

REQUIEM FOR A HEAVY BREATHER



“The obscene phone call has become a lost art, conjuring daydreams of a simpler time’s golden perversions.”

pleasures himself by causing displeasure in someone who has denied him pleasure.

Pity the poor victim. Perhaps she was fixing herself a cozy mug of hot cocoa, the kind with the friendly miniature marshmallows floating carefree on the top. Then came the phone call, and with it an unwanted sexual encounter that will tatter her frilly emotional fabric for life. Although there was no sexual contact, it was sex nonetheless, a disembodied bodily function. And though he leaves no physical evidence, he squirts an invisible cum shot onto her brain.

He and his unwanted penis enter her consciousness, leaving an indelible gravy stain on the once-virginal apron of her mind. His grimy boots mercilessly trample upon her sexuality’s delicate flower garden. Even in her own home, after all the showers and scrubbing, she’ll never feel clean again.

One hopes she’ll be able to get over it, but given her typically feminine emotional brittleness, such hope is doomed from the get-go.

“**HANK**” (NOT HIS REAL NAME) is a former obscene caller who was convicted of misdemeanor harassment stemming from a nasty habit of cold-calling women and talking dirty to them.

(A minister’s wife whom Hank had repeatedly badgered finally nailed him using Star 69.) As part of a plea agreement, Hank served six months in county jail and is now midway through a three-year probation. Hank spoke on condition of anonymity through an arrangement with his Seattle-based probation officer. Predictably, Hank insisted that he contact me via phone rather than the inverse.

Though Hank is nearing 50, he has never been married. He displays a near-palpable bitterness about his romantic failures. He lives in a basement room in (surprise!) his mother’s house. Beyond that, he is reticent to reveal much about his personal background.

Hank admits that in his heyday, he was making up to a dozen obscene calls daily, yet he’s evasive regarding the calls’ juicier details. When I ask whether he thinks any of his victims enjoyed his overtures, he’s silent, as if their capability for pleasure never occurred to him.

Hank swears that he’ll never lapse into his old ways, not because he feels what he did was wrong, but because the risk is too high. “You just can’t get away with it anymore. They’ve got it rigged so it’s impossible to be—what’s the word?—anonymous these days.”

Hank downplays the idea that his actions caused anyone harm. “Really, what did it cost THEM?” he asks, some emotion finally seeping through his voice. “Maybe they got a little upset for ten minutes after I called. But I spent six months in JAIL! I went through a lot more than THEY did! Where’s MY justice?”

Life grows hard for the anonymous pervert. Where can the cowardly phone predator go these days? The Internet comprises a thick new pipeline for covert sexual harassment, but as yet, a keyboard and monitor lack the obscene phone call’s luscious immediacy. And yet there remains hope that the dedicated sociopaths among us will manage to keep pace with technology. If there’s a match for the vast scope of human technological ingenuity, it is surely the bottomless depths of human sexual perversity. When the going gets tough for perverts, there is no choice for the perverts but to get tough. And so they soldier on, searching for a techno-loophole through which to slip their lonely dicks.

TECHNOLOGY KILLS THE OBSCENE PHONE CALLER

This used to be a hell of a good country, a place where you could leave your door unlocked at night, where you could stroll down Main Street and everyone knew your name, and where lonely pervs with their cocks in one hand and a telephone in the other could scare the shit out of unsuspecting females.

But just as video killed the radio star, technology has rendered the obscene phone call an emblem of a bygone era during which sexual predators could roam the fiber-optic prairie free from the fear of Star 69.

Like streaking and flashing, the obscene phone call has become a lost art, conjuring daydreams of a simpler time’s golden perversions. Before the emergence of gizmos such as answering machines, digital voicemail, and Caller ID, a mildly imaginative deviant was able to satisfy himself merely by dropping a thin dime into the big slot. But our precious Global Village has shrunk to the size of a cramped studio apartment, and privacy has gone the way of the wood-burning stove and the home-baked loaf of bread.

Granted, technology makes us safer, but it also enslaves us. We now have safety because there’s no place left to hide. Sure, some menopausal librarian with her hair in curlers and a Noxzema-smearred face will never again be forced to pick up the phone and endure some faceless meatball describing the veins on his dingy, but at what price to our cherished freedoms?

THE OBSCENE PHONE CALLER plumbs the shallow end of the deep, dark ocean that is Sex Offenderdom. Too timid to go buck-wild and forcibly seize what he wants, he cowers behind the receiver and commits Rape Lite™. He is more an annoyance than a threat, more a jerk than a menace. Too uncomely to attract a mate, too timid to rape someone, he is a small soul who takes small risks. He is alone. This is implicit. He has been unable to secure himself a suitable mate. We all understand this.

And so does he. He knows this all too well. So he goes for what he knows. He drools and snorts, pumps and chortles, tugging, twisting and pinching his greasy, inflamed Love Antler, huffing and puffing his way to a blown wad and a dial tone’s despondent hum.

The obscene phone caller is typically a loser in the Sweepstakes of Love. He can garner no female attention other than through being feared and rejected. The schmo has no other way to wield power over the women who intimidate him. His victim is everything he wants, everything he’ll never get, everything he’d never be able to procure if he were to step into the harsh spotlight and reveal his monumental homeliness and insurmountable inadequacies. So he

