

crooked letter 6.5

123 People Touched My Breasts in two weeks (And other strange, but true tales)

You sit at a table at the coffee shop and pick up the trashy weekly that lays there waiting for you. On the front is a black and white close-up of a woman's face mouthing an exaggerated "O" of shock and fear. The back of her hand is pressed against her forehead in dismay. The headlines, in the menacing typeface used for "Attack of the Giant Ants," pounds home the message that the reader will be delightfully stimulated by the scandalous stories revealed within the cheap, finger smudging newsprint pages.

You turn to the main piece, the true story of a poor young woman who sells her body to medicine to pay the vet bills incurred after her sweet little pussycat loses half his tail in a freak accident. After luring you in, this fine example of (yellow) journalism divulges that this particular woman has sold her body to science before for the less noble reasons of paying her regularly incurred expenses such as her DSL bill. You learn that it is no surprise that a morally loose woman would rather make \$15 an hour to test second year medical students on their breast exam skills than work pretty much any other part time/temporary job in Gainesville.

After devouring this titillating story, you read the sidebar piece about how her cat, Quizno, came home last Saturday morning with a bloody stump in the place of his long, grey tail. Unfazed by the loss, Quizno braved the examination of his injury with surprising stoicism, and confounding, as it may seem, he did not seem to be in much pain. Tragically, he had to go under the knife and a bit more of his fine tail was amputated by the crack surgical team at Suburban Animal Hospital. Despite his injury, Quizno charmed yet another vet. The author enlightens you on just how amazing this is, since most cats will scratch and bite anyone remotely connected to the word veterinary. Dr. Sammy enthused, "It is a real pleasure to work on a cat with such a great personality." This pleasure, however, did not move the vet to knock \$100 off the just under \$500 bill.

After a day of recovery, Quizno was ready to leap back into the cat life, but doctor's order required him to remain indoors for at least two weeks. While he bore the pain and indignity of losing his tail with aplomb, it is feared that after his enforced convalescence he and his food provider will need hours of psychological counseling. You are left with the pathetic scene of this poor cat meowing, as if in extreme pain, and scraping the plastic collar, which keeps him from chewing the sutures out of his tail, against the door barring him from the freedom he longs for, as his faithful food provider gnashes her teeth and debates whether strangling a piteously meowing feline at 4:30 a.m. would be seen as caticide or as a much needed social service.

The last piece you read is a cautionary tale warning of the dangers of putting your phone number on your website. You learn that the owner of crookedletter.com received not one but two calls from an artist who lives in West Virginia and believes that he is the prophet who can best interpret the scripture according to Ozzy Osborne. After listening to a rambling monologue about many seemingly disconnected topics including the mystical meaning of Ozzy Osborne's lyrics, the man said that he had sat down to surf the

web and the word “crookedletter” popped in his head as a key in his quest to reveal prophetic truth to Ozzy Osborne. He thought that the beleaguered website owner would know how to get in contact with Mr. Osborne since she had interviewed Eminem. (See crooked letter 5: Your Momma, Your Daddy, Your Itchy, Itchy Gram Mammie-Trash talking with Me and Eminem). After explaining that she had never spoken to the angry, white boy rapper, she diplomatically suggested that he **not** try to contact the heavy metal superstar and instead channel that intense visionary obsession into what she imagined could be an amazing series of painting. She also gently reminded him that flying too close to the sun could burn off his wings and that he should take care of himself. The next day, the artist-prophet called her to thank her for her wisdom and to reveal through another quote from an Ozzy Osborne song that her speaking of Icarus’s fall further proved the truth of his vision. She firmly disengaged from the conversation and sent a pray to the god/dess of madness that this man not burn too many of his feathers off before plunging into Luna sea, so that he might have a chance to rise again.

And you, overwhelmed by the strangeness of all these true tales, fold up the newspaper and leave these shivery stories on the table for the next patron to peruse.