

The Cheerleader and the Clown

by Kurt Arehart, October 2019

It was getting late, and the flattish keg-party-beer was adding a fatigue that contributed to the energy sag following a brilliantly entertaining evening. My beard stubble was well into destroying my expertly applied makeup and the illusion it had created. The wig was feeling hot and itchy and had to go soon. It was all coming apart, though my breasts still looked great.

In my twenties I was a huge fan of costume parties. By my lights they offered enormous behavioral latitude, room to experiment, to try on entirely different personas in a life otherwise held well in check early in a corporate finance career.

I always attacked a costume party opportunity with creative vigor, though never with any particular thematic intent. Always it started with some random trigger that led to the creative project and then the theatrical license.

A pair of knickers purchased for cross country skiing suggested courtly dress and Cyrano de Bergerac emerged. Add a flowing satin top and a rapier on the hip, and my Cyrano did his wooing for his own benefit. Or tried. The outrageous four inch wax nose I sculpted was vaguely phallic and funny, but proved a hindrance to any kiss I might plant, and my glue-on mustache fell in my drink on several occasions. So, license to make plenty of over-the-top passes at all the ladies of note, but not without its handicaps.

But there was time to learn from these false starts as the trend was toward better and better Halloween costume bashes thrown each year by the young professionals in my circle. A few guiding principles emerged. A costume might be creative and funny, but relatively worthless to me if it failed to offer theatrical license, or worse, interfered with social possibilities. No more wax noses for me.

A friend Rick would delight in creating a costume that would be some sort of sight gag, bewildering at first glance then funny thereafter as he worked it. One year he appeared as a chap doing a handstand, the illusion created by gloves on his

feet, shoes on his hands, and a mannequin head hanging where his little head resided in truth. Rick made this funny by lurching about as would a guy doing a handstand and trying to dance. Lovely stuff. But Rick had to hold his arms over his head for a very long time to maintain the illusion. A prime violation of my guiding principle for a great costume.

Casting about for a costume idea I wandered into a second-hand shop, fertile ground for some great inspirations. There I found a red and white pleated skirt, right out of the 50's. And it fit. With no premeditation that I am aware of, I was instantly launched into turning myself into a cheerleader of the female persuasion.

The same shop yielded some saddle shoes, a nice little training bra and a simple red top onto which I could apply some iron-on school letters. All this happened for \$10, and since my creative candle was now very much lit, my budget expanded a bit. Next I found a convincing wig of brown ringlets and white opaque panty hose so that I did not have to consider shaving my legs. Good friend Valerie, a true makeup artist who every morning made herself radiant, offered to bring the full force of her magic to my cause.

This was really getting serious. No longer was I looking at a rough spoof, but now might actually wind up looking like a female cheerleader.

Wood carving was a passion of mine at the time. I had some beautiful knives and spent significant time shaping wood in abstract, flowing shapes. Now I was keen on sculpting some truly lovely little breasts to fit into my training bra. Not big lumbering, pendulous things. Rather, I wanted the perfect little shape, evocative of ripened fruit, with little nipples angled gently skyward, more European in their ideal rather than American, where size seemed to trump all. In short, I set out to craft breasts I would dearly love to encounter more than wear.

To do this I bought a sheet of one inch foam rubber and glued-up stacks three inches high. From this I began my study. I saw that the base layer needed to present as a toned pectoral muscle that flowed naturally up toward the armpit. The next two layers would build into the lovely shape I was after, fitting well into

the training bra. These shapes were rendered with my razor-sharp carving knives and the work went quickly.

I wanted the nipples to be prominent, maybe a little outrageous, and settled on sculpting them separately and gluing them on at the desired perky, heavenward angle. With some trial and error I eventually arrived at a very realistic and desperately attractive pair of breasts, with the erect nipples straining credulity just a bit.

