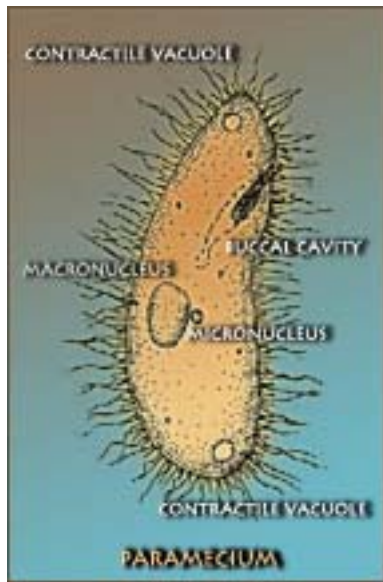


Come To Me, My Melancholy Baby

A Short Story by Bonnie M. Follett

Dedicated to the Strange at Heart...



Published by
Bonifol Design Works
875 Bush Street #44
San Francisco, CA 94108

Originally published in *The Medicine Jug*, Winter 1975,
Volume 3 Number 2, Mankato State University.

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Forward

About The Author and the Work

Bonnie M. Follett

Bonnie Follett was born and raised in Fargo, North Dakota. She graduated with a BFA degree in Art from Mankato State University in Minnesota and obtained her law degree from Golden Gate University School of Law in San Francisco. The author currently lives in San Francisco, California, where she is a lawyer, a web and graphic designer, and also works with e-book production.



"Melancholy Baby" was composed while in high school in North Dakota and was published in her college literary magazine, The Medicine Jug. The author has maintained all rights to the work. This edition also contains illustrations created by the author. This is a whimsical work, with a surprise ending ! Life is strange and it gets stranger all the time...

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Enjoy !

Come To Me, My Melancholy Baby

By Bonnie M. Follett

Dedicated to the Strange At Heart...

Just a few short weeks ago Sylvia and I could have been seen walking down the hall to Biology class. It was to be a fateful morning, a day which would shake both our lives.

My name is George, I am 18, Sylvia only 16, but despite the difference in age I worship the very pedestal she walks upon. We had been going together for almost six years, but it still seemed as if we had only met yesterday. I can truly say that I love her from the deepest, darkest depths of my cardiac arteries. And it was on that day that she unexpectedly broke our silence.

"Hey George..."

"Yeah?"

"What are we gonna do in Biology class today?"

"I think we're just gonna look at those stupid uncoordinated paramecium under the microscope again. Geez, I can't stand those little buggers!"

"George, how dare you blaspheme? Paramecium may be the simplest species of the animal kingdom, but they certainly aren't stupid or uncoordinated. Why, they're beautiful living, breathing organisms of the earth. Don't you **ever** spread lies about paramecium again or so help me I'll leave you and never come back!"

"But Sylvia..."

"Do you think I've actually **enjoyed** going everywhere with you these past six years? Do you think that I **like** being seen with a complete nobody like you? Well this might come as a shock to you but I don't! And I get sick and tired of hearing you talk about my... my... well just watch it George or I will leave you!"

"Oh Sylvia... Sylvia...! Sadness grips my gallstones in sorrow for what I have done to you. I promise that I will never speak of your.... your... well, whatever I may have said I am truly sorry. Can you ever forgive me?" I found myself on my knees now, I was so overcome with grief.

"Oh I suppose so. Get up off your knees you dumb clod, we're gonna be late for class.

We walked silently up the stairs, and were nearing the Biology room when the unexpected, urgent sound of the bell momentarily paralyzed us. But we knew our only choice was to enter the classroom, late.

"You're late," commented Mrs. Sporangia.

"We know," we both said in perfect harmony.

"Well, where's your slip?"

"Should we go get one?" I questioned.

"That's a good idea.

"Don't worry Sylvia, I'll get your excuse for ya," I whispered gallantly in her ear. I then made my departure for the office.

As I walked down the deserted corridor, with nothing but the clicking sounds of my footsteps to break the silence, my thoughts turned to Sylvia..., which they so often did. But today I thought of our brief quarrel before Biology class. It had been but my brief condemnation of the animal species Paramecium which had upset her so. Yes, she had something to the effect that she didn't like being with me so often, and she did say that she didn't even like being seen with someone like me at all... But could she really mean what she said? I took out my little pocket mirror, which I always carry for such occasions of doubt. My mother had often told me that I was very charming. Yes, I thoroughly agreed. Surely after these six years Sylvia must have become accustomed to what few imperfections I may have. As I stood gazing

into my visage I encountered one of those embarrassing experiences which seem to plague me.

"Hi George, what're you doing?" came a well suppressed snicker.

"Oh... oh... Hi Stan... aah... nothing much..." I nonchalantly slipped my mirror into my shirt pocket.

On returning to the class with the excuses, I noticed that Sylvia seemed to be thoroughly enjoying herself as she peered into the compound microscope. I realized that she had always liked observing microscopic creatures, but this was ridiculous! She was actually grinning and even **winked** at the lens. And at one point she started giggling and blushing to excess. At that time I hadn't the foggiest notion of what was going on inside that microscope, but it proved to be something I would never be able to forget.

