

with long-stemmed Steubens  
for the wine.

She was little and cute and sexy  
and bought all her size 3s  
at Bullocks and Buffums  
and the shops along Rodeo Drive.  
She seldom wore the same thing twice,  
but if she did, you couldn't tell,  
because of the clever things  
she knew how to do with accessories.  
She spent her weekends and vacations  
at the beach in front of her mother's house  
on Catalina Island,  
showing off her all-over tan  
and perfect bod.

One day I asked her  
how the hell she did it:  
the job, the house, the kids,  
the husband, the lovers,  
the gourmet meals,  
the perfect selfness.  
She said it was easy —  
she made all her plans  
for the following week  
while she was having sex.

#### CREDIBILITY

Sally had always been disappointed in Tiffany,  
one of her co-workers at the cosmetic distribution  
company where they shared a small office, because  
Tiffany believed every single word printed in  
The National Enquirer. She kept a current copy  
on her desk and read it cover to cover, sharing  
out loud particularly shocking and nauseating  
articles so everyone had to hear. She cut out  
special articles (photos or drawings included)  
and pinned them to the bulletin board above her desk.

Her favorite subjects dealt with weird sexual  
experiences and encounters with other-world beings.  
But any story interested her if it were outrageous  
and unbelievable enough. Like the Civil War widow  
who became pregnant from a bullet. Seems it was shot  
through some poor soldier's testicle, picked up  
living sperm along the way, then hit the widow smack  
in her left ovary. Nine months later she gave birth  
to a healthy baby boy. The only thing that seemed to  
upset her was that the soldier had been a Yankee.  
"Yup," said Tiffany, born and raised in Orlando, "That'd  
upset me, too!"



Tiffany, a worshipper of Elvis, especially treasured every account of The King standing in line at Wal-Mart or window shopping along Rodeo Drive or peeking through his front door screen. It was proof to her that he was alive and well and looked as handsome and slender (at least in the fuzzy, touched-up, 300 times enlarged photos that accompanied each article) as when he first appeared on the Ed Sullivan show.

Humans with extra body parts were also among her favorite subjects — especially people with more than one head. Not real Siamese twins — that was a boring medical reality done to death on the Sally Jesse Raphael show — but individuals with only one body and two or more heads. Or better yet, one head and two or more bodies, although that was distinctly more rare. She even believed the story about the farmer's wife who gave birth to a litter of pigs.

Now it's the Kennedys — raping innocent young women and running around their Palm Beach compound drunken and disorderly, dressed in nothing but t-shirts and ankle socks. This was the last straw for Sally, a staunch Democrat and ardent Kennedy fan. Now she refuses to talk to Tiffany, for fear of giving her the slightest encouragement. Says Sally, grateful to be among the more enlightened reading public, "I never believe ANYthing unless I see it in People magazine."

#### TO REACH THE COMMON FOLK

If I live to be 100 (and I will),  
my children have promised to mail my photograph  
to Willard Scott, the jolly, people-person  
weatherman on NBC.

When my picture appears on the screen  
Willard will gleefully announce:  
"Now, here is CATHERINE LYNN of Long Beach,  
California — 100 years young  
and isn't she a pretty lady!"

But no one will see a shriveled crone,  
package birthday bow in her carefully permed hair,  
dressed in something ill-fitting that her  
grandchildren picked out for her,  
stooped and confused and trying to smile  
as her bleary, watery eyes  
are blinded by the camera flash.

I will be sitting ramrod straight  
in my favorite antique chair,