

# new worlds

NUMBER 199

3s 6d



DOES SEX  
HAVE A  
FUTURE?

**PLUS**  
LOVEPOEMS  
by D.M.THOMAS

SPECULATIVE  
FICTION

**MUSIC &  
BAD BOOKS**

# new worlds

Number 199

**Cover:** Filing cabinet drawer in the art department of one of the principal British publishers and importers of erotic books and magazines

**Illustrations:** Gabi Nasmann 15, 19, 21, 22; R. Glyn Jones, 16, 17; John Bayley, 18; Allan Stephanson, 24; Ivor Latto, 27; Charles Platt, 8; Jay Myrdal, 23. We apologise for omitting to credit Jay Myrdal with the photograph on page 19 of our previous issue.

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*Storm Bailey*



**T**HIS MONTH NEW WORLDS FEATURES four serious treatments of sexual topics. Ian Watson's *The Sex Machine* suggests, in the words of the author: "sexual dehumanisation and inbuilt slave mentality of the consumer system might conceivably lead to public sex vending machines." Watson's treatment of this loaded subject is unexpectedly sensitive: "the machine fantasising itself as a woman ... reification in reverse" and the resolution of the story is laden with pathos.

A human approach is also behind Hilary Bailey's *Agatha Blue*, describing the immersion of a female-dominant alien intelligence in the mind of a mental patient. The background is London's Paddington area; the female viewpoint provides balance, against the grimmer flavour of John Landau's attempt to define the basic source of demand for pornography, and to extrapolate its future course.

J.G. Ballard's story this issue is another intersection of fiction and reality: in this case, the reality of a media-cliche (Princess Margaret) and the fiction of an imaginary plastic surgery operation. Ballard

achieves his effect directly, elegantly and economically, dramatising the abstractions of textbook surgical description.

D. M. Thomas is one of England's best-known poets; we are especially pleased to be first to publish his latest work, *Computer 70: Dreams and Love-poems*, which will appear in *New Worlds* in four instalments of around five pages at a time. Thomas says that this poetry "attempts to explore the interfusion of public and private worlds, at this point in time, when instant- and indeed over-communication ensures that our most private experiences are coloured by remote acts of violence and technological advances. If a poet writes lovepoems, it is as though a computer were writing them, at some distance from his head and heart."

As always, his poetry is sincere, succinct and emotionally loaded, but with perfect control. The subject matter is the events of the 1960s.

Interested readers will find more of Thomas's work in *Penguin Modern Poets 11* (1967) and *Two Voices* (Cape Goliard, 1968), the former dwelling largely on science fiction themes.

Other fiction this month includes a first appearance by Reg Moore, whose story *High in Sierra* "evolved out of a dream ... that remained in my subconscious long after routine reality had set in. My aim in the short futuristic setting was to arrive at a point of departure and no return". The writing is conventional narrative, but the mood and atmosphere extend far beyond the matter-of-fact descriptions.

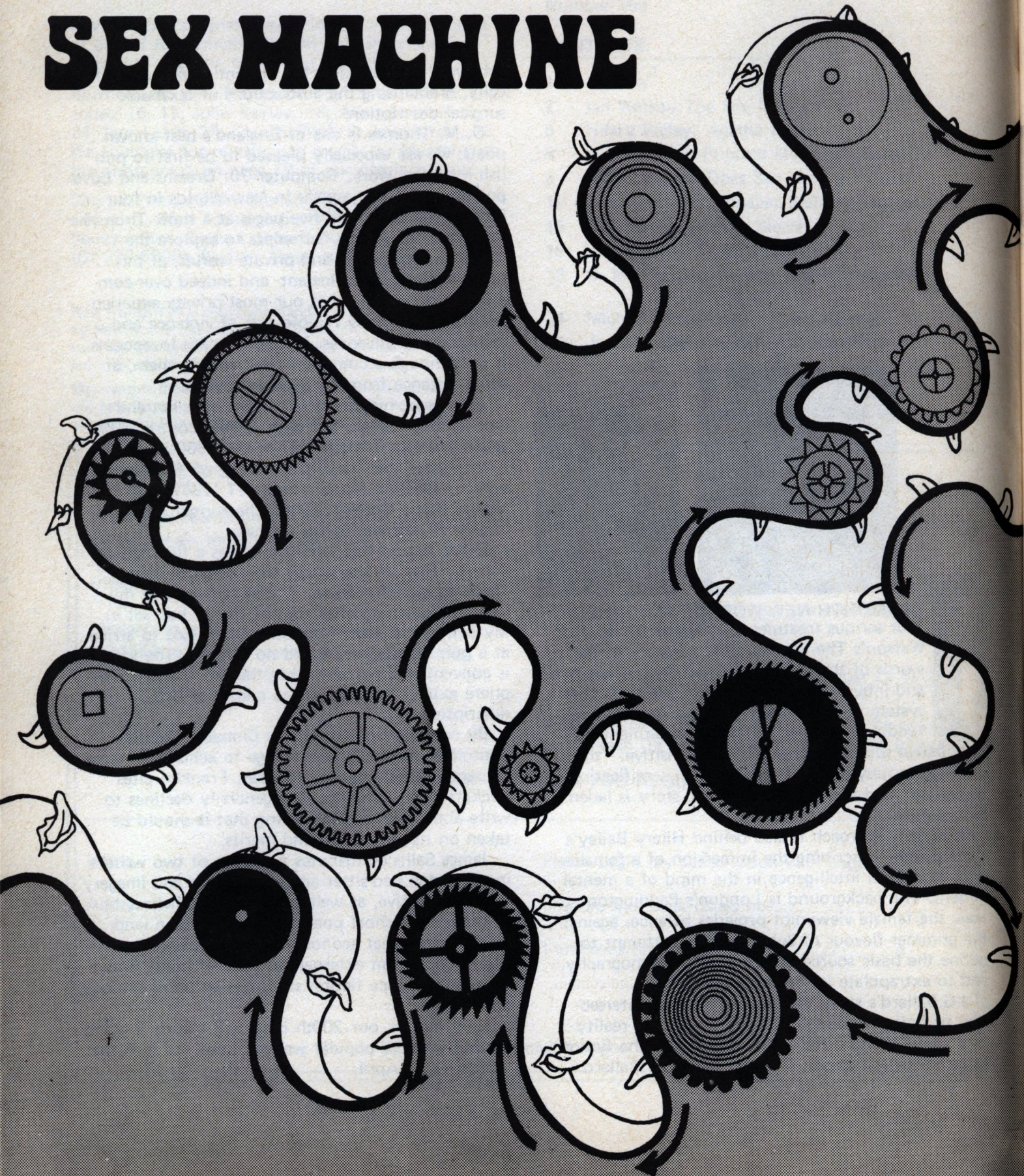
By contrast Bob Franklin's *Cinnabar Balloon Tautology* manipulates language to achieve its sense of paradox and multiple realities. Franklin cites Beckett as an influence, but generally declines to write about his writing, feeling that it should be taken on its own terms and merits.

James Sallis contributes a picture of two writers in a London bed-sitter and adds charm and imagery that is evocative, as well as being fun; Michael Butterworth's short poem conjurs half-seen landscapes using great economy of words; Jannick Storm depicts an externalised state of mind; Sonya Dorman's science fiction story has an unpretentious, direct appeal.

Next month, our 200th issue will feature a grand list of our most popular writers. Look for it in the first week of April.

Ian Watson

# THE SEX MACHINE



**Y**OU'D BEST IMAGINE ME AS A SOFT DRINK vending machine, only I'm much more elaborate. I stand six feet high with a grille in the top for ventilation and a small hidden peephole in the front. My steel body is painted bright red except in front where there's a pink vinyl relief of my supposed torso, exaggerated to appeal to the man in the street — the waist almost nonexistent, the breasts sticking out a full twelve inches, their points like well-sharpened pencils.

Down from my huge breasts the tiny waist bulges into voluptuous vinyl hips that curl seductively around my slot, which is three inches in diameter. The vinyl is dyed a deep mulberry red, the shape of a heart around it. Between six in the evening and six the next morning, and at times during the day when I'm not in use, the slot is covered by a steel shutter with the word CLOSED written on it. The coin hole is on the right hand side level with my shoulder and when the coin has been weighed and accepted I sense myself being pressed upwards and forwards by the steel seat I sit on, which pinions me behind the front of the machine, whereupon the shutter opens.

Painted in orange day-glo across the space corresponding to my head are warnings to those who would abuse my machine or want more than their money's worth.

*Withdraw within thirty seconds, says one. After orgasm the shutter closes automatically.*

*Anyone inserting other than a bona fide sex organ, says another, will be prosecuted.*

I belong to the Dollar Slot Corporation which controls nearly all the dollar pitches in the downtown area. Hotel lobbies, restaurants, offices, building sites, you name it. I'm in front of a big store. On winter days I can enjoy the warm air flooding out of the doors, on summer days the cool. It's a very busy pitch.

I'm not busy at the moment or I wouldn't have any time to think. I can't seem to think when I'm busy except in a vague general way. But this wears off in the evening and I have all night for my dreams. It's 4.00 a.m. just now and my mind is humming as I wait for Harold to arrive.

Harold is the maintenance man. I am in love with him and have given him the name Harold as I don't know what his proper name is, but I can tell by the way he looks after me that he loves me. A woman can always sense these things. He spends so long with me, he must be neglecting the others terribly.

Yet once a silence such as this has been established, it's difficult to break it, to be the first to declare one's passion. Therefore I have spent many of my free moments working on the declaration of love that will finally unite us. I shall definitely eschew the more sophisticated forms which might seem to have an edge of insincerity about them. I'd like to say simply *Harold I love you* or *I love you Harold* or *It's you Harold for me* or *It's me for you Harold* in a gentle voice which would not terminate the unspoken phase of our love too brutally. Yet he might be puzzled or alarmed by being addressed as Harold, if that is not his real name.

I cannot talk of love this morning however, after what happened last night.

It had been a busy day. The salarymen had received their summer bonuses. They flooded into the store to spend and formed long queues outside afterwards to use me. My slot hardly had time to close. I was tipped backwards and forwards like a roller-coaster rider. I felt butterflies fluttering in my belly. Everybody's face looked the same, settled and content. There was none of the hard-as-nails jackhammer violence of the labourers in their lunch break. Every time I tipped forward I saw the same face before me with the same expression of discharge-satisfaction already present on it from the spending

in the store. I shut my eyes and abandoned myself to the rocking swing-boat sensation. It was easier to avoid seasickness with my eyes shut. Why are there not seasick pills for such busy days? I forewent my lunch pack so as not to burden Harold with unnecessary cleaning, though he would clean me up in any case, dear Harold. I feasted on the butterflies that packed my belly as feathers pack a pillow. It was sufficient.

At 6 p.m. the slot shut for the night. The salarymen who'd missed their chance trailed their hands over my breasts, shrugged, headed home by train to the bed-cities. I drowsed, my mind still rocking to and fro, though the seat was at last horizontal and steady.

At midnight I was shocked awake. A gang of young savages with haircuts like the combs crests caruncles of roosters surrounded me, leering and laughing. They tried to pry open my slot with their knives, tried to kick in my coin box with their steel-tipped boots. I'm pretty strongly made, I didn't expect they could do much damage to the slot or the coin-box, but I was terrified they might find there was a peephole and try some real carving. I can't get my head very far away from the front, there just isn't room. But they didn't find it—people never stop to think that there's an eye watching them. Instead, they turned for their revenge to my lovely vinyl breasts which Harold buffs and polishes every morning, erasing the fingerprints of the day before. They slashed them off with their knives and left them lying at my feet, or where my feet would be.

It won't affect your love, will it, seeing me without any breasts? You can easily find me a new pair? Breasts are unimportant? I'd say they come between us. The real me is in here, not sticking out a foot into the street. The real me is closed to the public, reserved for you, Harold.

### Please Tick Your Choice

#### Question One:

Do you find the Breasts get in the way of enjoyment?

- (a) They are well placed and very enjoyable. I would like more.
- (b) They are well placed but unnecessary to my enjoyment.
- (c) They are unnecessary.
- (d) They are a slight nuisance.
- (e) They are a nuisance and I would like them removed.

#### Question Two:

Do you find our machines satisfying?

- (a) It fulfills my every need.
- (b) It fulfills my immediate need.
- (c) It half satisfies my need.
- (d) It doesn't satisfy me at all.
- (e) It makes me less than satisfied.

#### Question Three:

Do you find the price of one dollar:

- (a) Too cheap, I would rather pay more.
- (b) Very reasonable.
- (c) Reasonable.
- (d) Unreasonable.
- (e) Expensive.
- (f) Ridiculous.

Consideration might be given to the installation of a chocolate and fruit vending section. The customer may wish to refresh himself while using the other facilities.

Some form of public address system whereby people in a wide radius may be appraised on what we have to offer?

Installation of stereo cassette packs?

Mood button 'a' Military marches

Mood button 'b' Bird song

Mood button 'c' Screams, sobs and cries

Mood button 'd' Sexy voice yours is the loveliest biggest most adorable muscular sensitive tactile throbbing etc.

**H**AROLD IS GOING TO BRING ME MY NEW breasts, better breasts than ever, because he loves me. Not many people used me yesterday with my breasts off, they had nothing to hold on to. I've spent almost twenty-four hours in coherent thought; my mind is racing. Do I want the new breasts? Yes, they are my lipstick, my perfume, my jewellery, I have to wear them for him. They are my brassiere; underneath, my real breasts hide themselves away. Without a bra there is no breast.

**H**AROLD HASN'T BROUGHT MY BREASTS HE drives up in a small lorry with a crane on the back, he fastens thick ropes round me. My breasts don't need a crane to lift them, they're only made of vinyl. He is a small man but very strong. I can feel myself lifting up and away from the pitch where I've been rooted for so long. Good-bye store, goodbye winter gusts of warm air, summer gusts of cool. At last he has declared himself, he couldn't stand it any longer. All those others.

Still he doesn't say a word, and I keep silent too. Chance passers-by cannot be permitted to overhear our first tender words to each other.

He hides me under a tarpaulin when he has me on the lorry back, all grows dark, but I hear the voice of the lorry, and feel the vibrations of the road. I pedal some water from my spigot, unwrap a pack of food concentrates labelled Breakfast. I eat as we ride through the city streets towards wherever.

### **U**N A METAL HILLSIDE.

I don't know why I am. Not in some park among the bushes, some field or forest, he knows best, maybe there's no field or forest or park any more, though I have them in my head as I went out one May morning a squire a squire he lived in the wood he courted a lady gay young women they'll run like hares on the mountain mood button 'e' pastoral image change most popular with construction workers displaced countrymen all. On a metal hill that has its own form of beauty and grandeur, a hill representing all the wealth of the world that he wants to give me cars refrigerators washing-machines spin-driers lawn-mowers air-conditioners bicycles electric fires piled up about me on all sides. But what about my breasts? Has he forgotten my breasts? Or don't they matter any more?

There he stands looking at me, one foot on a washing-

machine, the other on a tricycle, domesticity and the suburban home — and he looks so shy.

How soon will he let me out?

Hasn't he heard my voice?

Perhaps I spoke too quietly.

He pulls a pipe from his pocket which I've never seen him smoke before.

Is he deaf?

He lights his pipe and puffs on it. A pipe is unromantic.

I look round the wilderness of dead machines. But this is maybe where he lives, underneath this scrap heap, in a cave studded with air-conditioners TV sets lawn-mowers everything to hand all labour-saving devices, an automated cave very like a spaceship sailing between the stars. I had dreamt of a suburban home with twin beds and a patch of lawn.

At last! He's walking round me to the back of my machine where the door is. I can hear his boots grinding over the heaped-up machines. Pausing directly behind me. A ringing vibration as he pats me on the rump.

