

BOMB

One of Milo Challenger's Stories by Lisa Persky

Oct 1, 1983

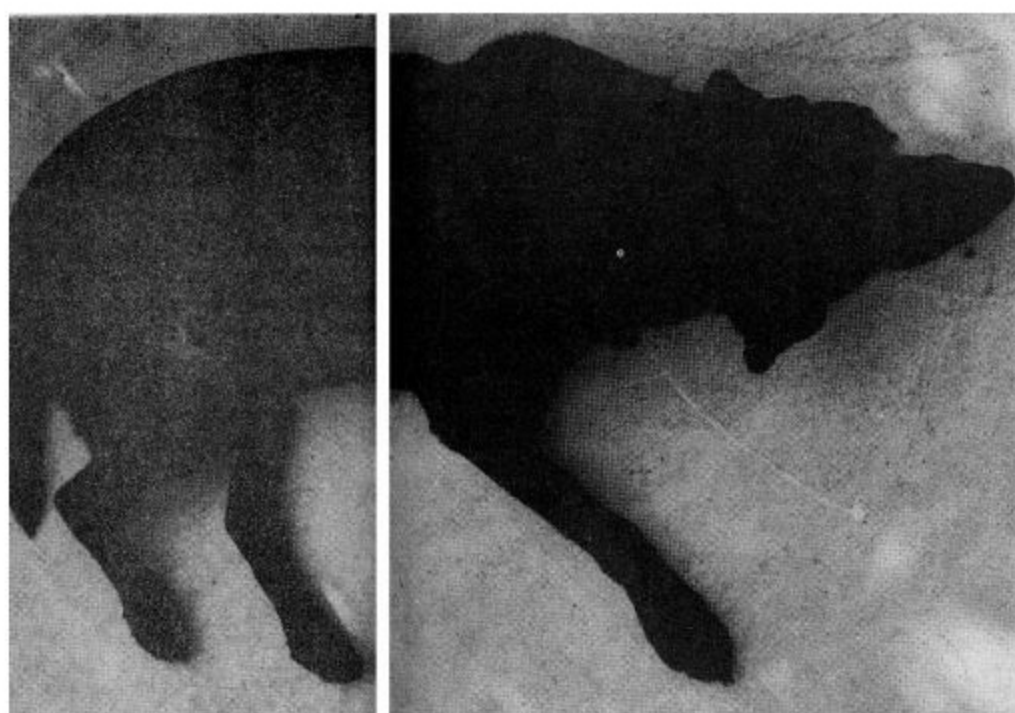
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ISSUE



SHARE



This is a story of me and my girlfriend Maxie Vulpine, which is funny in itself (her name, I mean) because she is exactly what the kids in the suburbs call "a fox." She plays this up too; there is a lot of funny things about Max that nobody knows, except me, of course, and this is because I'm cute and she thinks I am the Lolita type and me bein' taken with her and admirin' of her the way I am since she is ten years older, a foot taller than me and also a "fox," she tells me everything. We have even got our own language between us so's if anything is not quite right wherever we happen to be at, we can signal in time to get the hell out of a potentially lousy situation. Max's language is a lot of the time with the body anyway so's that anybody around will be watching hers. Everybody does just this. Max has to do everything "cool." In fact, bein' cool is so important to her that she even spends a lot of her valuable time tryin' to impress me. As you already may be seein', this is unnecessary but she needs me for practice. It is this "cool" business that is why we have got to have a lot of secrets. One of the most uncool secret things about Maxie is that she is married. I happen to know that every once in a while, after some stud screws Fell out of her in her Trans Am, she pulls down her little dress just down over the thighs and says so about bein' married. Likely in this situation the news might fly over like a dead bird wouldn't but immediately after her disclosure she issues forth a disclaimer in the form of a screechin' case of womanly laughter.

