

FACULTY HOUSING



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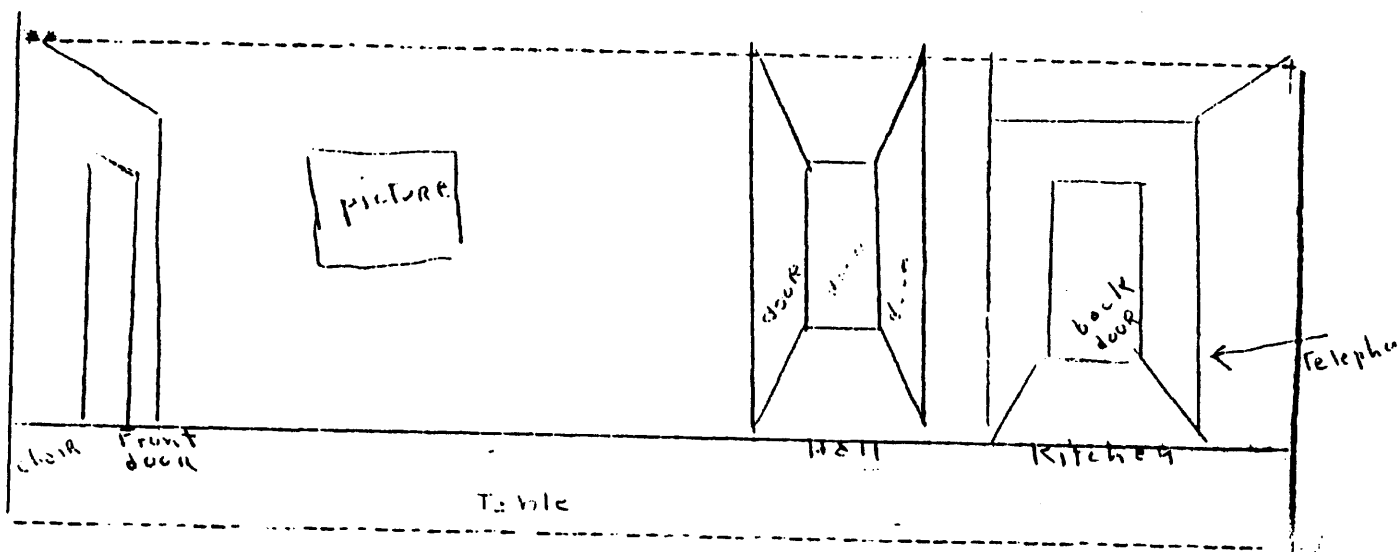
Dear Stefan

You have my permission to use Faculty Housing in your magazine MELE with the understanding the rights belong to me as the author.

Proud to be in your publication.

Aloha,

Zohmah Charlot



Cast in Order of Appearance

Martin

Papa

Ann

John

Bird

Mother

Peter

Repair man

Neighbor

Grandfather

and neighbor children

Living room of small house. American city. Time 1950s.
 What light there is comes through drawn curtains from street
 light and dawn. Quiet. Noise of car motor--milk bottles
 placed on doorstep-- paper banged against door.

Quick movement across hallway--running water.

Woman's voice backstage
 Lift the lid!

A little boy in pajamas comes in, turns on light, starts
 putting papers and tools on table.

Boys' voices from rear.
 Get up
 Shut up
 Get up
 Shut up
 Get up
 Shut up

Woman's voice
 Time to get ready for school.

Noise of body pushed on floor.

Two children running and colliding in hallway, one child
 gets through door and slams it.

Woman's voice
 Someday we'll get a house with two bathrooms.

Man appears in nightshirt, goes to kitchen, puts coffee on
 to percolate, returns to back of house.

A girl about 14 comes in, fully dressed, hair combed,
 carrying radio which she plugs in connection and starts
 music. Goes to telephone and dials number.

Ann
 Hi, did you finish your algebra. I did during the
 Imogene Coco Hour. Wasn't it neat. You know, I thought this
 was the best song on the Hit Parade: chum chum booooo boom
 boom whatcha whatcha gi gi gi ga.

A boy 12 or 13 appears during her conversation, fully
 dressed, hair combed, lets bird out of cage, opens front
 door, brings in newspaper.

John

What's happened in Formosa. What's happened to Lil Abner.

Sits down and starts reading, bird hops on his head.

Mother appears, wearing blue jeans, old shirt, looks a mess--opens curtains to daylight.

Will someone please bring in the milk.

No one pays attention except John, who without looking up from the paper shouts.

Bring in the milk, you guys.

Mother shakes Martin, still concentrating on his papers.

Martin

Damn you, mother. Excuse me.

Martin and John together

You bring the milk.

No, you bring them.

There, I brought two, now you bring two.

I brought one, now you bring one.

Mother

Where's Peter?

Little boy enters, very cross.

Peter

Too much noise, I can't sleep.

And this is how much Martin bothers me, I even have him in my dreams.

