

# Belltown Babylon

by Elaine Bonow

## Chapter 10

**A** typical day in Belltown is when nothing much happens, but sometimes shit happens. Like for instance, last week I was standing outside the studio looking to see if our newest PIA (Pain In the Ass) meter person was on the job. Us locals have been getting a dose of the real world—we are getting tickets for feeding the meter. *Quelle horreur!* But back to the topic at hand. I was just hanging out on the sidewalk looking for my nemesis when... I heard an incessant beeping noise for two or three minutes. It kinda bothered me. I looked around to see if a truck was backing up, but there was none in sight. Suddenly my attention was grabbed by a slightly familiar female face. She was shouting from the other side of the street. She was screaming and pointing up above where I was standing. DUH! I finally looked up to see thick smoke barreling out of the third floor of the Scargo Hotel. KRIKIES! Two women who worked in the Plymouth Housing office were walking by on the sidewalk, ran back inside and called 911. Finally, the distant cry of the sirens pre-echoed in the air. The first thing I heard from the fire truck, was a fireman saying, "It smells like food." From experience, they knew that someone had forgotten about the pot of beans on the stove.

Later that same week, my daughter came by to visit, but when she was ready to leave, her car wouldn't start. It was nothing really bad except a pissy battery, but she had to pick up her son from the school bus in a half hour. We raised the hood of the car and after a few unsuccessful attempts to flag a cab ("Hey lady, just call a cab and they'll jump ya for only 10 bucks." Yeah right. Well, we tried that and I'm here to tell ya this specific ploy doesn't work!) OKAAAY already, EUREKA! A man in a VW van u-turns in front of her car, pulling up to the curb sideways. He jumps out and slides the side door of the Vee Wee open. "Here hold the door," he motions to me, pushes the passenger seat forward, accesses his battery, pulls the jumper cables out of the back and is starting to slap them on, when a motorcycle cop pulls up, lights flashing. "PARANOIA WILL DESTROY YA," my brain screams. Just what we need is a ticket or a lecture by a stern officer. But he sweetly stopped traffic, waved to the baby girl in the back seat of my daughter's car and smiled.

"All's well that ends well."

WELL, I am happy to report that the problem with the valet parkers has been resolved, at least for now, on MY block. It seems that we now have a professional service working called Butler Valet. The boys are very nice, and when I voiced my concerns about them parking on the street, they made sure that I knew that they were a professional service and would not be breaking the rules. Hurrah! Miss my last column? Read all the past issues of the **Messenger** at [www.belltown-messenger.com/archives](http://www.belltown-messenger.com/archives).