

Teen Spirit

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Chris' first time didn't happen until he was nineteen years old.

Indeed, until that time he'd never even kissed a girl, though there'd been the odd time when he fancied he'd been close. But nothing he could ever be sure about. He was always very awkward with girls.

In fact, he was awkward with everyone. He only had a couple of friends, Pete and Stu, who sometimes came to see him, as he would visit their homes. On these occasions, they would crank up the stereo, put on their Scorpions, Metallica or Nirvana CDs, and mime wildly in front of the mirrors pretending to be a Kurt Cobain reduced to playing air guitar. Inevitably, one of their mums or, in Stu's and Pete's cases, one of their dads, would rap on the door and yell at them to turn the volume down. People were trying to watch TV.

Chris had had more friends, like Baz and Martin, at one time, but they'd done rather better at their final GCE exams and had gone on to university. Chris envied them when they met up at Christmas. They were now so much older and wiser than him and his mates. And they were having a great time at uni, staying up late, drinking in the student bar, smoking dope, and, in Martin's case, hanging around with a girlfriend. Fuck! It wasn't fair! All he had to look forward to, like Stu and Pete, were the re-sits of the exams in which they'd just not done well enough to get into a polytechnic or university.

Bloody Maths! Bloody General Science! And why, oh why, had he opted to do Geography? If only you didn't have to go through all this shit!

Most evenings, of course, Chris stayed at home. And most of that time in his bedroom, forever putting off doing his homework, leafing through imported American comic books whilst a selection of Heavy Metal CDs crashed, wailed and

moaned in the background. His walls were splattered with posters of rock stars and a couple of pictures of bosomy girls he'd scissored out of GQ or FHM, such grown-up magazines, too frightened to blu-tac the pictures he really wanted up there above the TV or crappy 80386 PC his mum had bought him. Christ! What he wouldn't do to have one of those Pentiums he'd read about? They had over 100 MB of hard disk, 33 MHz of processing power and an astronomical 8 MB of RAM! If he'd had that, then those pictures he got on the floppy disk he'd copied off Stu would load up really quick.

And it was these pictures, or ones a lot like them, Chris really wanted on his wall. So much harder core than the ones in the porn mags he'd had handed down from Gary at the sixth form college. Even though the girls in Penthouse and Razzle were a lot better looking. And, it was often these pictures he'd masturbate to the most furiously, rather than the ones on the floppy disks of women being fucked and women fucking each other. If only he could put their pictures on the wall instead of the ones of Ritchie Blackmore and the equally decrepit Ozzy Osbourne.

Every evening he found time to lie on his bed, long hair splayed over his pillow, one of the porn mags he stored under the sock drawer spread open in front of his face. Tonight he concentrated on lovely Lucinda's beautiful body. His hand pumped furiously at his erect penis while he imagined what it would be like to stick it in that airbrushed vagina, beneath that thin strip of pubic hair. Or to nuzzle his nose between those silicone-enhanced breasts with the rather too tiny nipples. What would it feel like to have Lucinda impaled on the end of his average length prick?

"Dinner!" yelled his mum over the cacophony of an AC/DC guitar solo, accompanied by a cat-like vocal shriek.

“Must I?” Chris groaned, tucking his penis into his jeans, hoping it would deflate to more manageable proportions before he joined his sister and mum for one of those ready-made meals at the only time of the day, besides breakfast, his family ever spent any time together.

When he got downstairs, he found that his mum had prepared something very different. In fact, she’d actually cooked a kind of casserole, something she did very rarely. And a bigger surprise than that was to see a woman, who must have been in her mid-thirties (at least!) sitting on the chair that used to be his dad’s. That was, of course, before he ran off with his secretary, whom Chris still hated as a blousy bitch, although she was actually quite petite and rather pretty.

“This is Pam,” announced Chris’ mum with a broad smile. “She’s staying here for a while.”

“Pleased to meet you, Chris,” said Pam, extending a firm hand to shake his rather limp one. “Tina, your mum, has told me so much about you!”

