Once upon a time, the Village Voice newspaper, a New York institution, was notorious for its personal ads. One day, members of the Wolfe Pack Steering Committee dreamed up a personal ad for Mr. Wolfe. Classified ads, whether legitimate or somewhat sleazy, all used newspaper advertising abbreviations in the interest of squeezing in as much information as possible, since each and every bit of type cost money. Hence the title: SWM, 1/7 of a ton…. [SWM=Single White Male].

The placement of the ad in the Village voice was a given as was the goal of the ad: to attract savvy readers who would see through our clever ploy and let them know about the Wolfe Pack. We were not looking for hook-ups for Mr. Wolfe. Really, we weren’t.

When we presented the ad to the clerk in the office of the Village Voice, we weren’t sure they would take the ad we wrote. We underestimated the tolerance of the paper and the “been there, seen it all” attitude of the staff.

The ad read:

“SWM (single white male) weighing 1/7 of a ton seeks kindred spirits to share interest in orchids, fine food, reading. Self employed PI, stay at home type. Owns brownstone in W. 30s. Fond of yellow silk PJs.”

The clerk at the desk looked it over, counted the words, charged us $51.30, and that was it. The responses were directed to the Wolfe Pack’s P.O. Box.

The responses that came in divided into two groups: those who got the joke, and (sadly) those who didn’t. These facsimiles reveal not only the content but the period in which they written, by hand, or by typewriter, complete with full address and telephone numbers. This kind of pre-Internet age response is now as distant as the Dead Sea Scrolls.
SWM weighing 1/7 of a ton seeks kin[-]led spirits to share interest in orchids, fine food, reading, self employed PI, stay-at-home type. Owns brownstone in W 30's. Fond of Yellow silk PJ's. Re[-]send to PO 822 Ansonia Sta NY 10023

(End)
Dear Mr. [Name],

I've been intrigued by your story but I have a few questions. I'd like to know about you. If you don't mind. How tall are you? Don't think it makes a difference -- well I'm lying -- if you're 4 feet tall there should be a slight problem discrimination. Inconsciously, mind you, but nevertheless present. And how old are you? This is also not a crucial matter but since you opted for no information on your twin account, I think you want to not tell us (Personal Readers) this information. Other than that your old was captivating.

As for me, I don't know a thing about orchids but my mom belongs to an Orchid Club so I know of them. I had been around some beautiful ones. I however seem to be a plant killer, more of my plants survive if I'm the grower, sent in you. I was fine food. I knew a bit more of this
because (or you really) I'm overweight. And it's not because I don't eat a thing like most overweight people claim. I eat and then telling the world this message. Although, like most overweight people, I do want to lose weight. So right forward headed you BB yet please read on.

Reading was next in the 90s, well nay again they might be a problem. I don't do much because reading because I have to still an a student and have had to read so much that it's not a fun thing for me to sit and read. Sorry.

Self-employed PI sounds interesting. Adventures and even part of what things I don't know what else to say about that you the first person in that line I work and tried to communicate with. But in one, you can tell some great stories, and I am a good listener.

Stay of home type sounds cozy. I like to watch TV (too much) and going to the movies (whenever I can) along with Comedy clubs are my main time absorbing activities.

I don't own a brownstone or anything else for that matter. I live with my family on the west side about 110 block away from you.

I've written too much and we need to go to the next page now--please follow
Here I am -- hi again.

As I was writing, I'm living here now because of my studies, but I'm from Florida, Miami to be precise, (here is where my mom lives, you remember her the orchid club member) I travel back and forth frequently. I'm almost finished with school, however, and will probably try to become an employed person here in N.Y. OK. enough about that next up in your ad -- yellow silk P.J.'s.

Hmm. I've never had to ever peer anybody with a pair but like I wrote earlier -- you and is captivating.

Well, now that I've addressed all 2 your points and if you're at all interested at this point, tell you that I am later, later actually. And that's about all you need to know for now. Of course if you desire any other information to want to answer the question I posed for you. Please feel free to give me a call. I'm not home have a message on my machine and I promise I'll return you
Call. My number is (213) 860-4541.
(Our timing paper-wise -- this way you don't have to re-read my letter
to get the #) (And this made no sense
to you -- I tried -- whatever that
sounds) Oh yes by the way last but
not least my name is Elaine.
Pronounced Elaine with an
A at the end. I think I wrote
too much but its done so well
least you now and hope you
find what you're looking for.