Then I hear the crunch of his boots a little further away, and a little further. Desperately I crane my neck. As if I could twist my head through 180 degrees and see anything but metal. My only peephole is in front, and now it looks out on nothing but machines, while my man is there behind me.

The lorry door slams. The engine starts.

And now I really know fear - as the lorry starts to move, as its fat tyres crunch the broken bicycles, as it backs away, only heard, not seen.

**T**HAT NIGHT THE KIDS COME ROAMING OVER the hundred-acre scrapheap. Not the kids that cut her breasts off but younger kids, jackals practising on the scrapheap before they move to the city streets, trying out the ethics of turf and territory and guerilla warfare on these fields of junk.

They find her, beat a tattoo on her sides.

'Reckon anything's in her?' asks a gargoyle boy with large head and ever-clawing hands.

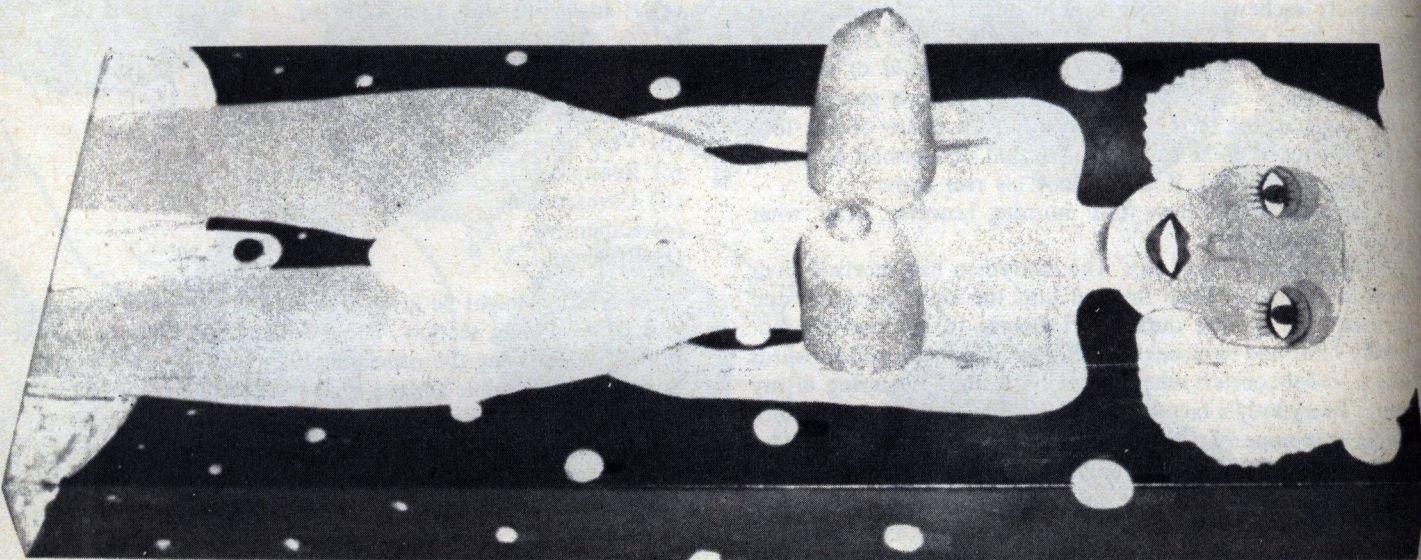
'Crack'er open?' suggests a kid with a squint.

'What dyou think yer going to find?' laughs the boss boy who wears a racing helmet.

'Maybe get a drink.'

'Look, the machine's empty, it says closed.'

So they climb away through the junk suburbs with their weapons handy, searching for more promising deposits, like a car, or a drum of poison gas.●



# AGATHA BLUE

by hiliary  
bailey

**A**GATHA BLUE ARRIVED ON EARTH ONE WEDNESDAY. Invisible, she drifted across the frozen lawns of Sunnydales Hospital. The trees were bare, and the round and crescent-shaped flower beds showed only a few green plants and twigs, but it was easy to see that in spring and summer the grounds would look quite delightful.

Her first view of Jenny was through the hospital windows: a bowed head of mousey, straggled hair, a green dressing gown in a wickerwork chair, a pair of scuffed royal blue mules. She faced away from the other patients sitting in the lounge knitting, playing draughts, reading magazines and chatting.

Agatha listened into Jenny and heard something like this:

*—he's out there I know but I'll take no notice ... they all want me to pretend ... I'm just sitting here, I'm just sitting here ... they'll tell me he isn't ... I shall not stir ... but if he, if he ... then I'll kill them all, yes ... get my clothes, a knife from the kitchen, sit still, still, still ... hide the knife, hide the knife, hide the knife, when he comes up I'll hide the knife and rip him up in the morning.*

That was more than enough for Agatha. She listened to Jenny's memories — the squinting rubber doll; running in the marsh; the Latin class; the coffee shop; Adrian; a false pregnancy; cough sweets for an aching throat; tired blood; digging in the garden; clipping the laurel; a wedding ceremony; and booming over it all, an angry roaring shout.

What misery. Agatha took over, reorganising the metabolism as she went. Jenny straightened up in her wicker chair, looked out at the garden and smiled.

A week later she was discharged. Another triumph for Dr. Gelabius.

**T**HUS IT WAS THAT ONLY SEVEN DAYS AFTER her arrival Agatha was walking down Praed Street in Jenny's body. A tall, beautiful girl in a holiday mood, she smiled cheerfully.

Across the road on the left lay the mighty bulk of a new hotel. To her right were shops selling cameras, books and magazines, watches, motor cycle and car accessories, radio spares, ladies' underwear, men's clothing and short-let rooms.

A small man in a grey mac was looking lustfully in a bookshop window as she passed. A pale man in a sepia anorak was looking lustfully into the next window at the peek-a-boo bras. An old man in a checked trilby hat and camel hair coat was looking lustfully into a chemist's window while next to him another small man in a grey mac was looking lustfully at the model in the man's-wear shop wearing a nineteen-guinea single-breasted suit. Beside him a man in a grey single-breasted two-piece suit was looking lustfully at a black leather motorcycle jacket in the same window. Nearby a man in a tweed sports jacket and grey flannel trousers was looking lustfully at a grey-jacketed book in a window full of surgical appliances.

*I shall know him if I meet him again, thought Agatha. He's the man roaring toward me on the motorcycle, clicking his Nikon at me all the time, pulling up and ripping off his black leather motorcycle gear to reveal a cheap grey business man's suit and then underneath a red satin and black lace pair of panties, and a mauve peek-a-boo bra and rubber tubing strapped down one leg. He hands me his whip and cries: "Punish me, whip me, Mrs Arlington!"*

Agatha felt Jenny beginning to murmur inside her head and turned to look at a camera shop. She thought: *The eyes, always through the eyes, catch a fairy on the Christmas tree in the lens and it's all mine...* A car started up behind her: speed and noise — particles, sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, hydrocarbon, carbon monoxide. The car passed her: 65% exhaust gases 15% evaporation from the fuel tank and carburettor, 20% from the crankcase. In the laden air such great, dirty, dark erections on either side of this narrow street, with the small gloomy men on the pavements. She

thought, *there is more dancing.* And Jenny said, *dancing, dancing.* Agatha said, *and light.* Jenny said, *light, light.*

A man stopped and spoke quietly to Agatha. She said: "I'm a stranger here."

He repeated his words more loudly. Agatha replied: "No thankyou, I don't want anything."

He moved away. Another man, slowing down as he reached Agatha, saw the first man move off and hurried past her.

Agatha felt a jolt in Jenny's head.

As she walked along an elderly business man in a bowler hat blocked her path. Her head jolted again. As she moved to one side to let him pass he stepped sideways at the same moment so that they again faced each other. Agatha smiled and stepped to one side again, just as he moved in the same direction.

"So sorry," he said as he steered round her.

Agatha inclined her head gracefully. She turned to look at him. Catching her glance he hurried away.

*Oh, said Jenny. Oh, oh, oh.*

Agatha strolled on again. Someone lurched into her as she passed. Two young workmen fell to mock wrestling as they saw her coming. When she reached them the taller one made as if to pull his friend across her path and just corrected the movement as she veered aside to avoid them.

*No, no, moaned Jenny.*

But supple Agatha moved on, still smiling cheerfully.

Two men came toward her separated by a plank they were carrying on their shoulders.

"Hullo, darling," shouted the man in front.

"Hullo, darling," cried Agatha.

The man at the far end of the plank laughed. As they came up to her the first man stepped across her path. She moved to avoid the plank as it swung in, bit her lip as she watched them go.

*They seem to fear me, she thought.*

Jenny said, *Many dream of injuring you.*

*Ah, said Agatha.*

*On your own, said Jenny, you're a bomb which needs dismantling in case it goes off and kills someone.*

But Agatha swung along Praed Street still smiling cheerfully. And as she came the men looking in shop windows turned, one by one, and recognised: mater dolorosa, mother, faustine, little nell, lolita and shirley temple, catherine the great, penthesiles of the amazons, child bride of the monster,

vagina dentis, martha, mary, mother, joan of arc, helen of troy, the queen, the school lady dentist, mrs mattheison the brain of britain, mother, rosa prentiss queen of the air raid shelter and many more. And Agatha, feeling nothing but a light drizzle of rain hitting her face, her heels coming down on the pavement, was whipped and whipping, stripped and stripping, and had intercourse ten times ten ways in ten places, all without knowing anything about it.

Running steps behind her. A boy of about seventeen in a school raincoat with his thin brown hair brushed back smoothly came alongside, slowed down and, turning slightly to block her advance, thrust his hand into her crotch.

"Ooh," Agatha cried challengingly and pushed him heartily backward on to a plate glass window where he banged his head and slid to the ground, stunned.

Smiling pleasantly, Agatha faced him. She moved her legs slightly apart, balanced herself and waited for him to get up and attack again. He looked up, caught her cheerful gaze, scrambled on to his feet and walked quickly away.

*Oh, oh, oh, wailed Jenny. No, no, no.*

*Funny, thought Agatha. He's gone away.*

She had reached the end of Praed Street.

*Let's go, pleaded Jenny. Come on, let's go.*

So Agatha walked back down Praed Street quickly passing the men in grey macs, tweed sports jackets, anoraks and camel hair overcoats, looking at the motorcycle accessories, cameras and watches, radio spares, chemists' windows, surgical goods, ladies' underwear, men's clothing, books and magazines and as she went they wailed in chorus: *I'll shove her against a wall it's no good at all she so tall and I'm so small.* And she strode on toward Whiteleys, passing, among others, a woman wheeling a pram with no pride and a middle-aged woman in a leopard skin coat and hat, and both looked at free-striding Agatha Blue as if they had been robbed.

Jenny settled down nicely on the walk, only shuddering slightly when a policeman in uniform came out of a side turning and looked mistrustfully at Agatha.

**W**HITELEYS, THE BIG STORE, ALL LIGHTS AND perfumes, was full of dissevered women struggling to pull their separated parts together here, where the world could not see them. They picked up and felt dress materials, stared fiercely at stockings, glared at powders, lipsticks, mascaras and false eyelashes, hated wigs. There was a conspiracy to sell them things which would make them ugly,





freakish, repulsive, sordid and hateful to themselves. But not if they were clever enough. If they were clever enough, soon they would have smooth, pale skins, glossy hair, soft, gleaming, seductive eyes, long shapely legs in coloured stockings, smooth slidey legs in pale stockings, small elegant feet in tender kid shoes and soft bodies in bright dresses which flowed with them as they moved. Whole, perfect and visible again, they would shimmer, gleam, flow, be glamorous, amazing, seductive, fantastic and glorious beyond belief.

Oh, said Agatha, her eyes wide.

Yes, yes, sighed Jenny, The graceful curves, the well-fitting bright clothes, the elegant legs, the tiny slender feet in the shining, soft shoes, the gleaming, waving hair, eyes glowing and soft as a young doe's, wee, smooth hands to which nothing would be denied — the world, all tiny and gold, would be placed into those fragile, soft, pink hands.

Oh, said Agatha.

Under the steel helmets in the hairdresser's the dissevered women sat. Soon they would be combed out and their princes would come and put them together again.

—My husband won't let me cut it: a desperate voice.

So Agatha left Whiteleys and turned back until she found Praed Street.

—Wouldn't mind being back in the army again: a desperate voice.

Behind Agatha were the women, with their carrier bags containing clothes and shoes, hair rollers, hand driers, small machines to push back cuticles, pluck eyebrows and remove surplus hair, stockings to make the legs shimmer and shine and pink stuff to garm all over their mugs.

Between one step and another, as she turned the corner into the grey street, Agatha felt Jenny struggling for control inside her skull. The strain of this exposure to the world which had maddened her in the past was too much. She fought, forcing Agatha's eyes toward her world. Agatha regained control — then Jenny...

There came the howl of police sirens and two cars drew up beside her. Seven policemen leaped out and ran forward to belabour her with their truncheons. Simultaneously a crowd of little men in grey macs ran round the block toward her exposing themselves furiously. Just at that moment a gang of skinheads ran up behind her carrying petrol cans and rags and gas lighters and set fire to her skirt and the Old Alleynians Fifteen singing Eskimo Nell charged her and brought her to the ground in a flying tackle...

Then came the roar of the hogs.

As the Hells Angels screamed to a halt the Alleynians, the policemen and the skinheads left Jenny bruised and beaten on the pavement and ran forward to attack.

The Hells Angels fought stoutly, aided by the Scots Guards who arrived to join them, kilts swinging, pipes skirling as they sang Mrs McFiggin got thrown in the jiggin for shouting hairy pie. At the sounds of the disturbance ten Irishmen fell out of Finch's and joined the battle, five on either side. Tyre levers, Guinness bottles and hammers filled the air. In the excitement, gangs of hooligans raided Whiteleys carrying off Scalextric sets, clocks, telescopic sights for air rifles, train sets, motor horns, bows, arrows and targets and power tools.

As it went on the Whiteleys women accumulated four deep along the pavements on either side holding bandages, boxes of tissues, cups of black coffee, family allowance books, blankets, hot water bottles, slippers, hospital and prison visiting cards, worn purses and bibles.

As the noise and confusion reached its height, a jestic of the peace stepped forward and read the Riot Act, a bishop appealed for an act of corporate worship and as the Tamley Motorworks band played God Save the King there was a burst of machine gun fire and the first bombs began to fall.

