

THE QUARRY

I Want to Hold your Hands

Michele Piper

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**WARNING TO ALL PARENTS, PLEASE KEEP AN EYE ON YOUR DAUGHTERS!
KEEP THEM AWAY FROM ALL BEATLES MUSIC. NATIONAL PUBLIC
SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT**

If your child displays the following symptoms, please contact the police

- Mood swings**
- Shrieking/squealing**
- Abdominal pain**
- Blood lust**
- Tiredness**
- Growing of limbs**

- **Isolation/lack of communication**
- **Mutation**

The Australian government is here to ensure your safety. Prime Minister Menzies will address the public shortly.

She was just seventeen. Like any other girl her age. You'd think a girl caught up in politics and movements would be last person to listen to the Beatles. Lynne O'Farrell, school captain for Bonnyrigg High. Tall, ginger, bursting with potential, that's what her teachers said. A proper smart girl. Those darned Beatles, Joan would think. Beatle fever: an epidemic spreading across Australia. Their world recovering from Vietnam. To avoid public hysteria, Menzies had to quieten down the rumours.

I've lost her now for sure, I won't see her no more.

I can't conceive of any more misery

It all started Christmas morning 1963. The family gathered in the small lounge room, Lynne sitting cross-legged on the brown carpet, still stained by last year's wine fiasco. Kenneth was fooling no one but himself if he thought that he pulled off the Elvis haircut. Lumped into the lounge, he meticulously combed his hair. Henry sat proudly in his brown worn leather armchair. I got the kids something good this year. I just know it, he thought to himself. Joan ran around frantically for the camera. Although Lynne had just turned seventeen, being the youngest meant she opened her presents first. As she unwrapped the green metallic paper, Joan bent down getting ready to capture the moment. Imagine poor Joan's horror to see four bowl haircuts. Henry grinned.

'All the kids are listening to them these days. Wouldn't want my sweet pea to miss out!'

Oh lord. Henry you idiot, Joan thought.

My Lynne wasn't going to listen to that garbage. Don't want it turning her brain to mush. Those boys were a distraction, making girls go gaga. They sang of love and dancing, adult things. Joan grinned painfully as she took a picture of Lynne, who was proudly holding up the album. Kenneth moaned loudly,

'C'mon mum, can I get going now?'

Joan scolded him; it was family time. Whatever he wanted to do wasn't important. He was quite desperate to meet Cassie his new girlfriend, who scored grass from a mate in Liverpool. Getting up, he kicked his boots into the carpet and left.

Lynne played that record every afternoon. At teatime, Joan would rush to the record player and turn it off. She found them tolerable at first. They were well-dressed boys, but their shaggy hair was most unflattering. Their songs tunnelled into her ear drums, a painful ache. Joan's efforts to kill this boy band obsession was quite trying. She occasionally nagged Lynne every afternoon.

'Lynne my darling, you won't be listening to that stuff when you're my age.'

At least she wasn't hypnotised by Elvis' swinging hips. She never had this issue with Kenneth. There was the obsession with John Wayne but what boy didn't have a cowboy phase? Despite her efforts, Lynne became submerged into new waters and girls all over the world were jumping in. It grew by collecting *Woman's Weekly*, reading articles about John's new girlfriend.

February 20th 1964

Lynne went to Gemma Smith's place. They were laying on Gemma's bed taking a quiz on which member was most likely to be your boyfriend. The new album playing in the room. *I Saw Her Standing There* played for the second time and Lynne bobbed her head along. Gemma got up to use the loo and left Lynne alone. She wouldn't mind if I borrowed it, right? Lynne thought to herself.

BANG BANG

Joan opened the door. There Lynne stood looking down at her feet like a guilty child. Mrs Smith stood next to her fuming. Caught stealing—my daughter! Punishment was necessary. Henry didn't help, instead he bought her the album encouraging her bad behaviour.

As well as religiously listening to the record, Lynne would plop herself in front of the TV and watch the Ed Sullivan show. Joan was quite cross as this meant she couldn't watch the news. Lynne wasn't sitting at the table anymore. Spent no time eating that one, she had to watch her boys. The way Paul looked, almost as if he was right there. Close enough to touch. The girls on screen went into some kind of state, almost like collective hypnotism. The unholy sounds that would come out of that box, Joan thought. Them **screamers**, it became infectious. Parents around the world saw it, the crazed look in their daughter's eyes. Lynne's love for the Beatles grew furiously, coinciding with her accident.

