

"But don't you think," persisted Brown, "that just from the psychological point of view—and from your own practice—that a group confrontation would be really effective?"

"That's not his problem, Charlie. Uh . . . where should I put my stuff? Which room is Schroeder's, by the way?"

"Good grief!" sighed Brown, whose asperity was even more perceptible. "Can't you stay focused for even a minute? What do you mean 'that isn't Linus's problem'?"

"I mean," began Lucy, "that the approach is too subtle. Linus would use all his sophistication and tie you in rational knots—Harvard guys are nothing if not intellectually convoluted. From what you've told me, Linus would be able to spot a logical loophole a mile away. *Deprogram* dear bro, I say! Blitz him with the absurdity of that pumpkin fetish. Wear him down. After a week without meals he will be ready to soak up whatever you like, maybe sign the Communist Manifesto. This coffee still hot?"

"Yeah," replied Brown weakly.

After a few minutes of silence Brown spoke again, perhaps half to himself: "Conversion isn't like that, Lucy. The right solution can't violate a person's own will. I grant you that Linus's fixation on The Great Pumpkin involves an overall psychological set that is very resistant to change. But you can't facilitate the kind of change I have in mind by reverse brainwashing . . . by prying his head open with a psychological crowbar and stuffing in new content."

"A pity," said Lucy as she gulped down the last of her coffee. "You know, you haven't changed a bit, Charlie Brown. Theories, you know, always get you stuck—you want them to be true, but that's just it; there's no way on earth to verify a theory. The problem is that the world screams for action while you are immobilized in an intellectual dither! Practice and workability are where it's at. And *technique* is what it all boils down to. I suppose some theory or other might explain why a technique works, but the problem is, lots of *different* theories might explain the very *same* technique just as well. In the end there's only the technique, only the 'how-to,' and the