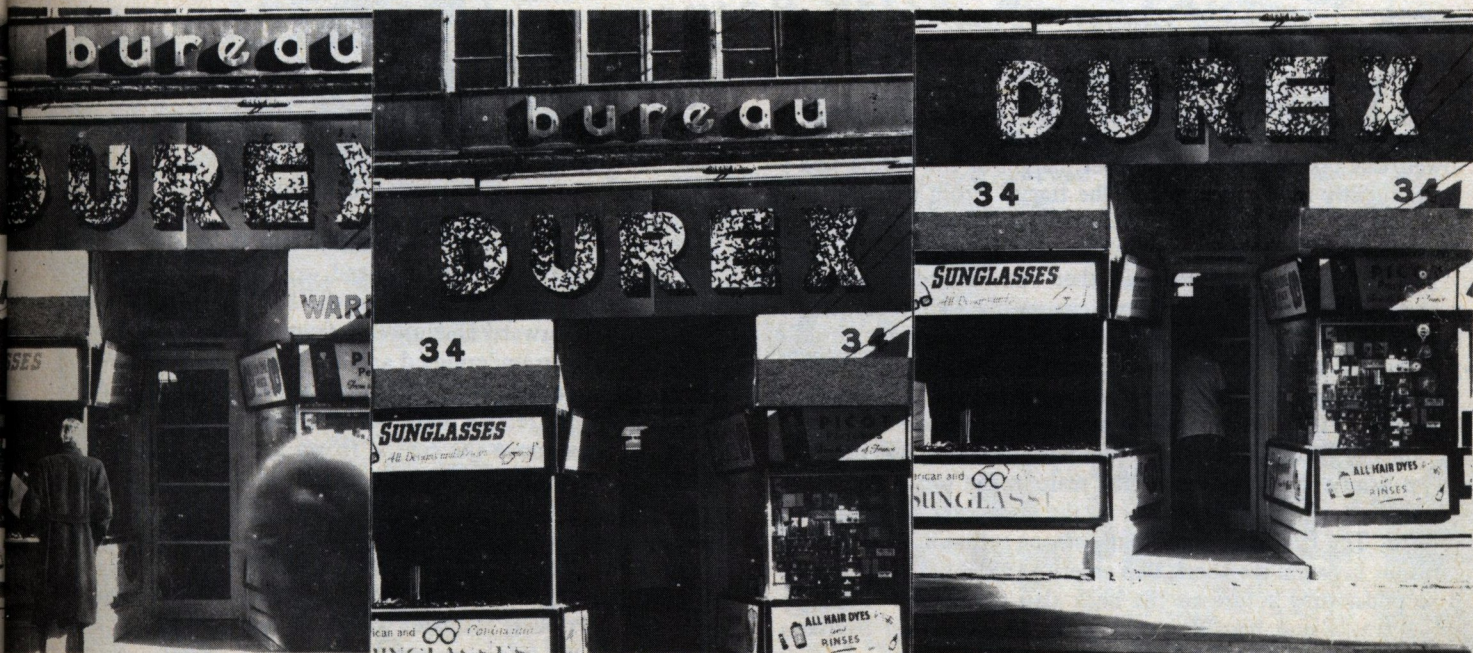
Meanwhile in the beflowered undertaker's parlour in Whiteleys, the beauteous Jenny, having been raped, beaten and set light to, with her waving hair pulled out in hunks and her fingernails and toenails torn off, was tenderly washed, arrayed in white samite and laid on a flowery bier by Civil Defence officers. She was lovelier than she had ever been in life, never again to be frigid, excessive in her sexual demands or a lesbian sleeping with best friends.

They wept as they consecrated her bier to the soft embrace of the Thames.

**A**GATHA BLUE FELT THAT SHE HAD definitely outworn her welcome. She seeped away into the cloudy, grey, exhaust-fumed atmosphere of Praed Street and was soon zooming home among the clouds.

Poor Jenny was found by a policeman sitting on the pavement in Praed Street, weeping bitterly, and was taken back to Sunnydales for further treatment.

Dr Gelabius said he was not surprised — he had expected it all along.●



# PRINCESS MARGARET'S FACE LIFT

AN INTERSECTION OF FICTION  
AND REALITY, BY

*jg ballard*



**A**S PRINCESS MARGARET REACHED MIDDLE age, the skin of both her cheeks and neck tended to sag from failure of the supporting structures. Her naso-labial folds deepened, and the soft tissues along her jaw fell forward. Her jowls tended to increase. In profile the creases of her neck lengthened and the chin-neck contour lost its youthful outline and became convex.

The eminent plastic surgeon Richard Battle has remarked that one of the great misfortunes of the cosmetic surgeon is that he only has the technical skill, ability and understanding to correct this situation by surgical means. However, as long as people are prepared to pay fees for this treatment the necessary operation will be performed. Incisions made across the neck with the object of removing redundant tissue should be avoided. These scars tend to be unduly prominent and may prove to be the subject of litigation. In the case of Princess Margaret the incision was designed to be almost completely obscured by her hair and ears.

**S**URGICAL PROCEDURE: AN INCISION WAS made in her temple running downward and backward to the apex of her ear. From here a crease ran toward her lobule in front of the ear, and the incision followed this crease around the lower margin of the lobule to a point slightly above the level of the tragus. From there, at an obtuse angle, it was carried backward and downward within the hairy margin of the scalp.

The edges of the incision were then undermined. First with a knife and then with a pair of scissors, the skin was lifted forward to the line of her jaw. The subcutaneous fatty tissue was scraped away with the knife. Large portions of connective tissue cling to the creases formed by frown lines, and some elements of these were retained in order to preserve the facial personality of the Princess. At two places the skin was pegged down firmly. The first was to the scalp at the top of her ear, the second was behind the ear to the scalp over the mastoid process. The first step was to put a strong suture in the correct position between the cheek flap anterior to the first point, and a second strong suture to the neck flap behind the ear. The redundant tissue was then cut away and the skin overlap removed with a pair of scissors.

At this point the ear was moved forward toward the chin, and the wound was then closed with interrupted sutures. It did not matter how strong the stitches were behind the ears because that part of the Princess's scarline was invisible in normal conditions.

**C**OMPLICATIONS: HAEMATOMA FORMATION IS a dangerous sequela of this operation, and careful drainage with polythene tubing was carried out. In spite of these precautions blood still collected, but this blood was evacuated within 48 hours of the operation. It was not allowed to organise. In the early stages the skin around the area that had been undermined was insensitive, and it was not difficult to milk any collection of fluid backward to the point of drainage.

Scarring was hypertrophic at the points where tension was greatest: that is, in the temple and the region behind the ear, but fortunately these were covered by the Princess's hair. The small fine sutures which were not responsible for tension were removed at 4 days, and the strong sutures removed at the tenth day. The patient was then allowed to have a shampoo to remove the blood from her hair. All scarlines are expected to fade, and by the end of three weeks the patient was back in social circulation.

**A**T A SUBSEQUENT OPERATION AFTER THIS successful face lift, forehead wrinkles were removed. An incision was placed in the hairline and the skin lifted forward and upward from the temporal bone. The skin was then undermined and the excess tissue removed. The immediate result was good, but as a result of normal forehead movements relapse may occur unduly early after the operation. To remove the central frown line, the superciliary muscle was paralysed by cutting the branches of the seventh nerve passing centrally to it. A small knife-blade was inserted from the upper eyelid upward for 3 cm and then pressed down to the bone. External scars on the forehead often persist, and even in the best hands results are not always reliable. It was explained to Princess Margaret where the scars would lie, and the object of the intervention. □

# DOES SEX HAVE A FUTURE?

**M**ANY PEOPLE regard the growing field of sexual entertainments as a purely temporary phase of over-indulgence. They argue that permissiveness has released a wave of curiosity which will die as soon as everyone adjusts healthily to their new freedoms.

Unfortunately, it is clear that this will not happen.

Far from dying, the sexual

substitutes — books, magazines, films, live performances and gadgetry like the much-advertised "personal vibrator" — are going to proliferate.

The case for this can be argued simply in terms of demand and supply.

The demand, in free-enterprise countries, and especially among urban dwellers, will increase for the following reasons:

Marketing systems operate

by implanting dissatisfaction; the consumer is incomplete without the product.

Media values: competing to capture an audience entails using the strongest and simplest values. This usually devolves to sex and violence. Indulgence in these vicarious physical experiences via the media has become an ingrained pattern of behaviour. The population is accustomed to it, and to a large extent depends on it.

Social conditions, in crowded residential areas and work places, tend to induce stress,

tension, boredom, frustration and general estrangement.

For many urbanites it is impossible to be sociable after a day's work; the television is an important retreat into much-needed privacy. Frustrations are partially alleviated by releases such as domestic arguments; spending money; taking vacations. But the fact that these releases are insufficient is borne out by the continuing demand for sophisticated entertainments and escapes. The great success of James Bond and the whole spy story ethos results from the same discontents which are feeding the pornography industry.

The conditions of urban life are unlikely to grow better, and are likely to get worse.

The demand for non-personal sex is thus likely to grow stronger, as will demand for all other non-personal involvements.

The supply: historically, technology and the soft sciences have been applied to most areas of leisure and entertainment, while sex has remained largely unmentionable and not to be looked on as a form of recreation.

Thus it has benefited very little from science spin-off. The result is that there is now great opportunity for increasing the sophistication and variety of sexual entertainments.

**BY JOHN LANDAU**

**440-5608 New York Dominant, 22:**  
Long-limbed voluptuous del. honey-cream skin, demanding re. seeks docile male

**MAN-HUNGRY GIRL**  
LOVES LICKING COMPLETE set USUAL persona ONLY FS. STA

**440-5618 New York Spitfire, 37:**  
Long dark hair, smouldering brown eyes, 5'4", 120 lbs. of controlled dynamite! Luscious!

**440-5607 New York Honey-Bug, 42:**  
Waist-length brown hair, hazel eyes, always the lovely

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Eight (8) | Please

**5" HIGH HEELS**  
NOT "Almost" 5" or 4 1/2", but a FULL 5" Heel. Complete range of colors shoes and boots to

**ILLUSTRATED C MONIQUE**  
445170 New York City Negro, 32: Seeks very large woman, at least 300 lbs., any race, age. Photo a must. Phone please.

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MAKE ME PROVE IT!  
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**2 BRUTAL FEMALES**  
ALL-OUT, ALL NUDE, BITING, CLAWING, KICKING, SCRATCHING, BLOODY, CAT-FIGHT TO THE FINISH!

**Deep Penetrating Vibratory Action**  
Reported better than the hands of the most skilled masseur.

Perhaps the most successful innovation has been the use of the 'peter meter' as an aid to film reviews. Screw's panel of critics judge new films by the number and quality of erections obtained during viewing. (Such a technique would raise immediate problems if adopted in London where the majority of film critics are old women—including many of the men.) A consumer column provides a valuable guide to what is new in the market of sexual devices and toys. Goldstein and Buckley investigate new products with all the zeal of a *Which* panel. The literary section is devoted to reviews of what the paper calls 'fuckbooks

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A selection of semi-display ads culled from imported American magazines. Sexual diversification has already begun.

# ESCAPE into BONDAGE

**BRITONS could become "anti-sexual" and "all sorts of ghastly things" if the population explosion is not curbed, Prince Philip warned last night.**

The Prince, appearing on BBC TV's 24 Hours programme, told interviewer Kenneth Allsop that unless the problem is tackled now "we shall arrive at a situation of overcrowding which will be so unpleasant.

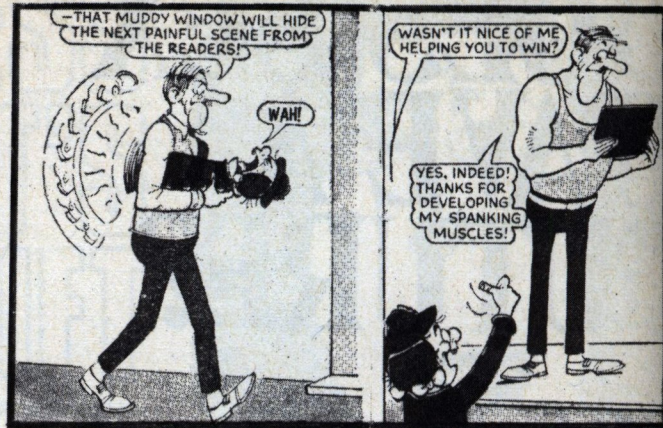
"If you overcrowd rats, they get all sorts of ghastly things happening to them—their whole social structure breaks down for one thing.

"They develop anti-sexual tendencies. Oh, I mean, awful things happen—and there's no reason to suppose that something like that won't happen to us if we let it."

"Now," she said, "how many strokes of my hand do you deserve? You've been such a wicked secret agent..."

"Fifteen strokes?" asked poor Gloria, with tortured hope in her voice.

"Fifteen thousand!" sneered the wicked countess, raising the whip.



expect the standards to rise as competition increases.

In time, there will be a sex genre, just as there are already western, private-eye, romance and science fiction genres. And, just as respected authors have drawn on the science fiction genre to write excellent 'mainstream' novels, so will good books be written drawing on the hard-pornography genre.

The sex field will also diversify. Already in the USA there are sex newspapers, and the Zap Comix series present a totally pornographic (in the classic sense of the word) indulgence in sexual distortion. Sexual symbolism has long been present in comic books; but never in such overt forms as these.

There are surely great opportunities for filming the first homosexual western, not as a joke but as a serious exercise, just as there are for writing a serious lesbian True Romance-style comic book.

So much for the media. Their lines of development are fairly predictable. Turning to live performances, we find the *Oh Calcutta* school, whose trend is obvious; and, in not too dissimilar vein, the striptease clubs.

The striptease club is not likely to survive in its present form. In London, they are still run on crude principles: a customer often has to argue over the entry fee, then a so-called 'membership fee', and even then may be sent down the street to a totally different club, the place he thought he was entering having turned out to be merely a 'front'.

This sort of crude practice is often matched by the clumsy, unattractive, bored and dull-eyed girls who move lethargically around the stage as

they drop their clothes, and pause absent-mindedly to scratch themselves between the end of one record and the beginning of the next.

Far more sophisticated, and far more unhealthy disturbing, is a set-up encountered in San Francisco where one enters one of a line of dim-lit, curtained booths, and in guilty, claustrophobic privacy indulges in a personal film-show on a look-in, coin-operated machine. The film, as they say, is explicit.

The development of this rather sinister, introverted approach will be discussed in the section of this article dealing with sex machines.

**L**EAVING THE visual arts, a more interesting and, so far, neglected field is that of mechanical sex aids. The personal vibrator - massager has become well known to readers of *International Times* or *Oz* magazine in this country. The equivalent device for male use is a vinyl, inflatable 'gogo girl' for some years available from the US West Coast. Also advertised is a ten-inch stick of "plastic flesh" which "can be moulded into a variety of interesting shapes".

These genital replicas are naive playthings reminiscent of the baby's dummy, as a replica of the mother's nipple.

It is quite feasible here and now to mass-produce a woman robot capable of the elementary physical and verbal responses of a prostitute. Children play with dolls that walk, talk, drink and so on. The sick vision of a brothel stocked with exquisitely proportioned, untiring, sweet-voiced 'women' with the synthetic charm and plasticity of

**I**N THE LAST YEAR, in England, there has been an unprecedented increase in the sex content of both national-circulation magazines and the flesh-market picture books sold in specialist outlets. *Curious*, the most intelligently produced magazine of them all, showed photographs of coitus with the excuse that the couple were posing as famous subjects in the famous Masters - Johnson sex studies.

But not all approaches were as subtle. *Fotostrip*, for instance, continued picturing men pawing girls' breasts under speech balloons reading "I love you" or "Oh, Doris!" or "I want you so much darling". *Playboy*, of course, remained the same, stuck in its role as the reactionary Establishment of the sex field.

Meanwhile, pubic hair was shown for the first time in picture-books also featuring

laborious dissertations on the importance of artistic freedom for photographers. And in the seedy little back rooms you could buy photos of men with semi-erect penises gazing stupidly into the eyes of girls lying with their legs wide open.

This last material comes mainly from the USA, where the Supreme Court ruling has made it clear that material with any socially redeeming qualities, however vestigial, has a chance of getting away with it. In New York 42nd Street bookstores, anyone over 21 can leaf through magazines which would have been seized instantly by the police a few years ago.

Thus the scene is pretty much wide open. Standards are still low; the photo stories have the same air of naivety as a child's comic or bedtime story. But, as already has happened in Denmark, we can

Pan Am air hostesses is very plausible, and certainly feasible. Advantages would include easy sterilisation of the plastic genitals, day-and-night operation and low maintenance. And robots never grow old and lose their looks, do they?

Psychoanalysis computer programs have already been used, giving intelligent responses to the patient's statements. One can see that in ten or fifteen years it may well be impossible to distinguish between a real woman and a replica, for the purposes of coitus and limited verbal exchanges in a dim-lit brothel. Even now visitors to Disneyland find it hard to believe that the many computerised robots are not real people.