Mother

Do you all want tuna sandwiches for lunch. (Pulls open kitchen drawer to get bread.)

Children's voices all at once

Lettuce.

No lettuce.

I don't want tomato.

Give me mayonnaise.

I hate cheese.

Ann stops telephone murmuring long enough to say
Lots of mayonnaise.

Papa comes in, looks at picture on wall, goes out front door.

Martin shouts

Oh Papa, can I have ten cents.

Peter

I am a lucky boy to have an artist papa instead of just a fireman or someone like that who would have time to take his little boy to picnics and the zoo.

John

Get ready everyone, it is getting late. Hurry up.

Starts dragging Peter back into the hall, fight starts.

Martin begins hammering.

Coffee bubbling

Radio playing

Mother handing around bowls of cereal.

Ann into phone

I am starting to school now. See you in a minute.

Peter reappears dressed, and all the children go out front door. All come back in and get forgotten books or forgotten lunch bags. Martin stops a second to hammer.

Bird hops on John's head and goes out door with him.

Door is held open and just bird reappears, flying in.

Bird

Karachikarachi.

Mother appears, gathers heap of dirty dishes and carries them to kitchen. Comes back carrying cup of coffee, picks up scattered newspaper with one hand, trying to put it together, falls into chair. Bird comes and pecks at her foot.

Telephone rings.

Mother

Charlot residence. Yesss. Yes. The PTA Tuesday.

A dozen cookies for the cub scouts. Yes. Goodbye.

While talking puts foot on table, touches forehead to knee, reverses legs, repeats.

Hangs up phone, sits down. Phone rings.

Mother

Charlot residence. Why hello Janie dear. Oh, we are all very well. Friday next. Black tie. (With one hand

thumbing quickly through appointment book) We will be happy to come. Goodbyyyyyyye.

Starts to sit down, instead runs down hall reappears with party dress, holds it in front of mirror. Makes horrible face.

Mirror, mirror on the wall
This is a terrible lie

Quickly does some bending exercises.

Doorbell rings.

Man

I've come to fix the sink. (Enter with tools)

Mother hurries to kitchen and brings back the stack of dishes. Bird flies over and sits on man's shoulder.

Man

This looks like a plain ordinary mynah bird.

Mother

That's what it is. He fell out of a tree and we've raised him from a baby. We like him a lot.

Man

I've got a real parakeet. (starts hammering)

Voice at door

Hi! All the kids in school today.

Mother opening door for neighbor to enter.

I'm glad you came, I haven't had anyone to talk to for days. I'll pour us some coffee.

Both sit down with cups of coffee.

Neighbor

I feel good today--children well, no leaky faucets, not pregnant. No one crabby.

Mother listening to Man hammering

It isn't our faucet. It's the glue Martin poured down the the drain. And I hope no one in this family is complaining or coughing.

Neighbor

What else do you know.

Mother

I don't think I know a thing.
Why do men always expect to be constantly happy.
Women don't always expect to be happy.

Neighbor

Can't they be pigheaded.
Any news on a house?

Mother

We still hope. My father is coming through town this afternoon. He hasn't been for a long time. Maybe when he sees how the children have grown....Anyway he is such a good business man we can ask his advice.

Neighbor

Why do you care two hoots.

Mother

Maybe he will like being a grandfather! Anyway, my children have a wonderful father. I married a wonderful father.

Neighbor

Oh, that darn bird, he nipped me.

Tiny children at front door.

Is Ann home?

Man, giving last hammer, goes out without speaking, looking back puzzled.

Commotion at back door. Group of neighbor children run around and around room, shooting cap pistols.

Neighbor

I must be going.

Mother sees her to door, shoos children out. Phone rings.

Mother

Hello, dear, yes dear, everything is fine. Any mail?
Come home as early as you can. Don't forget Dad is coming. Goodbye dear.

Rushes around, picking up things off floor, gathering up Martin's materials, sweeping, singing.

Not a fling
You get a ring
and can sing
It is love

If there's a doubt
 What it's about
 Just shout
 It's love

When you pop
 From picking up slop
 Don't drop
 It's for love

Plain rape
 Maybe an escape
 And have more shape
 But it ain't love

Don't complain
 Of the pain
 It sounds insane
 But call it love.

Don't wish to be dead
 It is blessed
 To be wed
 It is love.

Ann comes in, throws down school books, turns on radio, goes to telephone.

Hello, I am listening to the radio (turns it on louder).

Can you hear now. Okay, okay. Oh, thrill, thrill.
 What are you going to wear Saturday. Shall we wear
 bluejeans or peddle pushers. Shall we wear shoes?
 What's playing at the movie, or shall we window shop.
 Yea. One or two at the King. hmm hmm hmm hmm.

John comes in, holds up book

Say, mama, you should read this book "The Confessions
 of St. Augustine," Sheed does a good translation. I
 really like the beginning when he philosophizes. That
 man was a master with the vernacular. Gad.

