

The Oath

Being of sound mind and body on this 15th day of April in our sophomore year at Franklin High School, let it be known that Lorraine Jensen and John Conlan have decided to record the facts, and only the facts, about our experiences with Mr. Angelo Pignati.

Miss Reillen, the Cricket, is watching us at every moment because she is the librarian at Franklin High and thinks we're using her typewriter to copy a book report for our retarded English teacher.

The truth and nothing but the truth, until this memorial epic is finished, So Help Us God!

John Conlan
Lorraine Jensen

CHAPTER 1

*Read to page 64
for Tuesday.*

Now, I don't like school, which you might say is one of the factors that got us involved with this old guy we nicknamed the Pigman. Actually, I hate school, but then again most of the time I hate everything.

I used to really hate school when I first started at Franklin High. I hated it so much the first year they called me the Bathroom Bomber. Other kids got elected G.O. President and class secretary and lab-squad captain, but I got elected the Bathroom Bomber. They called me that because I used to set off bombs in the bathroom. I set off twenty-three bombs before I didn't feel like doing it anymore.

The reason I never got caught was because I used to take a tin can (that's a firecracker, as if you didn't know) and mold a piece of clay around it so it'd hold a candle attached to the fuse. One of those skinny little birthday candles. Then I'd light the thing, and it'd take about eight minutes before the

fuse got lit. I always put the bombs in the first-floor boys' john right behind one of the porcelain urinals where nobody could see it. Then I'd go off to my next class. No matter where I was in the building I could hear the blast.

If I got all involved, I'd forget I had lit the bomb, and then even I'd be surprised when it went off. Of course, I was never as surprised as the poor guys who were in the boys' john on the first floor sneaking a cigarette, because the boys' john is right next to the Dean's office and a whole flock of gestapo would race in there and blame them. Sure they didn't do it, but it's pretty hard to say you're innocent when you're caught with a lungful of rich, mellow tobacco smoke. When the Dean catches you smoking, it really may be hazardous to your health. I smoke one with a recessed filter myself.

After my bomb avocation, I became the organizer of the supercolossal fruit roll. You could only do this on Wednesdays because that was the only day they sold old apples in the cafeteria. Sick, undernourished, antique apples. They sold old oranges on Fridays, but they weren't as good because they don't make much noise when you roll them. But on Wednesdays when I knew there was going to be a substitute teaching one of the classes, I'd pass the word at lunch and all the kids in that

class would buy these scrawny apples. Then we'd take them to class and wait for the right moment—like when the substitute was writing on the blackboard. You couldn't depend on a substitute to write on the blackboard though, because usually they just told you to take a study period so they didn't have to do any work and could just sit at the desk reading *The New York Times*. But you could depend on the substitute to be mildly retarded, so I'd pick out the right moment and clear my throat quite loudly—which was the signal for everyone to get the apples out. Then I gave this phony sneeze that meant to hold them down near the floor. When I whistled, that was the signal to roll 'em. Did you ever hear a herd of buffalo stampeding? Thirty-four scrawny, undernourished apples rolling up the aisles sound just like a herd of buffalo stampeding.

Every one of the fruit rolls was successful, except for the time we had a retired postman for General Science IH5. We were supposed to study incandescent lamps, but he spent the period telling us about commemorative stamps. He was so enthusiastic about the old days at the P.O. I just didn't have the heart to give the signals, and the kids were a little put out because they all got stuck with old apples.

But I gave up all that kid stuff now that I'm a

sophomore. The only thing I do now that is faintly criminal is write on desks. Like right this minute I feel like writing something on the nice polished table here, and since the Cricket is down at the other end of the library showing some four-eyed dimwit how to use the encyclopedias, I'm going to do it.

HELP ME !!
science
a drug

A ROTTEN
has given me
Teacher to

Change me into a
teary messy
messy
Please help me.

Please help me.

Now that I've artistically expressed myself, we might as well get this cursing thing over with too. I was a little annoyed at first since I was the one who suggested writing this thing because I couldn't stand the miserable look on Lorraine's face ever since the Pigsaw died. She looked a little bit like a Saint Bernard that just lost its keg, but since she agreed to work on this, she's gotten a little livelier and more opinionated. One of her opinions is that I shouldn't curse.

"Not in a memorial epic!"

"Let's face it," I said, "everyone curses."

She finally said I could curse if it was excruciatingly necessary by going like this @#\$%. Now that isn't too bad an idea because @#\$% leaves it to the imagination and most people have a worse imagination than I have. So I figure I'll go like @#\$% if it's a mild curse—like the kind you hear in the movies when everyone makes believe they're morally violated but have really gotten the thrill of a lifetime. If it's going to be a revolting curse, I'll just put a three in front of it—like 3@#\$%—and then you'll know it's the raunchiest curse you can think of.

Just now I'd better explain why we call Miss Reillen the Cricket. Like I told you, she's the librarian at Franklin and is letting us type this

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thing on her quiet typewriter, which isn't quiet at all. But there aren't many kids in seventh-period study because most of them cut it and the others get excused early because our school is overcrowded. It's only kids like Lorraine and me that get stuck with seventh-period study because we have to stay around for an eighth-period class called Problems in American Democracy. And if you think having Problems in American Democracy is a fun way to end the day, you need a snug-fitting straitjacket.

Anyway, Miss Reillen is a little on the fat side, but that doesn't stop her from wearing these tight skirts which make her nylon stockings rub together when she walks so she makes this scraaaaaaatchy sound. That's why the kids call her the Cricket. If she taught woodshop or gym, nobody'd really know she makes that sound—but she's the librarian, and it's so quiet you can hear every move she makes.

Lorraine is panting to get at the typewriter now, so I'm going to let her before she has a heart attack.

CHAPTER 2

I should never have let John write the first chapter because he always has to twist things subliminally. I am not panting, and I'm not about to have a thrombosis. It's just that some very strange things have happened to us during the last few months, and we feel we should write them down while they're still fresh in our minds. It's got to be written now before John and I mature and repress the whole thing.

John doesn't really curse that much, and I don't think he needs his system. But even when we were in Miss Stewart's typing class, he had to do something unusual all the time—like type a letter in the shape of an hourglass. That's the kind of thing he does. And as you probably suspected, the reason John gets away with all these things is because he's extremely handsome. I hate to admit it, but he is. An ugly boy would have been sent to reform school by now.