

# 'I'm not paranoid, but my friends are out to get me'

Paranoia is a state of mind I usually manage to steer clear of. However, of late, I am finding myself increasingly on my guard.



**FROM WHERE I LIVE**  
**Bruce Stapley**

An ongoing vendetta, which appeared to have been laid to rest some months ago, would seem to be showing signs of coming back into prominence once again, and I am now finding myself constantly looking over my shoulder in case something is catching up on me.

It all started on a camping trip several years back. There must be something about sitting around a campfire at night that is conducive to the concoction of hijinks perpetrated against your fellow campers. A few of us had caught the dying strands of a distant Blue Jay game on a radio with failing batteries. The Jays had engineered an astounding last minute comeback, scoring some nine or so runs in the final inning.

Along with the other baseball freak in the group, I was more than anxious to read all about it in the following day's paper. But my 'friend', the third male in the crowd, had other ideas. He proceeded to abscond with the sports section, leading us to believe it had been the error of the people at the newspaper plant.

A few hours later, when he nonchalantly proceeded to read aloud a quote from this same sports section, about how the Blue Jays were faring on the whole.

We almost exterminated the cad right then and there. It was the equivalent of sacrilege to pull such a stunt on a couple of baseball junkies. However, we did exact a certain measure of revenge that same night, by way of a little

disappearing act involving family planning paraphanelia. I have never been able to fully forgive or forget this act of cruelty.

So a while back, on a designated 'day off', I proceeded to show up at my friend's doorstep, and announce that I was there for the day, and that I expected to be treated in the manner usually afforded unexpected company. Which meant, despite the man's protestations, that he 'wouldn't end up putting the slightest dent in that mountain of paper work he had set out to do.

A week later, as I sat at my dining table entertaining a particularly 'special' guest, who should show up but this same individual, unannounced, demanding that he be treated 'in a manner usually afforded unexpected company'? And then he had the nerve to tell me he was a patient man, and that his true revenge would be ultimately enacted.

Well, such is my distraction with the whole affair that when I

received a phone call the other night from a friend who had locked her keys in her car, I immediately smelled a rat. The hour was late, and I instantly sensed collusion.

You see, my friend, the originator of the dirty deed that had set off this whole affair years ago, has been given on occasion, to calling me very late at night. Something about wanting to be sure I was safe and sound, he will say, when what he's really doing is rubbing it in that he's thoroughly enjoying himself at a social function while I'm confined to my miserable single existence once again.

It turned out to be a legitimate case of absentmindedness on the part of the keyless friend. But it delighted my rival nonetheless when he became aware of the far-reaching potential of his influence upon me.

It is now up to me to devise a scheme that will make him so fearful of my devious side as to cause him to cease and desist, once and for all, from his own diabolical deeds. But then this man doesn't scare easily, and he's never been one to back away from a challenge.

So I guess it's a Mexican standoff to see who cracks first.

I think I'll start by having all my doorlocks changed.



## Literary laureates

Summitview Public School students were honored recently for their literary efforts by the Stouffville branch of the Royal Canadian Legion. Shown from left are

Jenny Nicoll, Ken Grinnell, Chad Stover, Anore Kaspick and Alton Ruff.

Brent Lowery

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