Oh! Christ! A woman! Probably ten years younger than his mum, but quite similarly dressed. Chris was relieved he’d applied the cream to that persistent zit on his chin. Her hair was cut relatively short, she sported long dangling earrings, and, unlike his mum, wore no make-up at all. Chris focused his gaze on her face, which was slightly broad, the eyes wide, the lips thick and fading freckles covering the pale skin of her face. Like his mum, she was thick boned, but by no means plump. Her hand and bare arm showed that she was at least as strong as he was.

Chris didn’t know where to look during the meal, despite the many attempts made by both Pam and his mum to engage him in conversation.

Were his studies were going well? “Yeh.” Did he play football? “Nah.” Did he

enjoy his day trip to Calais with the college three weeks ago? “S Okay.”

Whenever his eyes caught Pam, he attempted to evaluate her. She wore baggy cotton trousers and a kind of silk top that showed she had a rather less prominent bosom than his mum. Thankfully, it was his sister, Lottie, just fourteen years old, who filled in for Chris’ lack of communication skills and prevented the dinner from descending into sullen silence.

Chris couldn’t wait to get away from the table. Even though dinner went on for almost twice as long as it normally would. His mum had bought a cake from Marks & Spencer’s and even opened a bottle of wine. She was definitely making much more of an effort than she did when she invited any of her colleagues home from work. And as Chris sipped on the wine, its sharp taste such a contrast to the frothy lager he normally drank when he went down the pub with Stu and Pete at the weekends, he watched his mother’s eyes and Pam’s meet across the table with a strange intense warmth.

All the while Lottie chatted about the time she and Sally and Rachel and Pauline had gone to see some crappy boy band she was keen on. Bloody hell! When would she grow up and listen to decent music?

At least it wasn’t as excruciating as that time when his mum had brought back that accountant who worked in the City. On that occasion, Chris really hated the man, who reminded him so much of his dad and the way he’d go on about how Chris should cut his hair, study harder and get a girlfriend. He was actually rather pleased when his mum’s brief relationship disintegrated within a month to evenings of bitter tears and a silent unanswered phone. So much better than those horrible grunting and thumping noises he could hear coming from his mum’s bedroom late at night when he

was trying to get some sleep.

Chris eventually made his escape and pulled out the picture of Lucinda to finish his interrupted wank. All the while, he could hear Pam and his mum laughing and giggling long after Lottie had gone to bed and, strangely, long after the two of them had also retired, Pam, he was sure, laying her head on the sofa bed cushions in his mum's bedroom.

It puzzled him that over the next few weeks, stretching into months, with those dreaded exams approaching, that Pam still stayed at their house. Didn't she have anywhere else she could go? But he got used to sharing breakfast and dinner with her, and even found some of the things she said very amusing. Gradually, and reticently, Chris became less monosyllabic in his replies to her questions and even found himself laughing, in an unselfconscious way that rather frightened him, to some of her more outrageous comments.

And all the while, his mum watched the two of them together with an indulgent sympathetic smile.

Lottie, in particular, got on well with Pam, sometimes talking rather too much about how wonderful she was when they were together and Pam elsewhere.

"Oh crap, Lottie!" Chris exclaimed. "She's not that great. And anyway she'll have to leave soon when she finds a place of her own to stay."

Lottie seemed very downhearted at this. She went untypically quiet and picked at the little scab on her elbow.

"Do you think so?"

"Of course! It's not like she's Dad or anything, is it?"

One evening, Pam knocked on Chris' door and wandered into his room while

the sounds of Nirvana's *Nevermore* album pounded out its grinding, mechanical rhythm.

"Smells like Teen Spirit?" she commented, reading the sleeve notes.

"Yeah! It's great, isn't it?"

"It's got something, I have to admit. Better than most of your rock music stuff to my ears. But then I quite like house. Do you like house? Or do you just listen to heavy metal?"

"Yeah! It's the only stuff worth listening to!"

"Really?" Pam commented, raising a good-humoured eyebrow. "So you don't like house at all?"

"Not that. Or rave. Or anything of that dance shit. Sorry, rubbish."