March 12th 1964

Kenneth brought home a beat-up FJ Holden for his first car. The old tin box hadn't been driven in years. Red interior covered in dust and cobwebs. Sun rays beamed down on his naked torso as he worked on the car. Lynne ran up to it and jumped in. She twiddled around in the seat and noticed a redback scuttling across the dashboard. It crawled onto her thigh and dug its fangs into her white leg. That evening she vomited and sweated through her sheets. Sticky residue leaked from her pores. Henry put the record player in her room as it soothed her. No one could enter her room. The record played for forty-eight hours straight. In her sleep, the sweet voices of Paul and Ringo soothed her pain. They were there for her and now were hers **forever**. Joan waited to enter the room. At 1am Joan entered and turned on the lamp. There were slits slashed deep into Lynne's back, covered in thick yellow pus. With her finger, she cleared it slowly from the openings and noticed small tiny hairs on the inside. She wanted to scream, but could not awake Lynne. Slowly backing away towards the door, Joan was careful as to not trip over sticky webbing.

The Sun published stories of local girls being admitted to hospital for severe abdominal pain and high blood pressure. Scientists were saying the Beatles caused this epidemic, "the music exaggerates violent tempers, triggering dormant genes in their brains." Psychologists were saying it was just irregular levels of estrogen, caused by the weather. It didn't help that the Beatles just released tickets for their first Australian tour. Only Australian fans were becoming a threat, seen as silly teenagers' excitement. Girls across Australia were turning

into ‘Spider Girls’. Joan knew she couldn’t wait until Lynne’s condition would become worse. The thought of her sweet child turning into some sort of animal frightened her. She was never a religious lady. All she did was take the kids to Sunday school, only because her parents took her. Whatever she could do to make sure they were raised right.

The day after her hellish discovery, Joan woke up at 8am and cooked a full breakfast for her family. The eggs were perfectly cooked, the toast slightly under. She had always cooked—enough for the whole street, Henry would remark. As Joan set the last plate onto the table, she walked to Lynne’s door and knocked loudly for breakfast.

Lynne curled out of her blanket, slowly crawling out of her cocoon. As she sprawled out her spindly legs, she felt a slow pain spread across her muscles. Walking towards her cupboard, she passed the blinds wincing at the bright sun. “I must get ready,” she thought to herself. “Mum’s already pissed at me; I don’t want to make it worse”. Standing at her wardrobe, she looked at the peeled scented stickers. When she went to open her cupboard, she pulled on the doorknob and ripped the door clean off! Shocked by her sudden hulking strength, she haphazardly dropped it. Continuing about her day, she picked up a dress her Nan gave to her to grow into. It was brown and collared, a bit short now. It wasn’t the nicest dress, but she thought of Joan. See, a week or so ago, Gemma leant her a magazine about dressing like a Beatle. Joan confiscated it while Lynne was sleeping. Most of her pictures of the boys were taken. As she pulled the dress over her head, there was a loud CRACK in her back. Her back arched forward with a jolt. Joan knocked once again at the door, more quickly. Lynne slowly pulled it down and got ready to leave.

‘**The bugs are here and have made girls queer**’, read the newspaper laying on the coffee table. They sat side by side on the hard, plastic couch. The surgery smelt of chemicals and sullen notes of dirty diapers. Lynne was next to be called. She stared at the newspaper, angry. How dare they treat her boys like that. Joan sat; legs crossed with her hands in her lap.

Dr. Layton walked out of his office and gestured at them to enter. They walked into his office and shut the door behind them. His organised desk was placed against the wall, opposite the examination table and a green curtain. Joan had already informed Dr. Layton

about Lynne, over the phone. Lynne stood behind the curtain and removed her clothes. She had to listen to her mum, she had no authority here. Dr Layton went behind and took out his wooden stick. He didn't know what he was looking at. Not all girls who'd come in had progressed this quickly. He pushed his stick through the thick film of pus and hit something hard. He withdrew the stick disgusted, and in fear asked her to dress herself. Joan waited in anticipation to hear the diagnosis.

