My Midnight Mystery 2/24/95, 2:50 a.m.

Three times for sure, perhaps four, perhaps five, I've heard the same odd sounds at night that Lil has not heard. (I cannot sleep in the bed which has the head raised 5 inches because of her hiatal hernia when I may not have my legs down and sometimes must have them elevated in sleep.) All have been in recent days, rather nights. Except that - have not counted their number they all seemed identical. It began and it remains baffling for several reason.

The first of these reasons is that we have no birds or animals hereabouts who make such sounds. They are not a squeal or a,screech. They are rather without any indication of any emotion. They are of a higher frequency than I could utter yet they are not shrill. they are identical in having three parts followed by a Brief break, then those seemingly identical three parts are repeated, the second seeming to be of a slightly higher frequency.

I am not clear on the number of times I was aware of this but I recall telling Lil one morning that I'd heard what seemed like this strange series of sounds that I could attribute to no bird or animal. I recall telling her the next time that it was odd that I heard those same sounds as clearly when I did not have my hearing aids on. Without them I hear almost nothing yet these sounds seemed to be of about the same volume. That time I told Lil it must have been something that I "heard" in my sleep because I'd not have heard that well without the hearing aids. And there may have been a time or two earlier that I did not mention to Lil.

But last night/this morning was different. I was wide awake. I'd had about six hours of uninterrupted ~~asoo~~ sleep when I awakened to go to the bathroom. When I emerged it was just before midnight. I took a drink of water and decided to listen to the hourly CBS radio news. I have a small pocket set always tuned to the local CBS radio station for this purpose where I sit. It had the basketball games so I reached for an allwave set I got at the time of the Gulf war. I keep it tuned to the all-news CBS station in New York, WCBS, and when I'm washing and eating what I am to eat on awaking and peeling the orange I am to eat them with the metamucil I'm to take I listen to the news from it. I was sitting and holding it when I again heard those sounds. I turned the volume down without changing the volume of the sounds and turned the set off entirely without any change in those sounds. They began almost the minute the newscast at midnight began and they were over before the usual break in that newscast for a commercial. They were repeated about 8 times and then ended.

At least one other time this had been at about midnight, more likely two times before.

Last night/this morning I, as usual when I get up to go to the bathroom, was using only one hearing aid, the one for my better ear, the left. But I recall no awareness that what I heard was not balanced, from the left ear only. Then I remembered the time I heard those identical sounds with the identical volume and clarity when I was abed and

was not using either hearing aid. Not only is this rather mysterious, it is more mysterious that I had as much volume and clarity when I was using both aids and was wide awake. By this I mean no more volume and clarity with the aids than without them.

I remember telling Lil the time I was not wearing the aids and was abed that it must have been something that came in my sleep. Even though the previous time or times I recalled, I thought, being awake but abed.

Last night/this morning, however, there was no question at all, I was wide wake and alert. I had had as much sleep as I've averaged in recent yars and it was better, not having been interrupted. I'd thought of getting to work and then decided against it to get more sleep. Which I did, another two hours of sleep.

At least one of the earlier times I was certain that I'd heard those sounds at midnight and I have the impression this was true all the times I heard them. That I heard them at all is a mystery. It is an even greater mystery that it made no difference whether I was using my hearing aids or not. This suggested that I hear them in some usual, really inexplicable means. And there are no new appliances of any kind that could cause them. When all were turned off in addition, although connected to electricity.

For the past several weeks, as Lil pointed out just the day before yesterday we have gotten at least one call a day when the other party hung up after we picked up the phone and said "hello." When she is in her office and I am either where I sit in the livingroom or at my desk we use speaker phones. They require only pushing a button to be on. When I become aware of this I started using the caller ID. Each and every one of those many times the caller was outside the phone area for which they record the calling number. There was also a brief period during which the ID recorded numbers not assigned to this area. It has been a long time since we had such unanswering calls. They were one of the reasons that at the suggestion of the State police I got the caller ID. When I did the shopping for them, be design, on the phone, they then ended before the phone company made the required connections. Then there were also a series of calls in which a woman asked for another woman, al those callers asking for a woman of the same name. And haging up as soon as I said there was no such person here. This happened again yesterday, whether the silent caller did. I answered the phone then and heard the click of the breaking connection. It was Lil's idea that someone is checking to see if we are home. When we are away and return I usually check the caller ID to learn if any local friends have called. All the times I can remember we had out of-area calls that were not returned later. This may indicate more unanswering calls than we are aware of.

Last night/ this morning was the only time I heard those strange, three-part sounds when not abed. All the other times I believed I was awake and alert. Last night convinced me I was/ was not imagining anything. And in retrospect I believe all were at midnight.

Resumed later. This lingered on my mind. Not with any apprehension. It never cost me any sleep. I knew there was no possibility of any instrument having been inserted, as Art Ford said in his book under an assumed name, Are We Controlled? ~~to say~~. But what could cause it, how explain it? In the end perhaps thinking like Occam, seeking the simplest solutions, may have. Beginning with what seemed like the three basic clues: It was at midnight; Lil never heard it; and I heard it with and without the hearing aids.

As I thought about how I could have heard it without the hearing aids my mind went back to when I was a boy experimenting with radio, to the 1920s and early 1930s. I remembered instances in which people heard radio stations without radios playing, often when they had none. These were sometimes traced. Among the sources I remembered were ~~coke~~ smokepipies on old coal burning furnaces and even tooth fillings. So, while these were rare instances, they did happen and they were then confirmed. In those days anything about radio was news.

So, maybe something like that was happening to me. If so, from what?

Here midnight could have been a clue. Why then and only then?

That made me think of the caller ID. I know nothing about how it works but I do know that it makes noises in the radio and TV when it is turned off, for about 10 seconds. So, I presume that with the gadget turned off it is the part that registers that causes the electrical noise. Thus, perhaps midnight, which means a chance in the date that shows on the caller ID, could provide what becomes the signals, the noises.

It is farout but I'm inclined to believe it. Next time I'm up about midnight I'll turn the TV on and see if it picks this up.

In telling Lil about this she recalled that after another of those calls on which the caller was silent she checked the caller ID. It recorded a strange number to her, one not in out phone book's listing of those of this area. It was day before yesterday and the number was 442-2162. Those I had checked earlier began with 8 and 7.

Add to My Midnight Mystery, 2/25/95

Awake a little before midnight last night I decided to see if the TV reacted to the Caller ID. I was incorrect in saying the radio had.

The TV did not. But it became clear that the source was the Caller ID and that it was in fact the hearing aid that reacted to it. This leaves unexplained how I could have heard it when not using a hearing aid unless I remembered that incorrectly.

It happened that I was sitting so that my ear was closer to the Caller ID. The volume of the sounds was greater than I'd remembered. When I removed the one hearing aid I was using, in the ear closer to the Caller ID, I heard nothing.

I was counting the number of times I hard the sounds. This removal eliminated perhaps two. The count was 22, so perhaps the sounds each represent the change of an hour as the dates of the days are changed somewhere.

What seems odd is that I heard nothing at all with the hearing aid out. The sound was loud enough so I should have heard something, as I do a little when the phone rings and I'm not wearing an aid.

This leads me to wonder if it is the electronic system of the aid that picks up what when I hear it sounds like a noise up, reacts elecrontiely, rather than an audible noise coming from the Caller ID.