I dutifully gave Mrs. Sporangia the pink excuse slips and wandered nonchalantly over to Sylvia's lab table, She was so busy whispering to the microscope that she didn't even notice me. It actually appeared as if she was carrying on a conversation with it. Then something strange occurred... well, not strange really as I have known Sylvia to shoplift frequently... but it was certainly quite peculiar. First she lifted her head to see if Mrs. Sporangia was looking her way. When she found the coast was clear, she took the slide she had been observing and slipped it into her purse. She then appeared to return to her work. I stood there a moment, silent and bewildered, then took hold of myself and acted as if I had just returned from the office.

"Uh... hello Sylvia... uh, everything's taken care of... I'm back."

"Hurrah," was the sarcastic reply.

"Yeah..., well..." I said quietly, humbly. As we were lab partners we then continued the assignment together.

After class, I boldly confronted her with what I knew.

"I saw what you did!"

"Oh, really?" she said, again quite sarcastically.

"Yes. And I want to know why!"

"Right... ah... do you mind telling me what I did?" She sure knew how to keep her cool.

"You know very well what you did! I saw it all!"

"Yeah, well I'm real glad. But do you mind letting me get to my next class before the bell rings?"

I tried to stop her from leaving, but when I took a dive for her legs, she hit me over the head with her purse and I lay stunned for a moment. By the time I had recovered myself, Sylvia had gone. My worries were heightened when she failed to show up at the snack bar before our daily jaunt homeward. When I realized it was useless to wait any longer, I set off alone.

It had been a fairly warm May day, but now I felt the chill of evening creeping on and I decided to take the shortcut near Sylvia's house. It was a small medieval abode, situated on one of the countryside's many unusually beautiful swamps. As I stood squinting at the scene, the wind brazen against my cheek, I noticed the door of the storm shelter opening. A figure emerged. It was Sylvia! And how beautiful she looked. She wore an ivory brocade evening gown and all the accessories matched except for a suitcase.

I followed her down to the swamp's edge and hid behind a weeping willow. She seated herself and opened her purse, taking out what appeared to be a very small flask. Lo and behold! She then reached in to find the very same slide she had been observing in Biology class! She lifted the slide to her lips, kissed it and murmured "I have come my love. Now we can be together, forever."

I had never before heard her speak so tenderly and I was simply overcome by her beauty, as she sat near the swamp, the moonlight flowing down on her silken hair and gown. I leaped forward.

"Oh Sylvia! Sylvia!" I cried.

"George? What are **you** doing here? You **would** have to spoil the happiest moment of my life! Just leave us alone!"

Us? I finally came to my senses.

"Sylvia! You can't do this to yourself!"

"Do what? I'm happy for the first time in my life! So why can't you just leave us alone!" she pleaded.

"No! I'm doing this for your own good! Here I find you by the swamp in the moonlight necking with a microscope slide! What's become of your morals? What's wrong with you?"

"Oh George... It's not the **slide** I'm in love with! It's Francois!"

"Francois? Francois who? Sylvia, I never knew you to be a loose woman, but you must halt this affair at once! Have you forgotten? We are betrothed to each other! You must be faithful!"

"Oh George... George... How can I ever love you? Yes. We are betrothed. But that is only because my mother would approve of no one else. But I can never marry you George! You're too... too... well, Human! In Francois I have someone wild and exciting... but he's practical too. He can support me. He's in the insurance business and has a good chance for promotion. Of all the paramecium I have ever known, Francois can give me things I've always dreamed of. Love, adventure, security... what more could a girl ask for!"

Oh, his mother doesn't approve of me so we'll elope, but our life together is going to be perfect, I know it is!"

"But Sylvia... Have you **told** your mother? What does **she** think of your marrying a paramecium? Surely she can't approve!"

"Mother doesn't know. I'm not going to tell her because I know she would never allow it. She doesn't want me to end up the same way she did. Yes, that's right George! I am the offspring of a mixed marriage. My father was a paramecium like Francois, but they're completely different. My father was nothing but a gigolo, but Francois is loyal and I know he loves me. So if you'll kindly leave us, I will soon be his wife."

"Sylvia! You must be out of your mind! Marrying a paramecium... nothing but a biological creature...!"

"Ah, but we are **all** biological creatures, Geor..."

"But the difference in height! No one in his right mind would want a wife almost six feet taller than himself!"

"**That** problem is **all** solved, George..." she jiggled the little flask in her hand, "All solved. So just leave!"

"No Sylvia!" I rushed forward too late for she had already drunk from the flask. She grabbed her suitcase and was rapidly shrinking as she swiftly dashed through the bushes by the water's edge. Wasting little time, I started after her, but she was lost from my sight when the slime tricked me and I fell backwards into the swamp.

As I sat in the cool muck of the swamp, which I didn't particularly care for either, I understood with hopelessness that Sylvia must be with her Francois now, somewhere in this very same swamp. How could I accept that she would really be gone forever? How could she have really left me? But then I took out my compact little pocket mirror and gazing meaningfully at my suave, sophisticated countenance, I realized that her affair with Francois could not possibly last.

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⌘ I don't believe this will be the end. ⌘