Bye.

[Signature]
I'm the type of woman who doesn't understand why so many of the men in New York want a "dominant" woman. I'm the type that is easy to get along with, and takes the time and energy to be as comforting as possible. But understand, I won't be talked into anything I don't want.

If I've aroused your interest, and if you're not the type to play mind-games; then please feel free to call me at 718-384-7959 (don't let the machine fool you). My name is Verna Rudy, but my friends simply refer to me as Rudy.

[Signature]
Yellow? Yes, I'm very fond of the color.
P.J.'s? Yes, I'm a creature comfort type of woman.
Silk? Oh yes, I'm very fond of silk.

I've never grown orchids, but I do have a trace knowledge on them. Fine-food...say no more! My reading habits lean toward biographies autobiographies, eccentricities, and humor.

I am, by nature, an explorer and a person who enjoys being out and about the city. However, I've never found a museum, show, or bar that's anywhere near as comforting and enjoyable as an evening spent in the comforts of "home".

My vital stat's are: Single, white, 28 year-old female, healthy (in both body and mind), 5'8", weighing in a little under 1/10 of a ton, degreed, Texas native (recently relocated to New York from New Mexico), and honest.
3/4/89

Hi,

My first preference is to
older partners. I'm 41. Secondly, I
like heavyweights, but they are rare to
me. I'm 1/4 of a ton. I'm also a stay
at home and play person, but at the
other person's home. I can travel to
NY on some weekday afternoons
or evenings or most weekends.

What else can I say? Feel
free to ask me questions.

ART

PO Box 827
Ansonia Station
NY NY (0013)
Dear Archie:

The bank balance must be at an all-time low for you to try so desperate a ploy. Given your employer's ill-disguised discomfort in the presence of women, the invitation you extend (disguised as this) is a risk I hope you have calculated carefully.

Since I do not care for beer, only the possibility of sampling Fritz's cooking has lured me into answering. Still, since I love reading, enjoy fine food, and never use "simply" when I mean "infer," Montecitoan courtesy will not be the tip-off and we should be able to manage a pleasant hour or two.

I have no experience of oridina (or yellow silk pajamas, you that matter) and would love a tour of the greenhouse, if Theodore is willing.

Your employer's well-known reluctance to leave home means that even though I, too, weigh 1/2 of a ton and am therefore not your type, you will owe me for helping, and I expect you to take me dancing when my part in your plot is finished.

Sincerely,

Donna Jordan

(201) 333-5742
Good afternoon advertiser;

My name is Nadia. I'm writing responding to your ad in the Village Voice.

Well, I'm an attractive single young woman of 29 years old, 5'3. I weigh 116 pounds. I've got dark brown eyes, brown hair. I'm creative, caring and very affectionate. I enjoy good food, beaches, music.

So, if you want to know more about me give me a call at this number 718 267 0760.

Goodbye.
Here's to my Nero Wolfe—
the autocrat of Hollywood's celluloid buffoon—
the quintessential NY bachelor,
gentleman-farmer of the brownstone
with his undercurrent of Balkan intrigue—
painfully intelligent, erudite & unapproachable,
expending his sensuality
on devotion to orchids, books,
food & fine tailoring—
I love you anyway...

Marcie Kalinsky
Dear Mr. Wolfe,

Yours is the only truly irresistible personal ad I've ever seen - here's the evidence. Do you really weigh 1/7 of a ton? If not, maybe we can meet for a drink or a cup of coffee and discuss cases. Knowing how you feel about women, I must warn you that I am one. If that's not a problem, you can phone me at 718-499-1650.