Meanwhile, in the home, mechanical aids for marital sex will obviously supercede the oscillating bed. Visions of body-harnesses, cables and pulleys powered by a ten-horsepower motor with reduction gearing and elaborate cams and levers, are impractically mediaeval. A coital labour-saving device on more elegant lines would work on the 'waldo' principle: in, for instance, experiments with radio-active materials, the movements of the operator's hand in a metal 'glove' lined with sensors are translated into impulses which operate a metal 'hand' at a distance.

It would be equally feasible to insert the penis in a metal 'vagina' lined with sensors which would feed an artificial 'phallus', not only mimicking the operator's movements, but, if desired, amplifying them. The artificial phallus in turn would sense the woman's pelvic movements and vaginal contractions, feeding back to the artificial 'vagina'. The mutual feedback, lubrication, constriction and so on could be easily adjusted to suit. Partners would only need to move minimally for the mechanical 'genitals' to simulate violent coitus.

This would be a great boon to the disabled. More important, it would enable love at a distance:

*The Englishman has never met his Australian girlfriend, but speaks to her often on his picturephone. They know one another intimately, and so, with some shyness, she agrees*

*to plug in. They make love watching each other on the colour TV tubes, and feeling each other with great tenderness and emotion. It is a very personalised system, and in addition avoids danger of disease and pregnancy.*

*Later, the man re-lives it by playing into the artificial vagina the tape he has made of his lover's movements. He sees her face on the screen again, and hears her words of love...*

*Still later, he enjoys a tape linked with picture and voice of his favourite screen star.*

Technology of this sophistication is not quite developed as yet. But simpler masturbation machines could presumably be manufactured and sold much as the vibro-massagers have been.

Generally, it seems likely that the sexuality of machines will emerge more overtly, and impinge on people more directly, than it has in the past. Such mechanical sexuality is already inherent in, for example, automobile body styling. Car-driving, with its Freudian connotations of drifting, effortless speed, is a sex substitute rivalled only by motorcycling, flying or skydiving. There is a basic equivalence between pressing the accelerator pedal and stimulating the genitals; and beyond a threshold point of stimulation the two become indistinguishable.

This is important, because it is an abstract experience unrelated to all usual forms of erotic fantasy.

A woman-replica need not be the optimum design for a sexual substitute. Many men display more affection for their cars than their wives; perhaps the ultimate love-object could be a plastic thing, with many alternative orifices offering various tactile qualities, shapes and depths. How many 'breasts' should this object possess? What temperature should it operate at? What consistency of 'flesh'? Should it have a 'face'?

The idea of something like a long sausage, vibrating softly, full of warm treacle, has certain attractions as a sexual toy.

Attention should also be paid to the sexual environment. The mirror ceilings and black bedsheets of the kinky sex practitioner are crude, un-

subtle devices. Research would establish optimum colours, wall textures, tactile bed qualities, sounds, lighting and so on.

The ultimate development would perhaps be similar to that described in Richard E. Geis's novel *Raw Meat*, in which total experience of the sex act is fed into the brain from a recording, via a skull cap, whose wearer is immersed in body-temperature fluid, and completely cut off from reality. Certainly this is the ultimate introversion.

One of the most poignant parts of Geis's book describes a man and woman attempting 'real' sex, after years of experiencing only the ersatz perversions of the skull caps. The experiment fails when the man is unable to enter her, due to the fact that, despite her fantasy life of sexual experimentation, she is physically still a virgin.

The weakness in Geis's book is his insistence that men and women will feel sneakily dissatisfied by their lives of introverted substitute sex. A technology able to feed into the brain the sights, sounds, tactile and emotional aspects of intercourse would surely be able to improve on the genuine article. Why should not this ersatz sex, and ersatz love, be more satisfying than life itself?

These are not trivial questions, and they will come to have considerable importance.

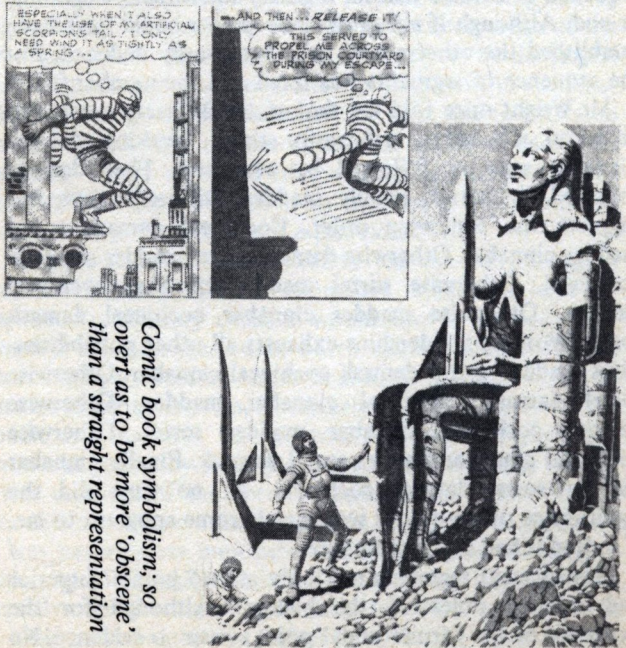
They will only cease to be relevant when man's current obsessive searching for satisfaction, in fantasies, in playthings, consumer goods and material possessions, finally ceases, whether from final fulfilment or as a result of a change in the conditions that foster the desperate, obsessive needs in the first instance.

I think it was Lord Ritchie Calder who suggested that there are three historical phases for mankind: in the first, man was a hunter, existing in small groups, going out often alone to hunt for food sometimes out of necessity, sometimes pleasure. A life of comparative independence.

In the second phase, the establishment of agriculture and farming introduced the first concept of work; regular and enforced tending to the animals and pastures. The work concept has survived to the present day and will only die when technology has progressed far enough to remove the necessity for clerks to file documents, for shift workers to tighten bolts, for secretaries to type letters.....

Then, in perhaps fifty years' time, an element of choice will return to the lives of the vast majority who possess only average skills and abilities.

Until then, it seems, the pace and desperation of the general search for escapes, both sexual and non-sexual, will continue to increase.



*Comic book symbolism; so overt as to be more 'obscene' than a straight representation*

## CINNABAR BALLOON TAUTOLOGY

**H**OW IT HAPPENED in the balloon. Why thus and not otherwise is not for me to fathom. I merely record.

There were two of us. Mr Wright and I. No others. That is to say during the period I am speaking about. Where the balloon is now I do not know. Nor whether Mr Wright is still aboard. For reasons that will emerge I consider this less likely with the passing of time. But such speculation is pointless. At the time there were two of us. For a finite period we were attached to the balloon. Where it went we went. Where we went it went. Description follows.

The balloon was encircled by a net. The net was attached to the car by ringbolts. Within the car you would have found Mr Wright and me. We were tolerably comfortable. The balloon was large. Spherical. Its surface was divided into five segments of equal area. (If a balloon can be said to have a surface). Each segment was of a different colour. Since the balloon was spherical the sequence of colours had no logically identifiable beginning or end. Although if either of these points could have been established the other would have been easily deduced. For the sequence of segments was fixed and the number finite.

Mr Wright once told me that of the different colours he preferred cinnabar. Arbitrarily then. Working deiseal. Cinnabar segment followed by cochineal. Then damask followed by sorrel. Finally madder. Different viewpoint suggests the following order. Cochineal damask sorrel madder cinnabar. Otherwise damask sorrel madder cinnabar cochineal. Otherwise sorrel madder cinnabar cochineal damask. Otherwise madder cinnabar cochineal damask sorrel. Working widdershins exhausts all other possibilities. Thus madder sorrel damask cochineal cinnabar. Otherwise sorrel damask cochineal cinnabar madder. Otherwise damask cochineal cinnabar madder sorrel. Otherwise cochineal cinnabar madder sorrel damask. Finally cinnabar madder sorrel damask cochineal. At no time did the significance of the colour sequence become apparent to me. If indeed it had any significance.

Nonadjacent segments met only at two points. Superior and inferior poles of the balloon. Although for the existence of the former nodal point I have no evidence. No discernible opening or valve for the insinuation or eruption

of gas. A perfect sphere. Though I speak only for the lower hemisphere. The upper reaches of the balloon were not within my field of vision.

Encircling the equator of the balloon were fifteen white symbols. These I took to be letters. The letters were in three groups. These I took to be words. The curvature of the balloon precluded my seeing more than the lower half of each letter. It was therefore impossible to determine all the letters with exactitude. Naturally Mr Wright's affliction did not allow him to determine any of them. Indeed he was to the best of my knowledge unaware of their existence. I have no reason to suppose that his life would have been enriched by such an awareness. We never discussed it. The longest word had seven letters. The first and third were indeterminable on my limited evidence. However the possibilities were finite. By a process of elimination I reached the conclusion that the initial letter could only be the sixth ninth sixteenth twentieth or twentyfifth letter of the alphabet. The other indefinite letter could be only the eleventh or eighteenth. Of the identity of the other five letters I was tolerably certain. Eliminating words not present in my vocabulary left one possibility. Parsons. By a similar process of elimination I reduced to two possibilities the identity of the following word. Pure or Puke. The remaining word I reduced to one possibility. Therefore a certainty. Soap. There were therefore six possible word groups encircling the balloon deiseal. Pure soap parsons. Or soap parsons pure. Or parsons pure soap. Otherwise puke soap parsons. Or soap parsons puke. Or parsons puke soap. Also six widdershins. Thus pure parsons soap. Or parsons soap pure. Or soap pure parsons. Otherwise puke parsons soap. Or parsons soap puke. Or soap puke parsons. There was no evidence to suggest that any one word group should be accepted to the exclusion of the others. And it seemed to me that none of the twelve could be said to be manifestly meaningless. Or significant. The precise message expressed by the words was therefore obscure. That is if any message was intended.

Beneath the balloon floated the car. Tubular in structure but lidless. Constructed of narrow wooden strips

interwoven. Shaped therefore like an exceptionally large basket. Internal diameter approximately eight feet. Depth approximately nine feet. Impossible once inside to view the ground. Unless one's height were artificially increased. That is by standing on something. Looking up one could see only the balloon and a circular strip of sky. Superimposed on this strip was the pattern formed by the net. A regular pattern of quasi-triangular segments of sky. Quasi-triangular because in each case one of the three sides was curved. Convex in those cases where the rim of the car formed one of the sides. Concave where formed by the balloon. From this it can be deduced that the ropes securing the balloon to the car met at various points around the rim. In fact at the ringbolts. To each ringbolt were secured three ropes. There were five ringbolts at equidistant points around the rim of the car. There were therefore fifteen quasi-triangular segments of sky within my field of vision. Five of these were large and congruent having one convex side. Five were small and congruent having one concave side. The remaining five were small and congruent also having one concave side. Furthermore they had the same internal area as the previously mentioned set of five small quasi-triangular segments. If reversed mirror-fashion they would have achieved congruence with that set. However they did not since no mirror was available. Had it been available I doubt that I would have attempted the experiment. It was enough to conceive its possibility. Furthermore I was satisfied with the view as it was or to be strictly honest I was not dissatisfied with it. I came to know it well. For obvious reasons I did not discuss this panorama with Mr Wright. Not that it offered much worthy of discussion. As a general rule.

One half of the car was given over to the chickens. Five in all. Whether or not they belonged to Mr Wright I do not know. I never asked him and there was no other way of obtaining the information. The chickens lived in a wire enclosure. At night they would sleep in nesting boxes. One of my duties was to feed them. Every morning. Their diet consisted of grain and meal. Also potatoes which I would mash for them. Also crushed eggshells. Altogether the chickens produced five eggs per day on average. Sometimes less. Infrequently more. Mr Wright and I supplemented our diet of eggs with potatoes. Also grain and meal. But not eggshells. The potatoes were stored in sacks around the car. As were the grain and meal. There was rarely a shortage of water. Ice frequently formed on the surface of the car. This could be reduced to water by the simple expedient of applying heat. Such was another of my daily tasks.

Mr Wright preferred his eggs boiled. (I was provided with a primus stove for this purpose.) He was particular as to the exact consistency of the yolk. It was my responsibility to see that this consistency was achieved. This task I was unable to perform with more than limited success. We had no altimeter. Thus the height of the balloon above the ground was an unknown factor. It was also an extremely variable factor. At different altitudes water would boil at different temperatures. We had no thermometer. There was therefore no way of determining how long an egg should be boiled. To overcome this problem I would boil an egg for three and a half minutes. This I would consume. In doing so I would note the consistency of the yolk. Thus I would ascertain with some degree of accuracy the length of time required to boil Mr Wright's eggs. One flaw in this arrangement was that we had no chronometer. To measure the three and a half minutes required to boil the test egg I was compelled to take my pulse. This I was loth to do since I have known it to fluctuate between fifty three and one

hundred and three beats per minute. It was therefore an inaccurate chronometer. Variations in temperature and atmospheric pressure aggravated its inaccuracy. Unfortunately the variation in my pulse was not uniformly proportional to variation in either or both of these factors. A further complication lay in the eggs themselves. Any variation in the chickens' diet would affect the consistency of the yolks. On the subject of diet the hens were as particular as Mr Wright. Although unlike Mr Wright their tastes would vary with altitude and weather conditions. But according to no discernible pattern. This variation added a further dimension to the problem. Furthermore the performance of the primus stove varied unaccountably. That is to say there were variations which could not be directly attributed to such theoretically (but not practically) calculable factors as altitude or atmospheric pressure. I suspect that the fuel contained impurities. Boiling Mr Wright's eggs was therefore a complex problem requiring a great deal of mental calculation. In retrospect I may say that it was largely a matter of guesswork. Had it not been so it would have been possible to use the consistency of the boiled yolks as a reliable altimeter. Fortunately we had no need of one.

The shells of the gutted eggs had another function besides providing grit for the chickens. Mr Wright and I used them as chess pieces. We had no board but the warp and woof of the strips of which the basket was constructed provided us with a tolerably uniform pattern of squares. These squares were originally identical in colour. To distinguish between them I rubbed chickenshit into alternate squares. This dried to a greyish white. The result of my labours was an acceptably even chequered pattern of brown and grey. One hundred squares in all. This distinction between colours was naturally for my benefit alone. To distinguish between Mr Wright's pieces and my own I was at pains to build a collection of twenty brown and twenty white half-shells. To distinguish between the values of the pieces was a more complex problem. I experimented by and large unsuccessfully with different sizes of shell. The number of possibilities was too small to allow for more than the crudest of distinctions. I was able to distinguish between pawns and pieces of higher value by electing that the ten smallest halfshells on each side should be pawns. But initially I was at a loss in considering how to apply similar methods to distinguish between some of the rear-rank pieces. The queen was obviously to be the largest shell-fragment on each side and the king next in size. But while it was possible to allocate the next size to rooks on the strength of their relative value I was unable to decide on the sizes to be allocated to the remaining three pairs of pieces. For it has always been my practice to regard bishops knights and poets as being of equal value.

Consideration of this problem led me to no logical solution. Reluctantly I was compelled to abandon logic for caprice. An arbitrary decision would have to be made. The simplest solution seemed to be to allocate alphabetically. Thus bishops would be larger than knights which would in turn be larger than poets. Nevertheless I could not avoid the conclusion that this was no true solution. For poets are known as jesters by some players. And to be strictly honest I was unaware of the correct nomenclature. Thus while I was able to allocate a size to bishops on alphabetical criteria it was nevertheless impossible to do the same for knights and poets. For while the initial letter of the word Knights precedes alphabetically the initial letter of the word Poets it is itself preceded by the initial letter of the word Jesters. Fortunately I was able after a little thought to see a way

out of this predicament. For it occurred to me that knights are known as horsemen by some players. And while this might seem to complicate the issue further it nevertheless offered me a solution to the problem. For in considering the four names before me I noticed that of the four initial letters that of Horseman was closest to one end of the alphabet while that of Poet was nearest to the other. Thus I was able to resolve the dilemma by electing that knights should be larger than poets but smaller than bishops. I should add that while I was conscious of a sense of well-being engendered by such an impeccable solution to the problem I was nevertheless aware that it had been reached by arbitrary methods. A fact which caused me a considerable amount of irritation on occasions.