'Mrs O'Farrell, your daughter will be fine. Now as you have informed me, she was bitten. You see there has been an infection of sorts. I can only recommend you limit her listening to this band. The correlation is unsure, but I myself have had bite victims recover quickly.'

He hid the truth, that there were no studies conducted and there was no clue. Every doctor in Australia had to lie. A spider infection caused by music sounded bizarre, and some who were bitten were not affected. There were links to puberty or redback symptoms. Little did the Australians know that this was only the beginning.

June 17th 1964

Lynne laid in her bed, leaving the door slightly opened as agreed by Joan. Lynne still locked herself away, keeping the blinds closed. Joan kept walking by her bedroom, looking inside to see the webs strung across the ceiling. All the mums at school were talking about it, how their daughters kept giggling to themselves and would argue all the time. The newspapers called the fans a cult. Joan did not want her poor Lynne to be associated with a cult.

There was a knock at the door. It was their next-door neighbour, Gemma with messy hair.

'Hi Mrs O'Farrell, I've come to see Lynne... about school'

As Joan let her in, she noticed the dark circles under her eyes. She also noticed how Gemma's mouth was quite full, her top teeth poking out of her mouth. Gemma slinked into the bedroom and banged the door. Joan stood outside the room, listening in. Lynne was laying on her stomach, sewing 'Yeah, yeah, yeah' onto the collar of her brown dress.

‘Did you hear what happened?’, Gemma asked Lynne.

Lynne pushed up out of bed and dropped the dress,

‘What happened?’

‘Ringo’s been rushed to hospital. He’s not coming anymore!’

They both started screaming, facing their heads upwards, almost like a shriek of pain.

‘But he must come!’ Lynne replied.

They grew very angry, as tall legs sprouted out of their backs. Lynne picked up the record player and threw it against the wall. Gemma started pounding at the walls and cried loudly. Scuttling to her pile of new magazines, Lynne began shredding the pages with her fangs. Their screaming became quite loud, but unrecognisable to Joan’s ears. Its piercing frequency alarming dogs and notifying all the girls in the neighbourhood. Reports of physical violence popped up around the nation. Joan barged in; the two girls stopped in their tracks.

‘What on earth is going on here?’

Gemma hissed and ran past Joan, pushing Joan to the ground. Lynne just stared at her mother, seething in anger. Joan didn’t know what to do. She couldn’t call the police, otherwise they’d take her daughter away. If she told Henry, he’d call her a monster and lock her up in the house. Perhaps she should pretend nothing happened at all, just carry on. Looking into those red eyes, that wasn’t Lynne anymore. Lynne hissed at her mother.

‘No one can stop me; I must see them!’

Lynne dashed past her injured mother; hell bent on going to their concert.

Well, my heart went “boom”

When I crossed that room

I saw her standing there

June 19th 1964

The Beatles beheaded! Chaos unfolds at Rushcutters's Bay. (The Sun)

Last night The Beatles played their first Sydney show at Sydney stadium. There were 200 officers present to manage the 12,000 screaming fans. The 'Tin Shed' built as a boxing ring was used as the venue, to hold the large capacity. The venue was dimly lit, flashes from photographers providing little light. Thousands of girls under sixteen who occupied the most expensive seats seem to be in a state of delirium. As the band played their first song, the room roared in excitement. There was a turn however as a group of fans started shrieking and chanting.

'Yeah, you got that somethin'
I think you'll understand
When I feel that somethin'
I want to hold your hand'

Their chant being lyrics for The Beatles own song. This eerie sentiment from large spider girls. Then they crawled onto the stage and seized George Harrison. The other members dropped their instruments and officers sprung to the scene. The howling crowd had grown 8 legs and sharp fangs; a father commented.

"They became angry. I don't know what happened to them. I looked over to my daughter to see her transform. Then she jumped on stage and ripped Ringo's head off, that's some strength for a fourteen-year-old." (Leonard Pax, father)

The fans then proceeded to fight over the boys, pulling their legs and arms. Officers pulled out their guns, firing into the dark. Their piercing screams grew louder as officers covered their ears. Some did manage to tackle the large creatures. Many did not survive. As such, The Beatles concerts are indefinitely cancelled due to this horrific event.

*You hurt me then
You're back again
No, no, no, not a second time*