

might happen to you —
only nobody ever
told us what.

The Kotex Company
finally published a pamphlet
obscurely entitled
"Are You In The Know?"
It was illustrated with cute cartoons
of young women dancing, skating,
doing jumping jacks,
even taking a shower —
all while on their period.
Wanda, the biggest slut
in our seventh grade class,
always carried a pamphlet in her purse.
Whenever she saw a boy nearby,
she would sneak it out
and show it off to her friends,
and they would giggle and gag
and shriek hysterically
as if they were looking at
a Tijuana Bible.

My daughters
get to choose from an enormous
and colorful assortment of tampons,
mini-pads, maxi-pads, panty-liners,
panty-shields, pads with little
butterfly edges so your underpants
won't get stained, and all of the above
for light days, medium days, and
heavy days — scented or unscented.
They toss them into their grocery carts
along with the fresh vegetables
and cans of ravioli.
If the price won't register
on the glass computer plate,
the clerk yells through the intercom,
"Hey, Joe! I need a price-check on
super-absorbant, scented, Maxi-Pads —
Aisle Six!"
And nobody even bothers
to look up from their copies
of The National Enquirer.

SUPER WOMAN

My girlfriend, Mary Ellen,
didn't have to work.
The interest alone
from her Daddy's trust fund

could have easily supported her
in a lifestyle few of us
will ever know.

But Mary Ellen said she needed
to work to get out of the house —
and besides, she was seeing one attorney
during her lunch hours
and another on the afternoons
when she was supposed to be attending
her Junior Assistance League meetings.
Neither attorney knew about the other
and her husband didn't know
about the attorneys.
Mary Ellen never worried about anything
except getting caught.
Guilt was not one of her
strong points.

But she would go into a stomping,
door-slamming fit
if one of her artificial nails
broke off.
Mary Ellen was a perfectionist.
She had her hair permed and frosted
twice a month by Mario,
her favorite stylist.
Mario wanted very much to
jump her bones,
but tho she found his accent
and rippling brown muscles appealing,
she was afraid he
couldn't keep his mouth shut,
or maybe she would catch a disease —
like herpes or the clap or AIDS.

Mary Ellen owned a beautiful
split-level in Newport Beach.
She did all her own housework.
She said it was cathartic, and anyway,
she didn't want some clumsey cleaning woman
breaking her expensive bevelled-glass
coffee tables.
She had two nice kids
who were always clean and well-behaved,
and a big shaggy mutt named Chivas
after her favorite brand of scotch.

Mary Ellen loved to cook.
After an exhausting day of work
and fooling around,
she would hurry home
and whip up an entire gourmet meal
and serve it on her every-day Noritaki,

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!"