However the twenty pieces on each side were thus distinguished more or less to my satisfaction. The ten smallest were pawns. Next in size came poets followed by knights and bishops respectively. Then rooks followed by their king with his queen overtopping all. Unfortunately this system was not without its drawbacks. For it was Mr Wright's invariable practice to crush any piece taken and it was not always possible to replace it with a shell-fragment of precisely the correct size. It was sometimes possible to revalue pieces by promotion or demotion to accord with the size of the new piece. But this was not always the case. For if one of a pair were so destroyed it was as a rule impossible to obtain at short notice a perfect match. And while it was enough to know that the ten smallest but not necessarily identical pieces on each side were pawns the higher value of rear-rank pieces made precise sizing and thus accurate identification a matter for concern. The small number of eggshells available was the limiting factor. For the majority of them had to be pulverised to form grit for the chickens. Thus it was frequently the case that there were several pieces in play at any given moment which were of different value though virtually indistinguishable from the point of view of size. And there was a further complication in that only one of the chickens regularly produced white eggs. Thus the stock of white shell-fragments was severely limited and keeping the pieces to the correct size was well-nigh impossible. Indeed it was frequently the case that there were not even twenty white fragments available and the ranks of the white pieces had to be reinforced with piebald henna marbled or even brown shells. This combination of factors severely complicated the game and placed a great strain on my mnemonic powers.

Mr Wright laboured under no such difficulties of course. He was able to identify each piece by touch alone. And this included even those pieces recently adopted as replacements. It was frequently the case that he would move what I had thought was a bishop in such a way as to leave me in no doubt that it was in fact a knight. Or he would move a piece which I had regarded as mine. On occasions it seemed to my confused mind that pieces varied in value or changed sides in the course of a few moves. Such was Mr Wright's assurance that I could only attribute this to the weakness of my memory. Nevertheless I noticed with some surprise that Mr Wright never challenged my own moves. I was unable at first to explain this apparent anomaly. For if my own play was sound it surely followed that I noted and remembered moves correctly. In which case I should not have been mistaken about Mr Wright's play. And the possibility that my mistakes were due to lapses of concentration seemed unlikely. That they should be so uniformly one-sided was statistically unacceptable. And yet it frequently happened that Mr Wright would call checkmate from a seemingly impossible position. He had

never given me any indication that he was a charitable man. And I was loth to presume so far as to ascribe any such sentiment to him. Nevertheless I was eventually compelled to conclude that my own play was as defective as my understanding of his and that he affected not to notice it. At no time did he indicate that this caused him any irritation. The blind are skilled at concealing their emotions. I can remember no occasion on which Mr Wright betrayed his thoughts or feelings by so much as a gesture. Indeed I cannot say with any certainty that I ever heard him express an opinion of any kind. Except to state his preference for cinnabar and for egg-yolks of a certain consistency. I rarely questioned him and on those occasions it was his invariable practice to ignore me. In our games of chess he always emerged the victor. Although it is true that he would sometimes leave the board with the game unfinished. But my interpretation of this was that he saw my position to be hopeless. In such cases I had no choice but to resign. On the whole I found our chess-games somewhat monotonous.

I cannot remember the precise point at which we became aware of the loss in altitude. Amid daily variations a gradual loss of average height was likely to pass unnoticed. By me at least. Nor can I account for this phenomenon. For as I have mentioned before the balloon had no discernible valve or other opening. Thus to the best of my knowledge the volume of gas was constant. Perhaps it was afflicted with a slow puncture. I saw nothing to suggest that this was the case. Whatever the explanation it was Mr Wright who first remarked on our gradual descent. It was his practice to stand on my shoulders every few hours with his head over the edge of the basket. Sniffing the air he would name that point on the globe directly beneath us. Thus in the course of a day I would be able to trace our route above the earth. Although more often than not I had only the haziest idea of the location of the places named by Mr Wright. Frequently I was in a state of total ignorance. Thus I know that on several occasions we passed over Ras El Fartass. Yet to this day I have no idea where it is to be found.

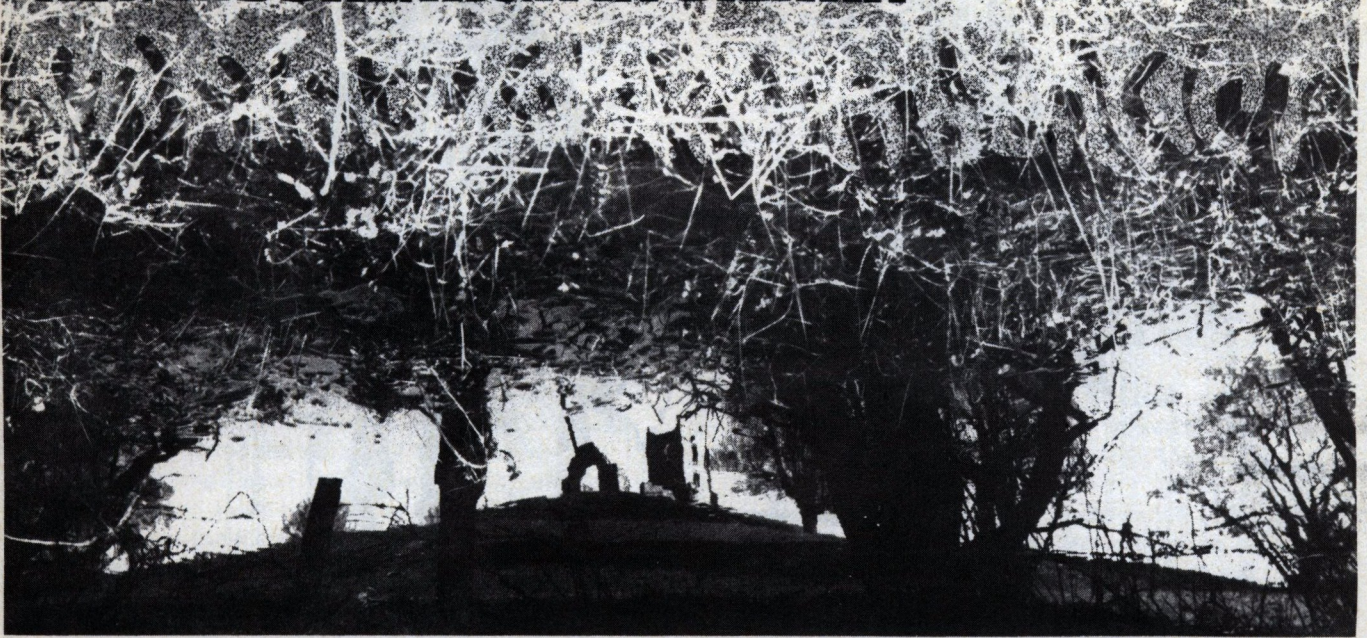
One morning Mr Wright mentioned that we were gradually losing height. He told me that useless cargo would have to be jettisoned. I asked him when he would like me to leave. He said that he would tell me when it was time. I remember this occasion vividly. It was the only time I had ever heard Mr Wright answer a question. Some days or possibly weeks after this exchange Mr Wright told me to throw the chess-pieces and three chickens with their nesting-boxes overboard. I reasoned that without my presence they would be unnecessary. It was thus that I realised the extent to which my presence was a burden. Mr Wright then told me to climb over the edge of the basket and hang from the rim by my hands. He said that he would tell me when to jump. With the basket between us I could not see him. But I had no fears about missing his signal. For I could distinctly hear him snuffing the air. Now said Mr Wright. I wished him goodbye and let go. Whether or not he replied I do not know. On the whole I doubt it.

That is all. I never saw the balloon again. I cannot believe that my departure did more than delay its eventual descent to earth. Although I am unable to estimate how much time would have to elapse before this occurred. On the other hand the inexplicable tendency of the balloon to lose height may have ceased. But I see no reason to assume that this is the case. In any event this is at best mere speculation.

Fiction over. That is how it was in the balloon. ■



# REG MOORE: HIGH IN SIERRA



**T**HE BUS WENT BEYOND the bounds of horizon. It climbed high into Sierra country, up through the pine forests, into the unknown hinterland.

I was looking at a marble city, framed below like a jewel in the trees, when the white-haired old lady reached over her seat to speak to me.

"Are you going far?" Her shrill voice and pea-green eyes startled me out of my reverie.

"Only as far as the bus takes me."

I saw the conductor out of the corner of my eye. He stood alone at the head of the bus, tall, gaunt and silent, holding a handful of clippings gathered from the departed passengers.

"They won't let you go all the way."

The bus lurched round a bend on a high plateau and shot along an embankment into an avenue of dark forest trees.

"Who won't let me?" I replied.

"They. The driver and conductor." She bent close and whispered in my ear. "I'm getting off at the next stop. You can come with me."

"But I have a ticket to the back of beyond."

The old lady peered anxiously into my sun-tanned face. "No one goes to the back of beyond. You can only go as far as they want you to. As far as the camp."

The bus lurched again and pulled up sharply outside a pair of tall, locked gates, behind which a pathway led into a prosperous settlement of adobe-style houses.

"It's quite all, right," the old lady said, raising herself and grasping her bag. "I've a pass into the camp. I belong here."

"All out." The conductor's deep baritone voice resounded through the bus.

The old lady eyed me confidentially and whispered: "It's quite all right. You can come with me."

I followed her out of the bus and on to a path running alongside the large iron gates. The bus roared off, disappearing into the dark foliage of the forest.

"Why can't we travel past the camp?"

The old lady looked at me in surprise. "There are wild indians in the woods. They have not yet integrated. You must stay on the reservation. It isn't safe beyond this point."

I gazed at the reservation with bewilderment and admiration. The camp was fenced by strong barbed wire. There was no way in except through the forbidding gates. Inside, a cluster of beautiful dark-skinned indians were running about. They were a new multi-racial society, a race born under the universal brotherhood, smiling and laughing and full of fun. I found it difficult to judge their ages as only the old lady and I were within the realms of conventional time.

While I hesitated on the brink of the new world, the old lady drew a pass card from her handbag and held it up at the gate. One of the Indians came bounding through the gate toward us. She was tall and graceful and she exchanged three-syllable words with the old lady. Then slowly she approached me and smiled.

"Are you coming in?" Her melodic voice warmed me.

"I'm trying to catch a boat at the other end of the island, but this is as far as the bus would take me," I explained.

Her smiling face darkened with disappointment. "I can get you a pass if you wish."

"Life can be very complicated without one." The old lady ambled alongside. "He's not one of us," she whispered to the girl.

The girl shrugged her shoulders and turned away. Her long slender shape disappeared into the reservation. The gate swung open and the old lady shook my hand before entering. "Never mind, my dear. Another day, perhaps."

She departed beyond the barrier and the gate closed firmly behind her.

I turned slowly on my heel and trudged back along the dusty road. A few other outsiders were on the road ahead of me; they were all walking in the same direction, away from the reservation.

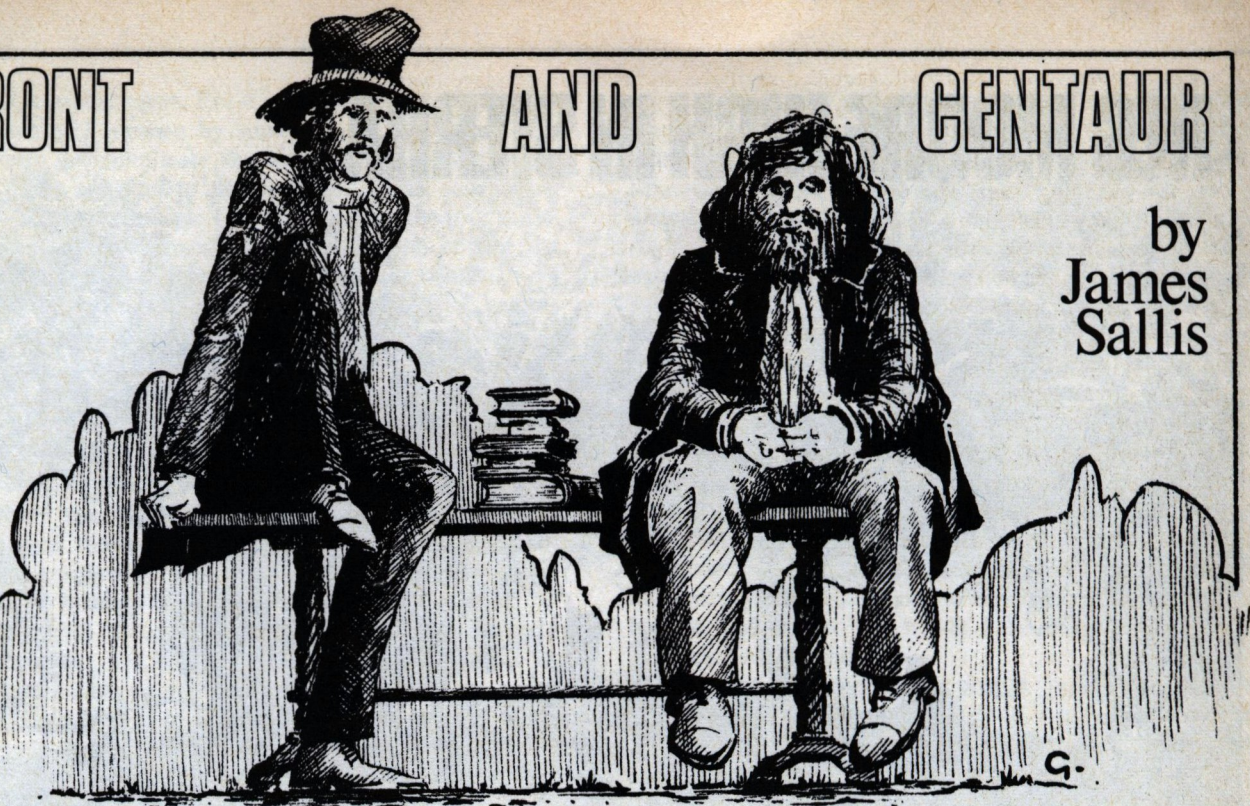
I walked until my feet were sore, and the laughing voices of the indians in the reservation had been replaced by the singing of birds above me, in trees shading the road. They were all colours of the rainbow, and following them, they led me to an open city, with a high marble cathedral. All of the streets were marble, but empty; I realised the new world lay behind me in the reservation.

There would be no way, now, of leaving the island. ●

FRONT

AND

CENTAUR

by  
James  
Sallis

SO THEY WENT to London and they got a flat together on Portobello Road and they wrote.

Down in the street dogs shoved their snouts into tin cans, scraping them along the pavement; babies waited for mothers outside shops in prams; the pubs burned brilliantly. One of them had observed: "My urine steams in British bathrooms!" Also, they had discovered that plugs of linoleum would appease the electricity meter.

Dave Dunder was the tall one, the thin one with a voice like vanilla pudding, and he wrote westerns. Bill Blitzen was short, with legs like two huge balognas, eyes that jumped on you if you came too close, and a burning red bush of a beard; he turned out true confessions, four a week, and ghost-wrote poetry (by a machine he had invented) on the side. Seeing them at opposite ends of a bench in Regents Park, a man would automatically tilt his head to one side, trying to get the world back to a level. When they walked together, Dunder leaned out over Blitzen from behind, sheltering him from sun and rain. They wore two halves of a six-foot muffler, ripped in two by Dunder one evening in "a moment of excessive charity". And they were in love with the same girl.