Most of the time this guy'll be thinkin' all this display of giddiness is from the "thrill" of his performance and that it has put her in the mood for some kind of jokes so he laughs right alongside her. This is one smart thing about Maxie, who I can never give enough credit to for guile. She knows men. She taught me that this kind of teasin' is cool because it is a turn-on to the guy, I don't know, but this is what she says. I do happen to know one thing however and that is that every once in a while, like in a lot of other situations with us, the guy gets all pushed out of shape and irritable. What are you going to do? Usually in a case of this, Maxie will fish me out from wherever I happen to be hangin' and give me "the signal." Then, for at least an hour we drive around in her car prayin' to God and anybody who'll listen that we don't run into this joker with no sense of humour again. Then we turn up the radio and look for something else. Sometimes I go on like this with these long sentences and right in the middle of the important part that I'm sayin', when I'm just having a revelation about the point of things, Maxie says could I repeat that ... WHEN I AIN'T EVEN FINISHED YET. Her attention span is not good for much.

This stuff all reminds me of a time we had together. One night we dressed all up and we was goin' to this Punk joint where there was a lotta guys supposed to be at. SO, we get there just in time to buy the last two tickets. (I think the cashier gave 'em to us 'cause of my hurt little kid look that I always give in these situations that are tense, since I was three, at least.) Anyway then we get on this very long line, which I am beginning to think is a worldwide theme; big long lines to get to somethin' even though nobody ever really knows what. For most of 'em the thrill is just in getting to the end. So, we are waiting there and people who had previously purchased their tickets earlier that day was showing up. Now we weren't on the end of the line anymore and even though we also weren't any further ahead, our position was lookin' a lot better, especially to those people behind us. Anyway next thing that happened is just typical; OUT OF NOWHERE comes two guys that we had once previously prayed so hard about. What a surprise. It wasn't anybody's fault. In all of this world there's only so many places to go. Maxie and I gave each other the "well what were they supposed to do stay in for the rest of their lives?" signal and as usual took the minimum of pity possible; enough to let 'em in line with us. Well we just stood there and made fun of practically every person that walked by us just for practice and to show these guys that we were nobodys chumps, we were cool and before you knew it we was all inside and the loud music is trampling my precious little eardrums and I am dancing to the pain. Maxie just stands dead still with a little cracking of chewing gum or a swig of whisky being all cool with that combination. The name of this being "giving an act a cool reception," which of course she always does so well. This is pretty smart what she does here 'cause it makes all the boys wonder what she is thinking and it makes them all uptight cause they think maybe she is just putting up with it just to be with them. I still don't know how they fit more than one of these behemoth egos in a room. SO. Now the show is over and everyone is worried that Maxie wasn't entertained 'cept me, and as usual we have done another cool thing for our personal history books by bein' the first to see this particular band play, so not all would be lost. Back on the street, outside this place, just because we were friendly to these guys and maybe touched them a couple of times in a couple of places on their particular persons in an effort to say GOODBYE, we see that they have followed us and they are standin' around like some dumb animal waiting for us to decide what we're doin'.

Well it was just then I remembered the idea that they were not, so to speak, A Good Time but my signals were shorted out by Maxie's aforementioned attention span (she was ignoring me). This switches on the automatic pilot in myself so in the gear known as cruise control we end up at midnight snackland with these very same guys who are leaning heavily into two dishes of fries. Maxie and I are wildly chatting away about subjects amusing which bring occasional macho giggles and I mean they thought we were cool. We entertained them real good but all they were capable of injecting into the situation was sound effects and so it wasn't very long at all before the air was thick with signals as well as the scent of potato. The idea Maxie and I had seemingly latched onto simultaneously was borne out of fear; indeed they was trying to bore us to death. Being on that suffocating inside portion of this booth set-up, it was difficult to make a smooth and dignified exit but we managed without dying after all and I haven't been out since. I mean it, I don't care how cool we are now if this is the reaction we can expect on account of her bein' such a "fox" and me bein' so cute.

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William Morris, Untitled Print, 1983, Print Collage.