This admission from Pam should somehow have lessened his opinion of her. After all, if there was anything Chris and his mates hated with a vengeance, it was house music. He and Stu had once been to a night club and spent the whole evening sitting around a table sneering at the ravers as they jumped around like lunatics to all that pounding electronic shit. Hardcore house and techno crap! Why couldn't they play decent metal at these clubs? Something with a bit of heavy axe-work where you could shake your hair and play air guitar. Fuck! If they'd put on some thrash, death or other kind of metal, it'd shit on all that percussive stuff where there was no, like, tune at all and almost as good as no vocals. But somehow Chris didn't feel like expressing his negative feelings as strongly as he normally would.

Chris noticed Pam's strangely downcast face.

"Well, I'm sure that some house is good," he conceded. "It's just that I've not heard any."

One morning, a few days later, when his mum and Pam were both out of the house, he sneaked into his mum's room, something he rarely did, and noticed with some disconcertment that the sofa bed showed no evidence at all of having been opened. However, he did notice that the sheets on his mum's bed mattress were pushed carelessly to one side and that there were the still warm indentations of two bodies.

Chris sniffed dismissively. His mum couldn't even be bothered to get the other bed made. How could Pam stand to share the same bed as his mum?

Nonetheless, there was something about these shared arrangements that troubled him, along with those late-night titters and the strangely noisy headboard, though he had no very good idea as to what it might mean. You just couldn't hope to understand women.

His disconcertment grew, but in a quite different direction, when one night he encountered Pam naked in the bathroom. He'd drunk perhaps too many lagers with Stu that night in the pub, and this was his third visit to the loo at an early hour. He pushed open the bathroom door, worried rather more that he might puke (again!) than of the likelihood of meeting anyone, when there he was confronted, only a foot or so away, by Pam's naked body.

Pam would never have got a job posing for Penthouse, that was for sure. Or even for Razzle. Her body was too thick and her breasts too small on her broad chest, coloured by innumerable freckles, but she was still the first woman that Chris had ever seen in the nude. In real life, as it were.

It was only a moment, accompanied by grunted apologies, but as Chris sat on the toilet seat, a stream of urine splattering against the bowl, he rehearsed in his mind

every second of what he'd seen. And again and again, his mind returned to the memory of that thick bush of pubic hair, so different from a porn star's shaved stripe.

This wasn't the only time that Chris saw Pam naked, though the only time it was accidental. So vivid and compulsive was that image, which he used without the accompaniment of *Whitehouse* or *Hustler* to achieve a fistful of semen in his regular masturbatory sessions, that he made a point of engineering a reprise. He actually waited until he heard the door of his mum's door open and Pam enter the hallway to himself emerge in the hope of seeing more of that bare flesh. Only this time, his penis was rock hard under his pyjamas.

It was only when he'd sat down on the toilet, his penis still stiff and wholly unable to perform the duties expected of it, that Chris worried about whether Pam's eyes might have wandered down below his chest to the evidence of his longing under his pyjama trousers.

Pam and his mum had a strange friendship, Chris could see that. Occasionally, they were so close that they even sometimes touched each other, just like sisters might do, even once kissing each other when they weren't aware that Chris could see them. Other times, there was a curious fractiousness in their friendship, rather like what Chris experienced when he worried whether Stu might be spending more time with Martin than with him. But he knew girls were sappy. And that was true whether they were young, like Lottie, or really old, like his mum.

Pam started visiting him in his room more often. At first, rather hesitantly, and making no comment about the music that was the constant wallpaper of his life.

Chris knew that the records he played were about the least like house music there was and he somehow felt strangely embarrassed about this. Perhaps he ought to

buy some CDs of the stuff chicks liked. Bon Jovi, perhaps. Or maybe even something that wasn't metal, although he had no idea what that might be. He wasn't about to buy a Prodigy or Chemical Brothers album, although he had a guilty liking for some of what he'd heard when sitting in the pub with Stu and Pete and had no choice as to what music was playing.

Chris couldn't help but notice an increase in the changeability of the relationship between his mum and Pam. There were moods that were pronounced in not only the intensity of their apparent mutual liking for each other, but also of something else that reminded him somewhat of the time just before his dad ran off with his secretary. One day everything was smooth and happy. The next it was jagged and tense.

There was one evening when Pam and his mum were shouting at each other in Mum's bedroom and Chris was surprised to see Lottie shyly and nervously enter his bedroom just to sit with him. This was another thing that hadn't happened since before their dad had left, but this reprise must surely be rather less serious when the other person involved wasn't their dad but just their mum's friend.