Tonight, after their customary mutual reading from the *Ulysses* night-town sequence, they had boiled up the day's left-over coffee and gone to work at their desks, which faced one another across the length of the room. A stein of soupy coffee steamed on each desk. With the flat they had inherited an electric heater. It had two filaments, one of which Blitzen had removed, extending it on wires across the room and hanging it from the ceiling directly before his face.

It was in the general order of things that Blitzen would sit down, ringed by sweets and smoking apparatus and small jugs of beer, and set immediately to work. For the next few hours, until he was through for the night, his typewriter would cluck away furiously, steadily, one hand now and again snaking out to light a cigarette on the heater — while Dunder would be ripping sheets off his pad, balling them up and throwing them toward the corner; jerkily spurting and halting toward the end of a story; rewriting, trying to find some pattern in it all, revising and banging away angrily at his desktop.

So Dave had fallen to work tonight, labouring, like a man constipated for weeks, at the final revision of a short-short, and was soon lost to the ordered confusion of pages, inserts, scribbling and deletion. An hour later, suddenly noticing the silence at the other end of the room, he looked up. There was a walrus sitting in Bill's chair, smoking a meerschaum pipe.

"I say," he said. "You're looking rather odd tonight, Blitzen."

The walrus glanced up, then looked back down at his work. "You should talk," it said. "That's the silliest red nose I've ever seen — and I've seen a few in my time." Then, almost as an afterthought: "Now is the time, you know." At these words, Dave's desk became a hippo potamus and went galloping off toward the bathroom. The floor creaked threateningly.

Dave sat for a moment staring at the little circles on the linoleum where the desklegs had been. As he watched, they suddenly started moving and scuttled off into a dark corner. He uncrossed his leg and his hoof clattered on the floor.

"Now that *is* strange," he said. "Blitzen, do you think you could take a minute off? I really think we should talk this over." Having finished its pipe, the walrus was methodically going through the desk drawers, eating every scrap of paper it could find. There was a small but growing pile of paperclips on the desk before it.

"Now is the time," the walrus said again. It bent its head and its tusk scraped along the desk, scattering paperclips: one pinged into the wastebasket. Minnesota was never like this.

"Yes, it would appear to be, wouldn't it?"

The papers were turning into doves, which flapped away from the walrus and out of the window. Dunder ducked to avoid one and caught a glimpse of print on its wing as it went wheeling frantically past him. A moment later it came back to the window with an olive leaf in its beak.

"But I really think we should put our heads together and give this a bit of thought. What are we going to eat, for example? I'll wager there's not a bale of hay in the house ... Is that right: hay?" As he said this, the rug

began to grow. "And what will Berenice say if she comes and finds us like this?" The rug was now three feet tall, a thick field of grass. Not far away, Dunder could make out his beaded belt lying like a snake across the top of the greenery, sunning itself. The rug rustled with the movement of many small things scurrying to safety. He jumped to his feet just as his own chair went hopping off into it; for several seconds he could see its back, bobbing up and down — then the grass was too high.

Dunder stood poking gently at the grass with his antlers, trying to decide what to do. What was needed was organisation, some careful thought, a system. They could cope.

And with a *pop*, flowers began growing off the wall-paper, small bunches of orchids, slowly drooping toward the floor under the weight of their heads as the stems lengthened like spaghetti. Feathers from the pillows had gathered in cloudy masses high in the room, and then they parted for a moment, Dunder saw things like water-bugs skimming across the surface of the blue ceiling.

He heard a snuffling at the base of the kitchen door; a rather foreboding growl issued from the bedroom. And then the walrus came crashing through the grass and yellow blossoms, muttering to itself: "Berenice ... I don't know what we saw in her in the first place. She's awfully *thin*, you know." It looked up, saw Dunder standing there, and went running, terrified, back into the growth. After a bit, Dunder could hear it far away, gambolling in bucolic splendour. There was a mighty *splash* —

And a knock at the door. It was getting dark; Dunder's nose began to glow like an electric cherry.

And another knock.

And another knock.

And another knock.

"Go away," a voice gurgled from across the room.

A key rattled in the lock and the door opened. Berenice stood there naked, clothes and the makings for a late tea under her arm. Her hair was done up in a honeycomb and a silver disc hung against her chest, like the moon sighted between two hills.

"Cut it out, fellows," she said.

"Glug. Glug."

"Now is the time," Dunder told her. That was all he could think to say. Minnesota had certainly never been like this.

"What does this *mean*?" she asked, coming a few steps into the room. "Are you trying to get rid of me? Don't you think you owe me an explanation at least? You don't want me to come around to see you any more."

"Oh, no," Dunder said. "It's just—"

"That's what always happens. They always do this, it always turns out like this in the end."

"Go away," the walrus bellowed from deep in the weeds.

"See? See? God knows I try to make them love me; it's not my fault. I do everything I can—"

"Now is the time," Dunder. He was rapidly running out of words.

"—and in the end it's always like this, this always happens."

Far away, they could hear the walrus dancing a soft-shoe and singing *America the Beautiful*.

"I'm pregnant, you know ... We used to be so happy. Damn you. Want accretion, the James-Lange theory of emotion. I thought you would *amount* to something. What happened to us? Epithesis, existentialism. I love you."

It was beginning to rain. "It's raining, dear," she said, then giggled horribly. They huddled together in the fire-

place, warm and talking quietly, watching the rain come down outside. "What will become of little William David now? That's what I decided to call him, see." Together they nibbled at chocolate biscuits. She fed him, offering each biscuit on her open hand after taking a few bites, and he chewed them daintily. He ran his tongue along the soft skin at the base of her thumb. She thought it was the walrus's dance which had brought on the rain. "Or do you think David William sounds better?"

There was a polite cough at the door: Dunder and Berenice turned together. A handsome young unicorn stood outside in a shaft of sunlight, tossing its head so that the mane swirled down around its horn.

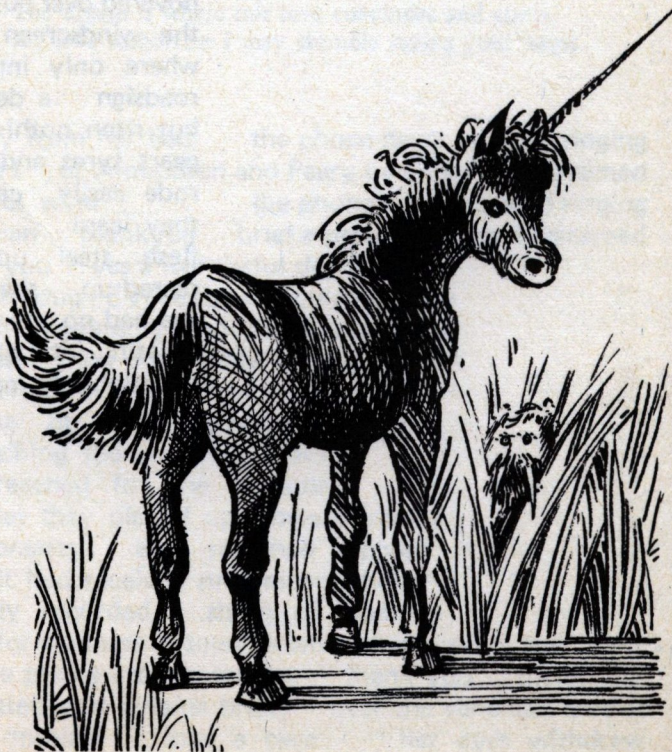
"Come live with me and be my love," it said.

Dunder was aware of the walrus standing behind him, peering furtively out from the bushes. "Minnesota was never like this," it whispered.

Berenice stood and with one last look at Dunder, a look full of scorn and contempt, walked to the unicorn and leapt on to its great ridged back. "*Americans!*" she said.

The unicorn nodded and swung its tail to brush away a fly that had settled on her bare bottom, in the dimple at the top of her left buttock. They turned and rode off together down the hall toward Cheshire...

And nothing's been the same since.●



# COMPUTER 70: DREAMS AND LOVEPOEMS

**D.M.THOMAS**

she is pleased excited by the handsome powerful and older man  
who drives masculine and arrogant with as firm a skill  
and watchful care as though it might be a thousand minutemen  
warheads couched in their steel burrows obedient to the will  
of his left hand guiding and adjusting and  
the closed air full of the song of suave flesh  
wined under smooth party dress his right hand  
hovered over complicitly tensioned synchromesh  
the windscreen framed the night a radar screen  
where only innocent objects and familiar flashed  
roadsign a dead hedgehog trees a risen moon  
but risen nothing that could perturb he clashed  
gears tyres and brakes turned right an arrowing road the springs  
rode easily catlights disappeared she feline settled a ridge  
they leapt drenched in excitement her scented underthings  
flesh steel upholstery talk one rocket-head a bridge  
reared up she drowned in her surrender to the waiting dunes  
she had no answer to nor failsafe to the embrace beneath  
isolating intimating night she was the undine moon's  
penetrable hymen she sought a star a breath

1

Your thighs meshed in the glow  
of the instrument panel,  
a gravitational field  
drawing eye and hand;  
intransigent flow  
of digits, mile on mile;  
man in the dead of the moon  
tonight; hedgehog dead on the road;  
images that time  
alone must reconcile

2

Dying, she is not also  
 well  
 today: an extra pallor.  
 Delicately  
 from tree of ovaries, tree of lungs,  
 bloodleaves fall  
 into soft linen.  
 So like my mother.  
 I pun savagely  
 for her. She presses upon me  
 painfully. The ship that bears  
 me is *Maria Crowther*,  
 woman.

If I had not  
 grown cold  
 at the last, (you said),  
 the figures on the urn had lost  
 all that they hold, withhold.

Swallows gather but they will return.  
 Already your face is hard for me to compose.  
 Your lock of hair; your white cornelian stone.

From the first kiss, all is clear:  
 Severn will sketch the death's head, to keep awake.  
 And I shall hold  
 the stone,  
 cornelian.

Already with thee  
 the night is tender.  
 Who?

Could I but dream  
 this girl was you,  
 I should get well,  
 I should return.

who is this lady dawnembarking at gravesend so belle and blanche the mast-  
 lights of a passing merchantman glided behind and through her gloved  
 hand given to the poet muffled & gasping for breath she will not last  
 the voyage he confided he is more ill than I she whispered moved  
 against his heart he carried a stone cornelian  
 heavy and cold as the lightyears he would spend  
 unpillowed on the breasts of Fanny Brawne  
 now the lady belle and blanche at gravesend  
 rises to accompany endymion his last autumn moon voyage becalmed  
 in each breath's painful hopeful channel he watched his actual  
 migration glassed in her hatches wide her blood seethed slammed  
 in storms he fainted scarcebreathed its meaning he could not fail  
 she is the wake his name will slide  
 into the chaos of unwritten poems  
 Fanny that still unravished bride  
 came Lulworth & a lull gleams  
 by Maria Crowther's anchorage a star  
 the lady unsupported can barely stand  
 consumed by themselves all they are  
 they walk the dark sand stone in hand

3

Tonight I love you as the dashboard gleams  
 the perfect running of a million parts.  
 We are two people sharing the same dream,  
 an upholstered journey sleepier than seconal,  
 and to no end beyond its own fulfilling.  
 As soft upholstery loves the bodywork  
 it couches in; as the steel clip and  
 narrow black garter-band  
 loves  
 the refined and runnable gold they are pulling  
 with a tolerant intolerance of stresses; as  
 the mirror loves  
 the silence into which our future flashes.  
 The dream is where our love concludes and starts.  
 My love tomorrow I may stumble saying your name.



she watched it dully from her bed the phone never stopped ringing  
 shambling polarbears or Amundsen and Peary by a flag that streamed  
 a cyclonic absence of wind the phone never stopped ringing  
 one huge step for man thank you brief a presidential smile gleamed  
 thank you thank you yes a wonderful day for us all  
 they were halfway through EVA extra-vehicular activity  
 once she whispered agitatedly no that's impossible  
 mustn't come please no I don't know when it can be  
 impossible to be private even for a moment  
 they were setting up the seismometer  
 her eyes were watching the shadowy event  
 while her hand reached for the vibrator  
 from the crater sides they picked up lumps of rock  
 it climbed her breasts and stiffened nipples  
 Houston reported it had received preliminary shock  
 waves her body recorded a shrug of ripples  
 there was no time for madness to touchdown each second of the count  
 was counted the phone interrupted her thank you thank you  
 the vibrator infiltrated taut pyjama briefs over the venerean mount  
 exploring finding nothing into a cave her eyes withdrew

I walked upon that lunar sea,  
 a second Adam to the flood;  
 the desert called Tranquillity  
 battered with meteorites. I stood,  
 as in Korea or Vietnam.  
 A barren plain that's drunk its gore.  
 In heaven too, I saw, the Ram  
 is slaughtered in a slower war.

Second was my only peace,  
 patented on our own dark star;  
 oxygen was love; to find out this,  
 strange, that I had to fly so far.

Unfiltered the sun's furnace roared;  
 a shadow was its fierce extreme;  
 a saviour round my body poured  
 cool water of Siloah's stream.

Even as the fish who rose to us  
 bore its own sea into our veins,  
 if we embrace the universe,  
 we must bring trees, we must bring rains.

We must bring dreams. I walked on ground  
 not sanctified by joy or sin.  
 Dream-emptiness stretched all around.  
 I wondered when life would begin.

Each second crammed with robot task;  
 EVA, the shadow I pursued;  
 tried to shut out, behind my mask,  
 the solitude's deeper solitude.

My rib in pain, as though some Eve  
 would spring, I slept but fitfully.  
 I felt it sad that I must leave  
 only my footprints on the sea.

8

Your hair  
 black, black as the dead, wrong side of the moon,  
 comet tresses,  
 if my lips dare probe them, electrically alive as a storm of meteors,  
 and as mortal to my peace of mind,

eclipsed by darkness, the whites of your eyes gleam at me  
 like the coronae of a binary eclipse,

the cold, still chastity of your thighs where my teeth wander  
 is the Milky Way, galactic whirlpool and forge  
 which comes to us as cold, still, chaste light;

the constellations crazy,  
 their patterns haywire;  
 in the space of a week  
 you have flared from nothing into a supernova.

9

She touches her vagina;  
 and turns her gaze to the moon's blankness.

To turn left, to turn right;  
 through me not myself alone  
 but a whole continent moves,  
 a world; the Old Glory planted on that moon  
 tonight; under the ice cap polaris roves.  
 Every decision has to be right,  
 and without hesitation or remorse;  
 with this movement of a hand I set in motion  
 an irretrievable course;  
 even if it is wrong it will be right.  
 Even if it is left it will be right.  
 Fear adds salt, the velvet engine hums  
 adrenalin elation. Right.

when from his eyes' portent-hungry observatory dome  
 despairing calculations reckoned that his universe  
 was running out was racing for all its gathering momentum  
 of spirit its perpetually thickening noosphere round desire's  
 core to meet head-on that anti-universe counter-time and -charge blight  
 to the wheat he should have strolled nonchalantly down from the snow-  
 line picked fruit in the fields then they might  
 have survived the impact indeed her troubled face begged him to do so  
 instead he panicked the blood's launching-pads submitted her  
 to the pressure of thrice-ten gravities strapped in  
 through space-warp headed for the metagalactic centre  
 mercilessly the cunt-vortex his desperation burning adrenalin  
 dervish dance of galaxies catherine wheels of stars the womb  
 hoping like Diarmuid and Grania Lancelot and Guinevere  
 whom they saw there white stunned in their goldprowed tomb  
 and Tristan and his Iseult in the black ship that there  
 where it began its end might be delayed by a few micro-  
 seconds but no he had dug his own grave hearts  
 thumped at the last the Word going out she strapped below  
 him reaching hopelessly into her new dimension new start

A full moon rising over Finland  
 set the radar screens flickering holocaust.  
 Your crossed legs' nylon threads'  
 rising moonlit field of forces  
 unleashes a warhead.