With this key detail completed, I returned to the question of what letters to iron onto my stretchy little red top. Fairfield University was nearby, so FU it was. Provocation upon provocation. Lastly, I made up little red-and-white pom-poms for the saddle shoes. Ready for game day.

A few hours before the party Valerie arrived at my home with her hefty make-up case to ply her craft. Impressed with my breasts, she was determined to match my level of craft with hers. I had just shaved my face as close as I dared and she went to work. Since I was unwilling to have my eyebrows shaped she decided to go for a more naturally-browed fresh-faced Brooke Shields look. And she nailed it. With the wig in place and that beautifully subtle make-up I was utterly transformed.

Time to check the full effect. I had a slim waist back in the day and that red and white pleated skirt was believable. The legs were thin and toned from all the cycling I did. The wig and makeup were transformative. Valerie had even blended my eye brow color to match the wig nicely. And the breasts, well, they were the focal point. My red stretchy top was short sleeved, and my medium-hairly arms were on display and a little incongruous. Devoted to the evening as I was, I could not bring myself to shave my arms. This incongruity would stand. Off the party.

What to expect? I really had no idea. Only Valerie was in on my project, and she had gone to a different party.

I entered the large home hosting the event, mingling a bit using a falsetto voice, and... no one knew me.

My facial features were in plain sight, but the artfully subtle make-up, the wig and the obvious gender cues were completely disorienting, even to people who knew me well. And the pretty little breasts were screaming for attention such that few men were noticing the hairy arms.

I decided to stay in character as long as possible, keeping the falsetto going as I engaged many friends in small talk, often confusing them with familiar references before moving on to freshen my drink. The headcount of bewildered guests was growing. What insane fun! And what an opportunity to walk in a woman's shoes for a bit. I quickly found that men were transfixed by my perky nipples and sincere eye contact was in short supply.

After making the rounds at the party for thirty minutes, my face fully exposed and many close friends and co-workers not knowing me, I realized that I had shifted their frame of reference to a point where they could not see me as Kurt. They asked not, "Who is this person who seems to know me?" but rather, "Who is this woman who seems to know me?" A very different question.

Such isolation eventually grows old, and I was ready to let friends in on the joke, relax a bit and resume normal party banter and chat, maybe brag about my carving skills. I selected Judy, my immediate manager at work and a close friend. Judy was fully recognizable in her dutiful but half-hearted pirate-wench get up. Sticking with the falsetto I allowed the conversation to veer into work-related topics that very few people would know or understand. Judy's face could be quite animated and now she was displaying deep confusion, well along into discomfort.

I would torture her no more. In falsetto, "Judy, don't you know me?"

And then in my lowest natural register, "It's Kurt."

The look of horror that overtook Judy was stunning, burned into my memory. I could see the gender frame through which she was seeing me get torn and bent as her mouth worked, silently. After five seconds of this her expression re-composed and she found her power of speech, something she was rarely

without. “What the fuck!!??” Softly at first, then repeated several times with varying emphasis as she processed the reframing of the perky cheerleader into the well-known Kurt, just in outrageous drag for whatever reason.

Many years before, at age 20 or so, I bluffed my way into a nightclub in South Philadelphia where an attractive female singer was performing well and very provocatively, capturing the whole of my attention. When she finished her number to thundering applause she ripped off her wig, revealing herself to be a man in drag. I had never heard of such a thing, never saw it coming, and so received this shocking education like a body blow, a punch to the gut. Most of the club patrons were hooting in appreciative laughter but I was in deep confusion trying desperately to catch up to the new reality.

This is what Judy was feeling, but the reveal was to her only. Was she now in on some kind of conspiracy? Was this to be a permanent change? The ground was still shifting under her. “What.The.Fuck!!!”

Once she was settled down with a fresh drink in hand, and assured I would appear as a man Monday at work, I went on to reveal myself to a few other of my closer friends, but mostly stayed in character with falsetto-voice for all others.

So began my next learning.

