large concrete obstacles blocking our way. Yet, in spite of all these hardships, we made it from the parking lot to the Ross building.

What leads men and women here to a daily struggle of life and death? That was our mission! Allowing the others time to rest, I set out to explore this vast entity known as York.

I lost all track of time, and, when I returned for my friends, I found that they had disappeared without a trace. Setting aside all the risks, I went out in search of them.

What I saw, I'm sure, are things never seen before by man. I encountered phenomena that go beyond human comprehension. I went on relentlessly, however, in search of the remainder of my party. Running scared, within the confines of York University, I saw, heard, and did many things and . . . this is my story.

My first encounter was with the phenomenon of Central Square. Although a mini-indoor mall is quite something in itself, it can't compare to that tract of land stretching from the Curtis Lecture Hall entrance to the affectionately christened "Bear Pit".

What does this area have that no other part of this, or any other, university has? People! Not just one or two, or even twenty for that matter. There are enough people to qualify as an independent country!

Upon nearing this "Gideon", from one of three possible access routes, the first sense to be aroused is that of sound. All that can be heard is one loud conversation and a sound system, equivalent to that of Supertramp's, blasting the latest disco tune.

The next sense to be adversely affected is one's sight. As you come closer, you are confronted with a peculiar manifestation which appears to resemble legs. Upon closer observation it becomes apparent that it is legs; in fact, as far as the eyes can see, there are legs! On the floor, one the ceiling, even along the walls (I'll never understand how that pair got in the phone coin return). When walking through this hallway, I defy anyone to tell me that they ever touched the ground.

Upon venturing even deeper into the wilds of this famed zone, I came to the realization that I may never get out. Then, just as I was about to lapse into vague memories of my poor departed friends, it hit me! Another sense had been aroused. What was that glorious smell? All of a sudden there were shouts of joy, and the sounds of shuffling feet growing louder and louder until it seemed that the whole area would fall in . . . Then, I saw it! My suspicions had been confirmed! There is a five-minute period when one is able to see from one end of the hall to the other, and this was that time. That wonderful aroma that had caused such a stampede was the arrival of the bagels and cream cheese. Ah! It's good to know that there are some forms of civilization around.

In order to quench my thirst for further knowledge of this York phenomenon, I endeavoured to interview some of the life that exists here. This is what resulted:

Excilibur: What do you think of Central Square?

Student X: Can't stand it, I think it's disgusting, what goes on here!

Excilibur: Why do you come here then?

Student X: It makes going home on crowded buses so much nicer.

Excilibur: How long have you been here?

Student Y: Well, I was on my way to get new books for the first semester, and I've been trying to get through.

Excilibur: When was that?

Student Y: Oh . . . 1975.

Excilibur: Why do you think people come here?

Student Y: I suppose you'd want me to take into account my observations of the people and their interactions with one another, plus my knowledge of Freud and psycho-analytical theory, not forsaking countless conversations, group discussions, and seminars on this topic.

Excilibur: Yes, please do!

Student Y: I'll answer that by your answering me this! How do they get the caramel in the Caramilk bar?

Excilibur: I don't know.

Student Y: There's your answer!

Excilibur: What is it that brings you here?

Student Z: I enjoy looking at the latest Fall and Spring fashions!

It seems from my observations that no one really cares for Central Square. They don't even know why they are there, and yet, people still flock there. I don't think I'll ever understand it!

Nevertheless, I must continue on my quest for my departed companions, that is if I ever get out of here. Maybe I'll just wait until the end of this Village People song . . . or the one after or . . . please, in the weeks and months to come, if someone spots me still talking along with the others about the decadence of Central Square, please, remind me of my quest!!

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