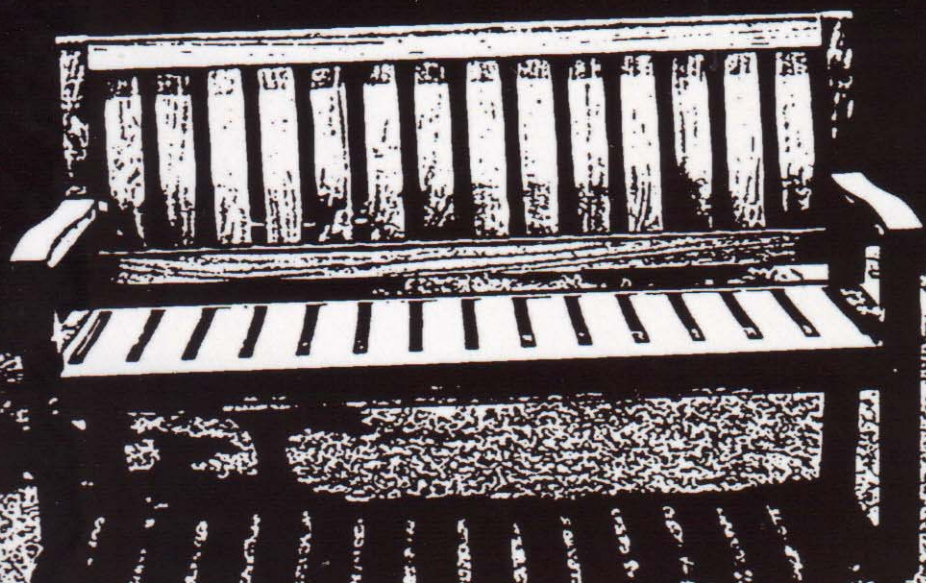




# Derek

& More Micro-Fiction



# Queen of the Nerd Prom

Every year, I look forward to it. It's the one place I can dress up and be beautiful, where for just a little while I've got everybody's eyes on me. And every year, I'm reminded why, each time, I come away depressed. The comic book convention never fails to disappoint.

I spend weeks on my costume, just like every year, and wake up early on Friday morning to prepare. I'm not kidding myself: I'm no beauty when it comes to going about every day, tramping down to school, working part time at the Pizza Hut. But in my costume, each year when I dress up, I look good. And this year, I look super hot, but I knew that already, when I was thinking up my character, when I assembled the material for my outfit. And the boys notice me, like I wanted. But not like I wanted. It's always some greasy thirty-year old guy in a Green Lantern t-shirt (classic or modern, doesn't matter) asks me if I'm painted blue 'all over'. Well, it would be silly to spend hours painting ninety-some percent of my body and leave the rest all pinky, wouldn't it? It's a little bit messy, and I can't really sit down without ruining everything, but you just have to make sure the paint sets, you know, before you put on the shorts and top. But this answer would only wind him up, and anyway He's Not the Droid I'm Looking For. So I give him a nasty look and push on. The boys my own age give me a look of a different sort, but they're either too shy to approach or more concerned with impressing their friends by quoting Kevin Smith dialogue to comment on my appearance.

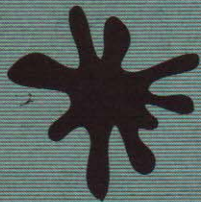
Pulled aside for some photos, I get to strike a pose and

everything seems all right. I've been practising, and I've got the posture just right. Sometimes there's another 'costume' in the picture, a passing Lex Luthor or Spider-man or Captain Jack Sparrow. Captain Sparrow is a new addition. I'm really starting to hate pirates. Not as much as I hate Cosplay Girls (freaking animé poseurs), but still, these guys put on some eye shadow and think they're Johnny Depp. Gag me. Sometimes it's another girl in the picture with me. Sometimes the photographer asks us to kiss. I don't like to think about the pictures after they're taken.

The year I was born, the Joker shot Batgirl through the spine. Comic fans are still crying about the sexism of it all, that she's still crippled in a world where any injury can be healed by magic. Next year, I'm dressing as her.

# Jealousy

*A Collection*



# True

*Shaun Manning*

'I've never had a boyfriend I didn't cheat on.'

'Well then, I guess it's a good thing we're not dating.'

'You're not funny.'

'I am.'

'You're supposed to listen. That's the point of you.'

'Is it, then.'

'That's not what I meant.'

'What did you mean?'

'...Maybe that is what I meant.'

'Maybe I'm tired of just listening to you.'

'Thanks a lot.'

'Not tired of listening. Tired of just listening. You know.'

'Yeah, I know. You make it quite obvious. Everyone pretends they don't know.'

'I know they pretend.'

'You're not embarrassed?'

'No.'

'You ought to be.'

'I'm not.'

'Then maybe you should listen to me, when I tell you I'm not very good at dating.'

'I heard you, I just...'

'What?'

'Well, you tell me everything. That's the point of me.'

'And what do you make of me?'