"Oh! I wish they'd stop!" Lottie wailed. "I wish Pam and Mum wouldn't argue like that!"

"It's nothing," Chris grunted.

"I hope Pam doesn't leave us," Lottie continued. "She's my best friend in the whole world!"

"Even more than Sophie?" wondered Chris, remarking on Lottie's closest friend at the moment.

"It's different. Pam's more like what Dad was like!"

Chris didn't like the analogy at all. But he hoped his sister couldn't see the erection that had inexplicably sprung on him, hidden though it was by the duvet covering his body.

In fact, what made it most difficult to think of Pam as a substitute father was precisely this very aching in his penis. An aching he relieved by masturbatory sessions that were guiltily focused on Pam. And this obsession was what he most feared Pam might notice during her progressively frequent visits to his bedroom. Visits that seemed to take place rather more often on those evenings when his mum was elsewhere, perhaps at her aerobics classes or working late in the office. Visits that had become so significant to Chris, he made the unprecedented concession of taking off his heavy metal CDs, and putting on a radio station, randomly chosen, that played quite different music to that which he would normally envisage listening to.

These conversations were a novel experience in Chris' life. Except perhaps with Lottie, he'd never really chatted with a girl or, even, a woman. And they were very different to his conversations with Pete and Stu.

He found himself opening out, talking more freely than he imagined he could. He talked about his studies. His feelings about Martin and his girlfriend. Why he'd originally chosen to study Geography when he could have studied History or English. His thoughts when he first met Melissa, his dad's lover, and how much he hated her.

And all the time, Pam sat next to him on the bed. Wearing a tee-shirt under which Chris knew just what treasures were hidden. The nipples and the slight upward turn to the bosom. Wearing baggy trousers that hid the hairy patch that featured so vividly in his masturbatory fantasies. Meanwhile, he sat in his Guns & Roses tee-shirt, with jeans, trainers and lank brown hair that fell so often over his face,

thankfully obscuring those persistent zits of his.

And then, most troubling of all, were those occasions when Pam touched him. A kiss on the cheek when they met or parted. The clasped hand when Chris was close to tears as he described his anxieties when his dad drive off with Melissa in the Volvo packed with all those old rock LPs of his dad's. The ones he used to listen to before he was able to buy his own CDs. The occasional tousle of his lank long hair when he said something that somehow touched or otherwise affected Pam.

She spoke to him too, but her confessions, in comparison to his, were undetailed and unfocused. The boyfriend she'd almost married. The friends she'd made who taught her that there was more to hope for than a life of marriage to and sex with a man. (She said this almost bitterly, which puzzled Chris, who assumed that was what all women most wanted). The break-up between her own parents who'd waited until she was at university to announce the fact.

But it was the touches that Chris remembered most well. His hand would burn for hours with the memory of her fingers. His cheek held an imprint of her kiss that he would later run over to the mirror to check was not in some mysterious way visible to anyone who cared to look for it.

But despite all these many and various forewarnings, when Chris actually did have sex with Pam, it came entirely by surprise.

Chris came home late from college. He'd just been visiting Pete where they'd been listening to Rage Against the Machine, an outfit a little too radical for Chris' taste, and looking at the images on Pete's computer of some hardcore photographs now copied onto the floppy disk in Chris' jacket pocket. He was looking forward to the time he would copy them onto his hard-drive and enjoy them more fully than he

could at Pete's house. His penis was already half-stiff with anticipation.

He pushed open his bedroom door, ready to fling off his jacket and eager to turn on his computer, when he saw, very much to his surprise, that Pam was sitting on his bed. She sat there quite distractedly, thumbing through a copy of one of his imported American comic books, one he especially liked, as the women it showed were remarkably voluptuous.

She raised her head as Chris entered and smiled at him broadly.

"Hi! You don't mind if I look at your comics, do you?"

"No, not at all," said Chris gallantly, but nervous in case Pam should guess what it was he found so appealing in this particular comic book.

Pam placed the comic book to one side and patted the mattress beside her, suggesting that Chris should sit there. He did so nervously, horribly aware that the stiffness in his trousers was, instead of becoming becalmed, stirring wholly inappropriately.

