

i remember when life was vivid. when a dozen roses stank up a three room apartment: living room, bedroom, kitchen, why doesn't the bathroom count as a room?

the bathroom floor was covered with black and white checkered tiles, that spilled half way up the wall. and i was ripped.

we were fooling around (that sounds naïve) and i said to him, "just a sec,"

this is a story about my first diaphragm; it came with a clear plastic stick with notches in it. the diaphragm itself looked like a little mini (rubber) spaceship from war of the worlds.

you were supposed to hook a semi-rigid edge of the space ship onto the top notch, on the tip of the stick, stretch it tight, like an arrow, hooking the opposite edge onto another notch, this one on the shaft. then you were supposed to roll it over and turn it upside down > and slide it into your vagina. once it's inside, the diaphragm is supposed to pop effortlessly off the stick onto your cervix, an invincible barrier to sperm.

they have you practice this in the gynecologist's office which is sort of weird, squatting, stretching, flipping, popping, in front of a nurse. but we weren't ripped and the floors and walls were solid, beige, green, yellow, ignominious, unremarkably bland, no little black and white squares. easy. sort of. compared

to the bathroom with black and white checkered tiles. squatting so i could slide the stick inside my vagina, rotate it and pop the diaphragm into place, the way i was taught < but the edges were greased up with the requisite sperm killing goo i was told it was necessary to spread *thickly* on the inside of the spaceship and *liberally* around its edges – so no renegade baby making spermies could breach the rubber spaceship barrier – and every time i'd get the diaphragm loaded on the stick, these greased up edges that had to hold the diaphragm in place on the stick, wouldn't. couldn't. didn't. the goo-filled diaphragm shot off the stick, bounced off the walls, spreading sperm killing goo, randomly, landing onto black and white squares dancing.

this is 1971 and the pot was really - fresh, maybe some people here remember? red? gold? i couldn't stop laughing. three times i had to retrieve the bouncing rubber spaceship, wipe goo off the walls and goo is hard to find on black and white tiles. i wash the diaphragm, dry it, put more goo on it, stretch it onto the notched stick, turn it over and - kapow - he's in the bedroom going, - *what are you doing?* he was crabby: coitus got interruptus before it got begunus. i'm laughing so hard, trying to get my new plastic slingshot and slimy spaceship to protect me from something i didn't even know i couldn't have.

walking after midnight in the soul light magic blunts up against the man as we know him to be or not to be mostly not being mostly not but why not that's what's interesting why.

i loved being chased. then falling and receiving whatever he was bringing communicating in his thrusting or his teasing and the eruption of feeling and liquid warm or hot his waste my treasure. how could two creatures be so far apart making completely different meanings from one ex-static act.

i didn't feel inferior. i felt invisible.