Sincerely,

Carisa Cunningham
THE WOLFE PACK™
P. O. BOX 822
ANSONIA STATION
NEW YORK, NY 10023

THE WOLFE PACK ASSEMBLY

October 23, 1993

Hart's Restaurant, 122 E. 27th Street
New York City

Moderator: Ettagale Blauer

PUTTING-DOWN ROOTS
Dear SWM, 285 lbs (I love the teddy beat look.), many diverse interests, self employed (It must be nice to be the boss.), stay in West 30s brownstone, you sound super, man with intriguing VV ad for a woman who looks good in yellow silk PJs, (Me, I hope?):

I am: "A blonde, cute, curvy, slim, clean, petite, Vassar female WASP, 36, 36C, 21, 32, 105-110, 5', wants healthy, kind, caring, honest, financially successful man. Discreet sensual fun assured. Kathleen Anderson, Suite 60, 2901 Broadway, New York, New York 10025." I am single and live on Manhattan's Upper West Side - 6 rent stabilized rooms, river view. The best view of the Hudson River and New Jersey is from my bedroom which is like a forest or garden - fresh cut flowers, me, music, candles, green carpet, curtains, walls (I laid, made and painted them) and light oak furniture. I finished the virgin wood myself - great hands. I'm mobile with my great car whose like me - All American, top of the line stripped.

Until I changed jobs from banking back to my 1st career - teacher, I did not have time for ads. It was worth the pay cut, because teaching frees up time for my MBA - Columbia, my Mom, decorating my apartment and hopefully you. You sound like the most fun of the four. My stepfather died in 1985, and I have:been spending some weekends in Buffalo to be with my Mom. I am a good daughter and thank heaven for USAir. I hope they stay cheap and safe.

Please send me a day (since I am free to call you days and teach some evenings) phone number and best time to call. Do not worry if it is a work # - I just want to give pleasure, never embarrassment. If a brief conversation cliques, I'll give you my number and we can make a date at once. I do not mean to sound paranoid, but I never mail my number to strangers. That would be even worse than the bar scene which I always avoid.

Love & lust, Kathy Anderson

[Signature]
3/23/84

My dear Nero Wolfe—

I was quite surprised to see your ad in the Village Voice. I rather thought you were a much more private person— the PI business must be slow these days. My father would be horrified at the thought of my getting involved in yet another mystery, but trust Nancy Drew to get in over her head once again. Be that as it may,

I'd be delighted to tour your beloved rooftop greenhouse and see your prize-winning orchids. Perhaps your chef could be persuaded to whip up something special in honor of the occasion—

Hoping to hear from you (or even a message via Archie)

Nancy Drew
AKA [signature redacted]
861-2264
Kathy
(Archie's wife)
Monday
March 6

My dear [Name],

What a joy to learn that rumors of your demise are unfounded.

You know, although I'm not a newspaper woman, even I lost track of you.

Call me at [number] or send a postcard. I hope you will take pleasure in your delightful home - there's lots to see and do in the Big Apple of the '80s.

Your fond admirer,

[Signature]

Office (212) 935-0880
Home (516) 754-1878
Dear Ken Wolfe,

I have been a fan of yours and would love to finally meet you. As an avid reader of the thriller/detective genre, I have read most of Rex Stout's chronicles of your most famous cases.

At 5'8" and 130 lbs, I am an attractive, slim, vivacious 32 yr old woman with brains and great legs.

I am a manager for a record company. I examine various marketing and operational issues to improve my firm's profitability.

I enjoy most forms of the arts, especially music and film. My tastes in music range from Jazzy (Mainstream, Big Band--especially Miles Davis), Rock (Springsteen, Peter Gabriel--most non Heavy Metal), Classical (Back to John Adams), and some Country (Stevie Louvett).

In terms of films, I like vintage American comedies (Coppola, Hawks, Seegers). I also enjoy "junk" like "Die Hard" and "Top Gun".

As much as I enjoy the city, I like to get away from it. I particularly enjoy the beach. I also enjoy going to New England up with buying a coop on the Lepper. With a little luck, I should be able to move within a month.

Though I have no great cases for you to solve, I would like to meet you. I do appreciate fine food and orchids. I may be reached at 201-420-1774. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours,
	Heidi
Dear Nero,

Does the window come down automatically at 6 a.m. so the room can warm up.

And, have you overcome your Antipathy for women and emotional outbursts — or for attachments of any kind other than your memories of a Roman childhood.

If so, we could share some of the stay at home time, preferably and after a while, without yellow silk pajamas.