"The girls in the comic are pretty sexy, aren't they?" Pam commented. "You like girls, don't you?"

Chris nodded. They'd never before discussed his interests in or, more particularly, his failures with women.

"Yeah. They're not bad!"

"Not bad at all! Do you like your women like that? Slim, like hourglasses, but busty at the same time?"

Chris nodded. He slightly swallowed. "Yeah. It's cool." Then he remembered that Pam wasn't nearly so shaped, being rather thicker round the waist and with a smaller bosom. "But I like girls that don't have... that aren't... well, other types of

girls!”

He put his jacket on the bed behind him, hoping that the floppy disk wouldn't fall out of the pocket.

“And you've not got a girlfriend, have you?”

Chris coughed. “No.”

Pam sighed and looked away for a moment towards the dressing table mirror where the two were reflected, looking very nervous, and hugely ill-matched.

She looked back at Chris and glanced down at his trousers where her eyes, Chris knew, penetrated through the denim and could see every vein of the penis pressing against his buttoned fly.

“Sod it!” she suddenly said. “This is fucking stupid!”

This was the first time Chris had heard an adult in real life, who wasn't someone in the pub or at the bus stop, use one of those words he was still nervous about using himself, even with his mates.

But this was nothing compared to the confusion that muddled his thoughts and nearly panicked him as she placed a hand, at the end of an arm mostly covered by the loose cotton of her sweater, on, of all places, that part of his crotch where his penis was most obviously erect.

“Uuuhh!” he moaned despite himself.

“Euurrghh!” Pam echoed, who turned her head round and somehow, Chris not exactly sure how, pushed her face with her thick lips onto his mouth. And then Chris responded, without thought or premeditation, by pressing his tongue and lips onto Pam's.

They were kissing. They were bloody kissing! It was really weird. Her mouth

was so liquid, a pool of slightly garlic-tasting saliva slobbering against his own, his tongue pressing against the teeth that in his memory were white and wholly regularly, but now seemed to grow enormous in his mind as her tongue pushed into his.

The steps that led towards them actually fucking were disconnected but somehow inevitable.

The clothes came off as soon as their mouths parted, Pam spending more time divesting Chris of his than she did her own. Her tee-shirt and trousers were less of a struggle to remove than Chris' tight jeans. And underneath his penis ached almost painfully with desire and came free of his underpants before his jeans, socks and trainers were flung to the floor.

It was one thing to see a woman naked, Chris discovered, but a wholly different thing to have one naked against your body. In the perspiration and anxiety of these first gropings it hardly mattered whether her bosom was of super-heroine stature or whether her bum was like the swelling monstrosity of his fantasies. It was flesh, glorious flesh, far too much of it for his metal-addled brain to focus on in its entirety.

There were freckles there, a mole here, short brown hairs on her forearms, a bosom that flattened as she fell backwards onto the mattress, and legs that clasped his buttocks as he positioned himself above her.

Chris had an idea of how a man should fuck from the pictures he'd seen. It was something like doing press-ups only with your prick engulfed inside a twat. But, in real life, with a truly hairy vulva just inches away from his fully erect penis, his arms around her shoulders and his mouth pressed to hers, it seemed less obvious to him just how he should attain the posture of penetration.

It was Pam who guided his penis into her vagina. It was Pam who made the

exertion that allowed Chris' instincts to take control. And there, for a few moments, Chris knew, he was fucking. He was actually bloody doing it! Just like in the photos. Just like in that porno video he'd watched over and over again at Martin's place before he went to university. It was the real fucking deal!

His buttocks pushed his penis in and out, his glans sore and tender, and surprised at the moistness of the orifice that so easily accommodated it. And as he fucked mechanically, no imagination required at all and rather more physical effort than he'd envisaged, it was Pam who seemed the most excited. She gasped and swore, repeating again and again all those swear words that still sounded very strange indeed coming from, of all things, a woman. A woman perhaps fifteen years older than him!