Dopey, drunk, hair-knuckled guys starting hitting on me. One persistent fellow, another pirate, would not be brushed off easily, his eyes locked on my jutting nipples as he made clumsy attempts to chat me up. This sort of attention was exactly what I was imagining as I sculpted my breasts, Geppetto in his workshop wielding his knives, softly cackling to himself. But now, in this moment, it was irritating in the extreme. The notion that this lout, this imbecile, who likely grew his pirate beard stubble in three hours time, felt he had license to rake me, or in this case, my foam rubber, with his eyes as he swayed slightly, red solo cup in hand, was just too much. Clueless ass!

I dropped my voice a few registers and told him to piss off. The bewilderment in his eyes as he staggered off was not particularly funny or satisfying. I was done with it all.

Enter The Clown

She made her approach just as I was dispatching the lout, dressed out with a floppy harlequin outfit, oversized shoes, thickly applied clown-white under a painted-on happiness and even a cherry red nose ball. Right out of the bigtop. And with a crinkle-eyed smile suggesting that she shared my amused disdain for the retreating Blackbeard.

Like me, she was virtually unrecognizable even though her face was fully exposed aside from the clown nose. “What an ass”, she offered. A kindred soul.

Did I know her? I did not think so. While most of the folks at this party were young professionals at GE, plenty more were not. I dropped the falsetto and thanked her for chasing him off, though this was not really so. She knew me for a man, but still we had a moment of sisterhood with the shared experience of fending off an unwelcome advance from an idiot.

Joan and I moved through the early findings. She was indeed at GE, in information systems, more in the back room tending the main frame, and I concluded that I had probably never met or even seen her before. Still I kept working at mentally removing her clown-white and red-ball nose and seeing her face as she would look at work. And the harlequin outfit was equally discreet: I had little idea of her physical form, only that she did not weigh two hundred pounds. Was she the strong, athletic sort I usually favored? I had no idea.

For a clown, Joan moved pretty quickly. She suggested I ought not to drive home in my condition, and would be safer coming home with her. Again with the crinkle-eyed smile, really quite cute, as near as could tell.

In this time I was not over-cautious with women who found me attractive. Though she, like me, could not really see much of who I really was. Maybe she had seen me in the office, maybe had heard something about me and had some sense of what she was getting into. Or not.

I had already learned that she was intelligent and clever. To this I could add bold and decisive. My alcohol-addled brain was charmed. Why, of course. What a lovely idea. The clown-white would come off eventually.

Upon Waking

The morning dawned, the head raged, and in the slanting early light I uncomfortably began to assess my situation. Next to me lay the sleeping Joan, now no more the clown than I was the cheerleader. Her face roundish with a vaguely slavic bone structure. Her hair a dirty blond, in a short practical cut. Her body-type well short of toned athleticism. Distance and Excedrin were needed in equal measure and I made my excuses and way home.

Dr. Helen Fisher, in her popular and entertaining book, *Anatomy Of Love*, describes how bonding hormones are released by the act of intercourse. In the course of a normal courtship where substantial familiarity and attraction are present, this rings true in my personal experience.

But what if there is no background of slow-building knowledge and attraction? What if the peculiar play-acting opportunity of a costume party has obscured most emotional cues and all visual ones, bypassing any reasonable selection process to allow completely unfounded intimacy?

Then a long-building sexual drive lubricated by a bit of alcohol is set free and the rational brain can be left tied up in the corner with a gag in his mouth. Under these highly artificial circumstances, consummated intercourse serves only to rip the gag out of his mouth. He is still tied up.

And so the headache ebbed, replaced by a manageable level of remorse and dread at what I had started. What to do? To recoil and pretend it never happened seemed more juvenile and small than any of the prior evening's doings. To behave as if Joan and I were suddenly in a well formed and solid intimacy seemed just as wrong, an extension of the play-acting that was our false beginning.

Perhaps a first date was in order.