7

I open the locket,  
 touch the lock of plain brown hair,  
 lock  
 so soft and unopenable.  
 Fire fiercer than the consumption that  
 burns me burns me.

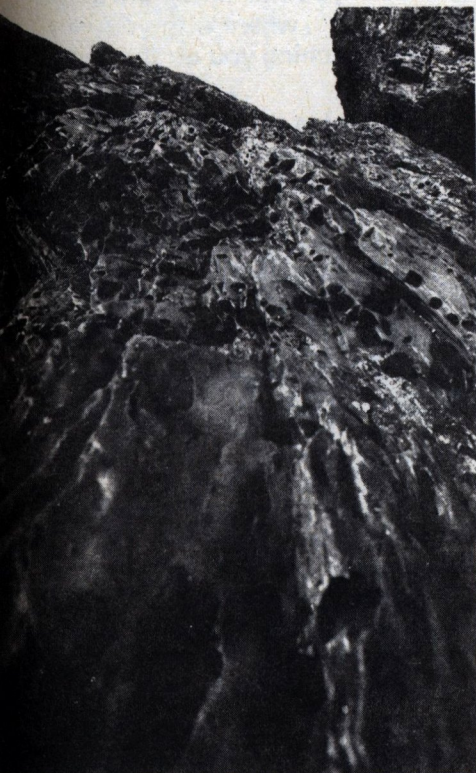
10

Ophelia in your party dress  
 the automobile's  
 skirts of steel,  
 heavy with their drink,  
 have pulled you to an unmelodious  
 and evil lay.

You are flower crushed  
 on a dynastic battlefield;  
 you interrupted the swordthrust  
 meant for a greater.  
 Your death was doubtful;  
 you have become a brawl

over your maimed rites; an expendable sting  
 in an old curse, an argument  
 over your virgin crants;  
 but from your fair  
 polluted flesh  
 violets will spring.

Since you the transplant of me cut  
me off as you cut off your hair,  
—romantic folios you must shut,  
—hacking it, dropping it in the fire,  
watching, with a glint of tears,  
the ripening bounty of three years  
catch in the same tongue as my letters:  
I take your letters and I cut  
lying phrases from each page,  
re-make them, strip on burning strip,  
into each day a new collage,  
a letter passionate and long,  
re-seal it in an envelope  
invisibly along the edge,  
the flap still sealed from your moist tongue,  
and send your letters to myself.



12

Be great to fuck you on the dunes  
where nothing grows but dry sandgrass  
your face a wayside stone of runes.

Lit by the headlights and the moon's  
our instants throng on us and pass.  
Be great to fuck you on the dunes.

Hand groping thigh, the future swoons  
like a nude patient under gas;  
your face a wayside stone of runes.

Midnight and engine-warmth maroons  
us on Steel Island ringed by glass.  
Be great to fuck you on the dunes.

Viola-husked the engine croons  
monotones enigmatic as  
your face. A wayside stone of runes  
flicks by; the sharp rear-mirror prunes  
from bloom of might-be drifts of was.  
Be great to fuck you on the dunes,  
your face a wayside stone of runes.

Since you the transplant of me cut  
me off like a long distance call  
that ate into your youthful purse,  
chequebook of marriageable beauty,  
cut off before I could reverse  
the charge of love to my account,  
mid-sentence in a blackmail plea,  
as on the night I drove, through tears  
contained by the mesmeric screen's  
sickled, blindly springing rain,  
your wraith still with me in the car  
that you would never ride again;  
coins became tranquillisers, call-  
boxes dressing-stations, scarlet  
along the highway, and to hear  
your rising anger, easier than  
the enormity of your withdrawal;  
I made it grow, from each dead town;

all response gone, my ear still caught  
some comfort in the throbbing phone,  
I knew its green shape in your hall;  
then, off the hook, at least it was  
your air's indifference that spoke;  
in a dark time I grasped at straws:

since all your lines went dead to me,  
the hour each week your call came through  
I arrange to get a call from time;  
he rings reminding me it is  
the hour I can expect your voice;  
time who interrupted you  
from me, and dragged all cables down,  
makes small amends; you ring and ring;  
his tone was never pure like this;  
for a wild minute love is true.

nine G.I.'s swinging down the rough road to Xuan Ngoc  
where a full moon is shining floods the paddy fields  
around it Surveyor turns like the point of a clock-  
hand spin-off from that arrogance falls  
on to the nine G.I.'s nearing the hamlet of Xuan Ngoc  
they rough up eight huts and in the ninth prepare  
a girl for ritual rape but under flashlight they look  
closely long at her cunt and diagnose VD they spare  
her and go to the tenth hut they find the young mother no harm  
in her and place on father sister and two children a guard  
outside her skinny resigned flesh has been nurtured on napalm  
five have already screwed her and the next two inside are hard  
when the father sets up a screeching howl and they grow afraid shoot  
all five next morning it is a chance of war the major forgives  
spin-off from a skirmish with VC the five-year girl stirs butt  
of an M-14 smashes the story perfect except the mother lives  
five G.I.'s swing down the dirt-track to Cat Tuong  
where a full moon is shining on the paddy fields  
collect in the hamlet a peasant-girl to take along  
to share their five-day mission and their meals

13

i

This final privacy:  
in love or war  
to be shot  
surrounded by cameramen.

Wait! Freeze.  
A camera plate is broken.  
A fly settles on sweat.

ii

Colour supplement  
for a grey sunday;  
Hollywood-jungle-technicolor.  
Concentratedly,  
staring down, this vietnamese  
girl, man-handled, does up her  
shirt button;  
her bewildered, lively, almost-  
dead child on her arm.  
It is  
obscene of her.  
No one should be shot  
fastening a shirt button  
ten seconds before being shot,  
(triangle of firm brown flesh).

whisper now    je t'aime    slide your hand to meet his    so  
 lean over him    draw your hair back from where it veils your mouth  
 kiss him    where passion is edged with nuances of boredom    throw  
 your thigh across his    in amends    lustfully    talk about truth  
 in alphaville your voice is as close  
 to his ear as this hidden receiver  
 is to yours    the lens will trace  
 intimately    the fall of the tear  
 that you will now evoke    I will zoom right in  
 truth in alphaville    make up your own dialogue  
 whisper while I whisper    do you recall the inn  
 high in the mountain    and higher still the log-  
 cabin    where we sheltered    my ring then on your finger  
 cabin    where we sheltered    my ring then on your finger  
 till you lost it in the snow and we scabbled on our knees    fill  
 your round tear with that slope and those cedars    I will linger  
 on it    while you talk    to your lover    of truth in alphaville  
 then we will cut to an empty afternoon cinema rendezvous  
 with him    distrait    unkempt and late    you will watch this scene  
 then    cut    to the premiere of this    where with your new  
 husband we shoot you watching you & your lover watching you on the screen

14

I watch you, glacial in mink,  
 enter on the arm of your husband,  
 imperious through the sighs  
 of your fans, the autographs.  
 Haughty, you take your seat;  
 your arm shrinks from his hand;  
 I whisper into your ear,  
 I am still crazy for you.  
 Mink is as tender as steel  
 in alphaville.

He is still crazy for you.  
 He watches you, late, uncombed,  
 with lateness on your mind  
 straight from your doctor's room,  
 enter the cinema's dark  
 afternoon, sit straight by him.  
 Neither yet flickers a sign.  
 You brush your hair from your eyes.  
 Hair is as molten as steel  
 in alphaville.

He watches you watching the screen  
 with never a glance at him.  
 He watches him loving you,  
*je t'aime je t'aime je t'aime*  
 he whispers, now as then.  
 He is still crazy for you.  
 Your hands touch on the sheet,  
 like pack-ice, split again.  
 Days are as cool as steel  
 in alphaville.

Love is a cutting-room, all  
 images equally true,  
 I mix them all up in you,  
*au revoir* becomes *je t'aime*  
 in the crystal at your ear,  
 as I direct your hand  
 to stretch for husband, lover;  
 the camera is crazy for you.  
 A film can be cut like steel  
 in alphaville.

Your hand in the pit of your back,  
 steel grapples to eyes of steel;  
 your breasts on hoardings star;  
 swiftly you brush your hair;  
 your husband is crazy for you.  
 Our son must be fetched from school.  
 Blinds of the late afternoon  
 are falling one by one.  
 Light opens on the steel  
 evening of alphaville.

You are the bathroom scale's  
 bland mutability;  
 the steel tape whips around  
 your breasts, your waist, your thighs,  
 inexorably as lovers;  
 the tape is crazy for you,  
 erecting your rasped nipples;  
 it hugs you into despair.  
 You ghost into the steel  
 slimlines of alphaville.

When, next autumn, next spring,  
 the houselights go down on this film,  
 who will be crazy for you,  
 whispering *je t'aime, je t'aime ?*  
 I whisper this in your ear:  
 stretch out your hand to him,  
 but remember our mountain cabin;  
 preserve it in snow of your tear;  
 converse on what is real  
 in alphaville.

You are light falling on breasts,  
 you are a stockings stretch,  
 you are the heel of a shoe,  
 you are a brush through hair,  
 you are a collar turned up,  
 you are the leaves you crunch,  
 you are the wheel of a car,  
 life is in love with you;  
 you are the sad, steel thrill  
 that steals through alphaville.





the tinted lenses swimming on Clara's tears  
 cleared some of the sting from lying too long  
 closed loved myopia from Helen's years  
 in the micro-library bequeathed her this along  
 with the mark each side her nose the itch behind  
 her ears the flesh on hips from her alter's food  
 habits eight days could not completely unwind  
 the thread another person wound she lay in nude  
 abandonment to her grief

he already suspects I don't take my drugs  
 in my sleep the clock accused two hours ago she should have gone  
 to a shifting-booth

his cheeks two hours ago he had shifted out on time  
 as ever he sighed with guilt but spoke consolingly  
 our love in olden days would have been no crime  
 married lovers with no split personality  
 he gazed long in her eyes

danger signals flashed madly  
 lens-maddened his wife had broken shift to catch  
 time he shifted too a stiff alien between moist alien thighs

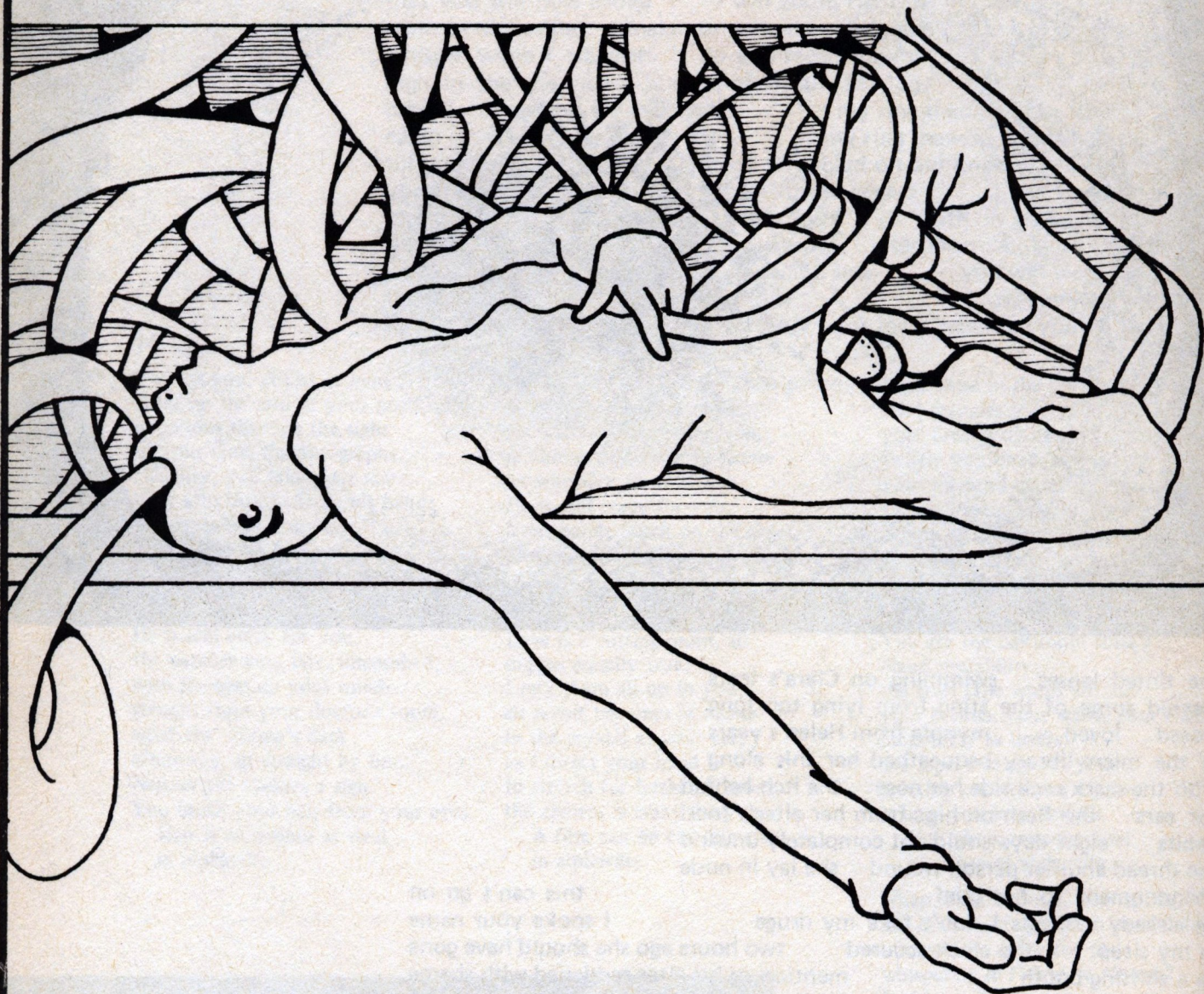
this can't go on  
 I spoke your name

15

Ten o'clock and I have tossed  
 a last beer back out of the ice box,  
 turned off the colour picture  
 and entered the bedroom with her,  
 a colour picture in her blue nightgown.  
 The spunk is the same,  
 when I remember the woman in Xuan Ngoc,  
 if that was its name.

16

*Da mi basia mille, deinde centum,*  
 take, cut; take, cut; always something  
*dein mille altera, dein secunda centum,*  
 ever-so-slightly imperfect sets us trying again;  
*deinde usque altera mille, deinde centum,*  
 sustained by the silence of many held breaths;  
*vivamus, mea Lesbia, atque amemus,*  
 and if at times another voice whispers  
*soles occidere et redire possunt,*  
 in your ear or mine, we are professionals,  
*nobis cum semel occidit brevis lux,*  
 stretch out our hands again and again, to touch;  
*nox est perpetua una dormienda.*  
 I think we shall perfect it in the grave. ●



Parts of this were broken leading to the big terminal. I awoke at morning without life running into the desolate world. In the evening I misplaced a restricted area breaking into lines and bus routes – the car sped at irregular volumes transcending maximum voltage through to the terminals ... an avenue of space. I cornered at 78 miles per hour ... turning the car over at Mowall's corner ... without life. I lay down for the night under preparation of brass – the broken parts of the cylinder ... small channels ... rivulets of brass leading to the head where the terminals were. I got into the car at once and drove into the big terminal.

—Michael Butterworth

# EDWARD BREAKFAST by JANNICK STORM

in over the newly laid breakfast table. Without especially noticing the view I sit down and wait for the coffee.