It was far too soon when he ejaculated. He knew that. In fact, he'd dreaded it happening. But it did. Just when Chris thought he'd got the hang of all this. Just when he thought he'd almost got to the stage when it was natural and, even, in a strange way he'd never really thought of before, a very pleasant and thoroughly intimate, almost loving, activity. He was only just beginning to see Pam as a sexual animal, someone who had her own needs and desires.

But he was also concerned about how he would tell his mates about this first time, imagining how Stu would react when he announced that of the three mates he was now the only virgin.

Far too soon came that release of semen so familiar from all those masturbatory sessions when, at least recently, the image in his mind was so vividly like (but also unlike) that of the woman he was currently making love to.

"I suppose it couldn't last long, could it?" said Pam sympathetically, as their bodies separated.

Chris gazed sadly down at his twitching penis. It seemed such a pathetic thing now. Deflated and dripping. And yet just a moment ago, he felt so proud of the same thing as it pushed and thrust inside the vagina whose warmth and moistness was now just a memory imprinted rather more vividly in his mind than any other memory of their conjoining.

“Was it all right?” asked Chris nervously.

Pam laughed sympathetically.

She kissed him on the cheek with the same almost innocent affection she used to do, although it seemed almost incongruous now that the two of them were naked. Chris’ lank hair was sticking to the sweat on his face. There was a pool of perspiration on Pam’s torso where their two bodies had pressed together.

“You did very well, Chris. Very well, indeed!”

At the time, this seemed to Chris a confirmation of what he most hoped for: that this encounter, brief and hectic though it had been, and, in some way, not quite as satisfying as that of his virgin fantasies, would not be all. That it would be a prelude to many more such couplings. In fact, he was already thinking, even as Pam got dressed again and kissed him goodbye, anxious to get away before Chris’ mum returned from her aerobics class, that this was just the first of many more such encounters to come.

And next time, he was sure, it would be better. It would last much longer. And perhaps he could do those other things you were supposed to do. Like foreplay, for instance.

Alas, this was not to be.

Pam never came into Chris’ room again, although he spent many hours in

anticipation, just waiting, unable, more than ever before, to concentrate on his studies.

In fact, Pam seemed to make every effort to ensure that there was no time at all that Chris and she could spend time together alone. She even stopped going to the toilet late at night, although a sleepless Chris waited anxiously for the door to his mum's bedroom to open.

The tension between his mum and Pam seemed to grow. An icy blast took hold of any room his mum and Pam were in at any time that Chris saw them together. And these were the only times that Chris ever saw Pam nowadays.

Lottie could sense it too. His only nocturnal visitor now was his sister who entered his room and sat with him. The both of them were strangely silent and unable to express more than the most desultory words, but glad of each other's company, while overhearing the most ferocious row going on in his mum's room. A row in which Chris was sure he heard not only Pam, but his mum, shout those words he still thought were only right in a movie or said in the pub when you were really drunk. And the shouting went on and on, interspersed with quieter spells in which Chris could hear the distinct sound of choked sobs.

That was the last night his mum and Pam spent together. In fact, Chris never saw Pam again at all. She wasn't there at breakfast and when he got home from school she had moved out altogether.

The house was strangely empty now. Emptyer than it had been at any time since Dad had left. And Chris' mum was just as distraught and moody as she had been on that earlier occasion.

Perhaps Chris should have known what it would be like. After all, he had lived through a similar period before. But this time, it was somehow worse. Especially as

he became aware that his mum no longer treated him with quite the same indulgence as before. Nothing he could do these days was right. And sometimes his mum would just burst into tears when he came into the same room as her.

“How could you?” she said one evening, her tear-smearred eyes glaring at Chris accusingly across the kitchen from the stool where she sat. “My own son! What have I ever done to deserve it?”

“What, Mum?”

“How could you?”

“How could I what?”

His mum looked at him accusingly. And then she cracked into huge sobs that shuddered and shook her body until such time that a confused Chris took the only release available to him, his own eyes beginning to fill with tears. He ran off to his bedroom to put a Nirvana CD on his stereo and to sit on the edge of his bed staring into space, barely able to focus on his own image in the dressing table mirror that had once reflected both his naked body and that of Pam’s.

At least, however, he reflected as he struggled to remember just what Pam had looked like in that reflection, he wasn’t a virgin anymore.

That was one thing to be pleased about.