Holds up another book.

And this is a good adventure story but not particularly
 terrific.

Starts to sit down with books.

Mother

Do your practicing. (John goes to get violin)
 Ann, you had better practice now too.

Ann

What, ohh, Mrs. Neighbor is home and she said I can only use their piano when they aren't home. I need a piano, mother. (returns to murmuring into the phone.)

Mother

When we get a house...

Martin and Peter rush in, throw books, shoes, ties, papers on every chair.

YIIPPPPIII YIIPPIII!

Mother

Boys, change your clothes.

Both boys rush down hall, immediately return. Peter carrying an electric train and starts laying it out on the floor.

Peter

I like my train.

Bird tries to follow.

Martin enters with large papers and strings which he starts to nail on walls.

John stops practicing long enough to turn on the Hi Fi, goes back to practicing. Ann reaches out to raise sound of radio. Mother starts for kitchen, trips over Martin's work.

Martin

(In loud voice) Damn you mother. (In soft voice) Excuse me.

Concentrates back on work.

Mother starts tap water and mixer.

Neighbor children at front door.

Is Ann home? (No one pays any attention.)

Papa enters silently, carrying picture, takes down the one on wall, puts up new one.

Peter

Hello Pop.

Papa goes out, returns in nightshirt, goes to kitchen, mixes drink, kisses mother, disappears in back of house. Pounds very loud on connecting wall.

Papa, yelling
QUIET!

Mother draws curtains, turns on light.

Door bell rings

Grandfather enters.

Children all running to door
GRANDPA, GRANDPA

Martin spills his paint.

Mother to Martin
Oh, you haven't changed your clothes.

Mother, kisses her father, calls
Dear, come, Dad's here.

Martin and Peter drag Grandfather to chair, sit on his lap.
Martin gets paint on him.

Peter
Grandpa, you haven't much hair.

Martin
Don't say that, Peter.

Peter
Well, he hasn't

John
Grandpa, have you read this book of saints? Here is something rather cute. About a saint, it says she was virgin, wife, widow and religious.

Grandfather
I believe in the Great Scientists.

Ann, after standing on one foot and then the other, returns to telephone
My Grandfather is here...

Papa appears
Hello Dad.

Grandfather

I am certainly very glad to see you all. If only I wasn't so busy with my business I could come more often.

Mother

We are glad you are here now.

Grandfather

My Peter, you are really growing up.

Peter

I am still falling down too, BOOM.

Grandfather

I understand you want to buy a home. That costs money. Money! Now, you can't live cheaper than you do right here. Stay right here.

John

You mean not try to get a house?

Martin

Well, I like it here, we have a tree to climb.

Peter

We have a mountain to climb too.

Ann into the phone before hanging up

My Grandfather doesn't think we should get a house.

Then calling

But could you get us a piano, Grandpa?

Grandfather

Well, this has been a fine visit. Now I must get to that business deal.

All kiss, he leaves.

Children return to their activities. John puts away violin, starts reading. Mother runs to telephone---murrmurrs.

As mother returns, only Papa sees tears.

Papa

Don't feel sad. It was so nice to have your Dad here, and so nice for the children to see their grandfather. And we do have almost enough saved for a down payment on a house, almost a thousand dollars.

Mother

No we haven't. That's what I telephoned about. I've just spent it on something that's going to be delivered right away.

Children, I have a wonderful surprise for you!

Truck motor. Everyone presses back against wall while moving men enter and set up a grand piano in the middle of the floor.

Ann

Oh, Mother!

Children

It's beautiful, it's beautiful.

Papa

What an idea!!

Ann and Peter try to play piano at once. John brings out his violin, everyone shouts or sings.

Bird

Cherrup, cherrup, cheerup.

Papa

I think we should say our prayers.

All kneel around piano

John

It is my turn to lead the prayers.

Martin

It is my turn

They kick each other.

Papa starts the prayers, the boys still fighting.

Peter, putting his head against his mother

Mama, I'm sleepy, carry me to bed and stay with me a little while.

Phone rings, Ann answers

You know what, we have a piano. Keen!

Prayers

Ann murmuring into phone

Papa goes to his room.

Mother

Now, all brush your teeth.

Martin

I forgot to tell you, I've got a terrible sliver in my foot.

John

I want to tell you a good joke I heard today.

Mother goes out carrying Peter, the bigger boys following.

Martin shouting

Hurry and come and kiss us, mother.

John

Go to sleep.

Martin

Shut up.

John

Go to sleep.

Martin

Shut up.

Ann hangs up phone, plays a scale on piano, goes out dancing.

Mother returns to room, runs around, catches bird and puts him in cage. Carries milk bottles out. Carries out garbage can.

Looks at piano and clasps hands to head.

Opens typewriter, sits down, but nods sleepily.

Papa reappears, goes to refrigerator.

Papa

Come to bed.

Mama

In a minute.

Starts typing

The audience isn't shown what she writes.