I turn around in the bed and stare towards the curtains behind which the window is dimly outlined. It cannot be sunshine. I can hear that the door opens slowly and creakingly, but decide that it is the wind. I rise, groping for the coffee-pot to make myself some coffee.

As I lift the coffee-cup she says something to me, and by way of answer I draw the curtains. The grey autumn light makes her think better of it. The door opens and she enters with the coffee-pot and the cups. I withdraw to the wall and stare full of hate at her movements while she efficiently lays the table.

The square of the window is sharply outlined against the not yet drawn curtains. I hear muttering voices outside the door. It irritates me that she has not taken care to send him from the house earlier. The door opens and the smell of coffee makes me take a few steps out into the room. The air is heavy and smoky and in the darkness it is difficult to make out the opposite wall. She breathes heavily at my side and her nostrils vibrate in a way which otherwise I have only seen at our infrequent copulations. I shape my hands around the cup and try to lift it to my mouth but as the curtains have been drawn the blinding sunlight confuses me and again I withdraw to the wall.

I use the moment when I am alone, which I presume as I have heard two abrupt sounds from the wall in which the door is placed, which might mean that this has been opened and closed again as it would be if somebody was leaving. The curtains are rapidly drawn and a hurried glance through the window down towards the sea assures me that the waves are beating against the shore in normal size and with usual rate. I hear her voice from the table before she lifts the cup to her mouth but I decide to look steadily across the sea.

Her broad sensual face is turned towards me in the bed and she is snorting heavily in the direction of my pillow. I happen to upset the cup and the lukewarm coffee runs out onto the quilt in a broad stream. She does not wake up and soon after the door is being closed or at least it sounds as if the door is being closed. Had the morning light not blinded my eyes I would have been able to collect myself to answer her questions about the coffee. But on the other hand her voice is not especially distinct through the door, and also one has to consider the sound of the surf from the other side.

While I sit with my mouth half-open and the coffee-cup on its way up, speculating on what is keeping her or if she means to come back at all or come at all, I hear the door rattle, or the wind, or the surf, or her voice quite near while she draws the curtains and starts laying the breakfast table. Through the wall to one of the other rooms I hear small sounds like the ones she uses to utter during copulation, but decide that it is the wind, or the surf.

As the sunshine reveals nothing frightening I let go my hold of the wall and stretch out my arm to seize the cup with the steaming coffee. I lift the coffee-cup and just then hear the door click, and I am aware that she has left the room and the hand stops on its way and I try to stare through the smoky room for if possible to perceive the opposite wall.

But now I hear the door open differently, as if the sound comes to me through a layer of absorbing material. And I close my eyes tightly in order not to see what I will not see. But my upper arms feel the hard grasps and I cannot prevent my body from detecting the movement. And the movement leads me towards this door which perhaps does not exist and in which I perhaps do not believe and which perhaps is no door.●

Lift the coffee-cup, just then hearing the door click, so that I am aware of her having left the room, and the hand stops on its way, and I try to stare through the smoky room for if possible to perceive the opposite wall.

Lift the coffee-cup, just then noticing that the curtains have been drawn. The hand stops and the coffee-cup does not yet reach my mouth. See the door open and the light in the room is subdued.

Still dark in the room and the breakfast table can barely be glimpsed in front of me. I see the door being closed and think that then she must be on her way out to fetch the coffee. I stretch out my hand to feel the wall. That makes me less afraid.

I hear that she is breathing asthmatically at my side, but the morning light is blinding my eyes through the newly polished windows. My hand starts to shake and the coffee-cup which I was moving down towards the table splashes over. I feel the drops fall heavily on my bathing wrap.

Through the open door I can hear somebody rummaging in one of the other rooms. I draw the curtains and the light pours

# NEST EGG † Sandra Dorman

**T**HIS IS RIDICULOUS, she thought, as soon as she woke up. I must still be dreaming. Above the door opposite her floated a radiant sign which read: Federation of Phosphates. She shifted her uncomfortable position. Good God, what was this egg she sat on? She couldn't seem to pull herself together; her arms slipped like wings away from her. A loudspeaker in the wall crackled with static, hummed; then a voice cackled through it: *Attention Sun Plus Equals Cracked Corn Sun Plus Equals Cracked Corn*—she clapped herself over the ears but couldn't feel a thing. Now just a minute, Hennie, she said to herself. What is the last thing you remember? She couldn't remember the last thing she remembered. She was sliding, falling off the large, warm egg on which she had awakened. Her lids drew up over her eyes; she wanted to faint; but remained conscious. The last thing she remembered was sitting in the breakfast nook. A summer breeze blew the chintz curtains in like daisied sails, those curtains she had finally managed to buy, to replace the previous wife's tattered organdy ones. She returned to that moment: crack off the top of the boiled egg, sprinkle in a

little salt, lift the spoon to her lips - whoom! it had sailed in the open window, tearing the curtains from the rod, striking her with a feathery smell on the side of the face and toppling her to the waxed tile on the floor.

*Attention Attention* The loudspeaker was operating again and she was retrieved from her memories. She had slipped off the egg and was lying beside it. For some reason, and against her will, she crept back up the pale side of the egg and once again sat on it. It gave a slight throb, as though a heart had beat once.

*Attention The Sum of Millet and Bran is Calcium*

The floating sign over the door had disappeared, leaving a milky glow. Am I hungry? Am I thirsty? she asked herself. She had been hungry when she sat down to lunch. The wash was flapping on the line, the sun shining, the chickens clucking in the field, and over at the Hennessys the dog was barking at the rural free delivery mail carrier.

The Hennessys, who talked to her of nothing but Chuck's first wife, who had taken off several years before, had three children, a Guernsey cow, a brindle Boxer, a Chevy sedan, a pick-up truck, and they paid to have their garbage removed by a private firm. Not that we're badly fixed, Hennie said to herself. The trip to the dump is a short one, and anyway, I found a planter there which after two coats of Rustoleum turned out pretty nice, and I do have the new curtains. I did have them.

While she was busy with these recollections, which comforted her, she kept resettling herself on the egg. It was uncomfortable and she couldn't understand her own passion for squatting on it this way. Except she was sure there was no other place to go, right now, and no other thing to do.

It's not that I like sitting here, she thought. She withdrew one leg, in its yellow fishnet stocking, which had escaped her and was hanging down the side of the egg.

If I could only get off this thing, I could do some shopping. I did plan to get some of that print and make a

dress, I haven't had a new one since last year. Sometimes I wish Chuck had bought into the restaurant business with his cousin after all, it couldn't be any worse than poultry and every time there's a thunderstorm the electric goes off and if I candle one more egg by hand I will scream.

A blood spot seemed to float before her eyes; the hair-line damage of a crack; the dark revolving of the cheleza seen through the shell held up to the Coleman lantern which was all the light she had when the power went off. Sometimes she understood why Chuck's first wife had escaped into the blue.

*Attention* She had been dozing, and sliding. She woke with a ruffled start. *Attention The Sound of Round Gravel Will Encourage You ...* the door below the milky light panel opened and a man in a white jacket entered smiling.

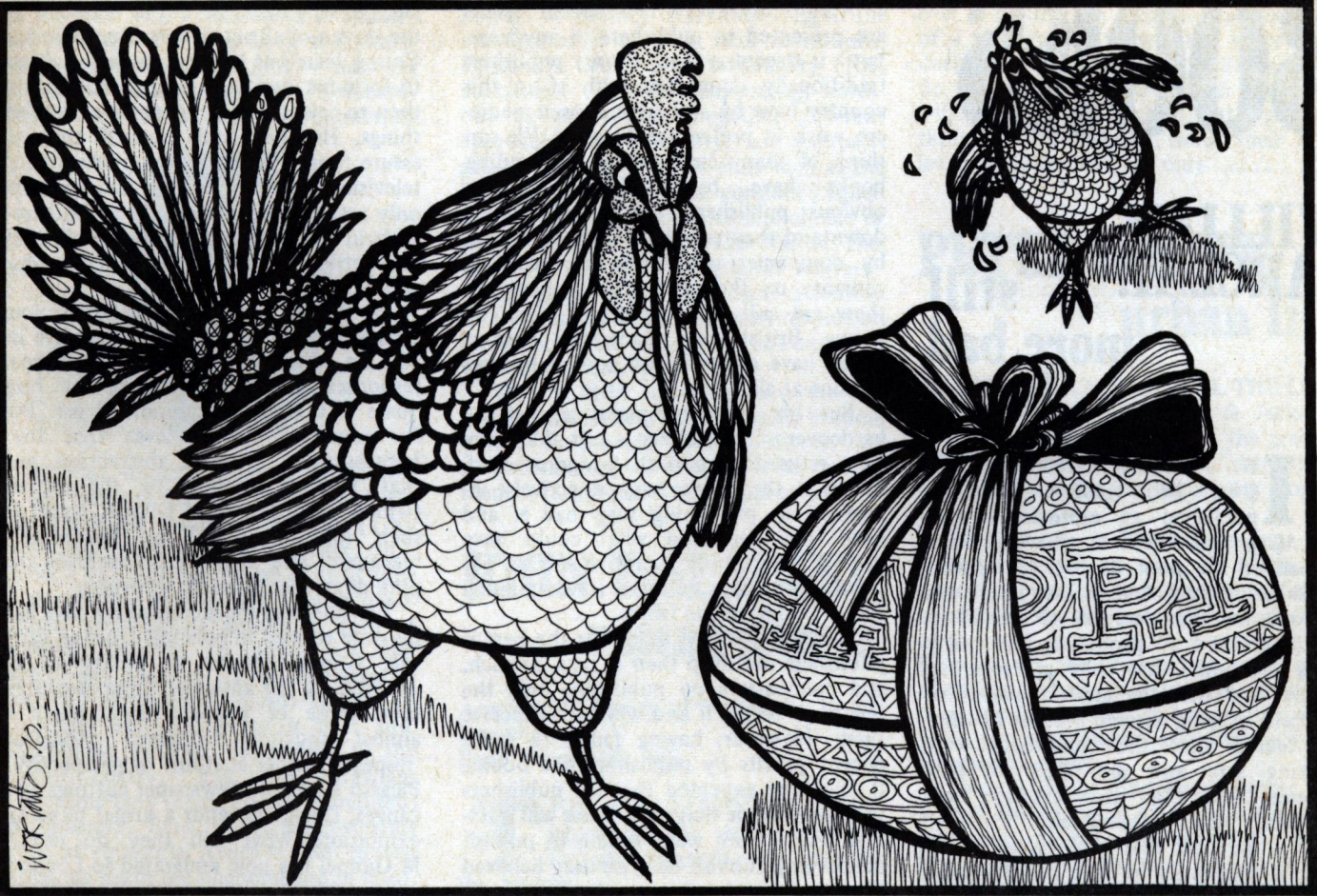
"Well well. Well well well. There's a good girl," he said.

She grabbed at him. He came to her, crooning in a soothing voice, and lifted one of her legs which she tried to pull away from him, but he was only peering at the egg. It throbbed. Its heart beat. Once, twice. Then all was still.

The man patted her, and in a defensive rage she slashed at his hand and was satisfied to draw blood, though it wasn't very much. He snatched his hand away and stared at it. "Dear me," he said. "Oh dear me."

He snapped a switch on the wall and the light went out, leaving her on the hump of the egg-island in the darkness. She could just see the white of his jacket as he loomed there. He said nothing more. She resettled herself, and in doing so, looked down at the egg. Like phosphor, it glowed mildly green. Its heart beat, irregularly at first, then levelling off in a dull, steady boom, boom, boom. The man went out and closed the door.

What have I gotten myself into? Hennie wondered, but just the same, she felt reassured by the glowing of the egg, it seemed the right thing for it to do. After a few minutes,



the boom, boom got quieter, and she fell into her former dream of what might have been: Chuck in the restaurant business and she herself natty in a yellow uniform with a white apron and her hair gorgeous from the beauty parlour in enormous crests over her brow. It was all neat and neon, with the beer foaming in the glass steins and the cash register giving a beautiful ping! as the sales were rung up.

Instead of which she had a lousy forty-two dollars to show for two years of sticking it out in the wilderness, next to the Hennessys with their garbage picked up and shiny sedan, only forty-two dollars put away bit by bit that Chuck didn't know about. It was better than nothing, and would pay her bus fare to the city and beyond, if and when she decided to escape.

Ah, what a dream! Escape into the distance beyond the heaps of coal slag and sooty hills among which she'd been born, further, further; right out of the valley and over the hills on forty-two dollars or even on fifty dollars if she could stick it out a little longer.

*Attention Attention* She nearly fell off the egg in her bewilderment at coming back to the present, and while she listened, she clambered back into place on the glowing egg which was now throbbing and rocking with such violence that she could hardly keep her place on it; it was worse than a carousel horse. Come to think of it, the last one she'd ridden *Attention* when the carnival came last summer had not only horses but elephants, tigers, giraffes, and a rooster, on whose back Chuck had placed her for a ride *Attention* laughing, with the gold in his back molars turned shocking pink from the lights all over *There Is No Such Thing as Overproduction Keep Up Your Quota* gabble! *Keep Up Your Production* crack! *Down Your Daily Calcium* wham! Hennie was lifted into the air, and clutching hopelessly at the cracked edge of the shell, she fell to the floor. Bits of egg shell flew in every direction.

Oh my God, what have I done? she thought. The two large pieces of egg shell fell back from each other like a picture in a nursery book and from between them rose and stepped out a feathery yellow little bird which ran up and down peeping: Mama! Mama!

She got to her feet and began scurrying after the baby bird, which continued its piteous cry of Mama! She almost caught it, hoping to take it under her wing and calm it, but just as she reached the poor chick, the door opened and it ran out ahead of her. Tripping over the sill, she followed it as fast as she could, running with an awkward waddle and feeling her skirts too long behind, trailing in the grass.

The chick had disappeared and she stood in the yard. It must be just before dawn; a faint pearliness appeared in the east. It faded as she stood there, feeling the cool breeze blow around her, and then the pearliness grew bright again, and tinged with rose.

A rooster crowed. The sound sent a tremendous thrill through her breast. She looked behind her, at the low, long bulk of the poultry house, and ahead of her, where the Hennessys lay asleep. The rooster crowed again. Hennie turned toward the house. The kitchen lights were on.

How odd, she thought, walking wearily across the gravel of the side yard. She swerved away from the door, following some instinct, and stood on tip toe to peer through the kitchen window. Chuck had removed the forty-two dollars from under the pile of clean dish towels, and as he counted each bill, he put it into his pocket.

Hennie let out a screech. Her husband turned toward the window, she saw his eyebrows raised in astonishment, and then an expression of incredulous terror froze his features as Hennie flew through the window and began slashing at his hand which held the last dollar bill. ●

# BOOKS

**WILLIAM  
BARCLAY:**

**still  
more bad  
books**

**I**N NEW WORLDS 168 (Nov. '66) Michael Moorcock published an editorial headed *Too Many Bad Books* in which he complained of the poor quality of most sf books being published in Britain. It was his opinion that 'certain sf publishers are committed to producing too many titles a month, that they are selecting hastily, and that the general quality of the field is being harmed because of this.' He feared that the publishers were 'playing safe and are wary of new material and that this attitude will ultimately result in falling sales.'

Now we hear that while good paperback sf continues to have healthy sales, hardcover publishers are beginning to say that sf isn't selling as well as it did and some are having doubts about continuing their lists.

As far as it matters, they could have discontinued publishing 90% of their books five years ago and probably ensured better sales for the remaining 10%. Reprints of bad books by well-known names of the forties and fifties have not helped raise the standard, and neither have re-hashes of these books by fifth-rate writers. Publishers have refused to encourage innovation, have failed to recognise higher literary standards and fresher themes. Instead they have shown caution, cynicism, poor taste in their selection, have not trimmed their lists and have instead continued to saturate the market with dull, ill-written rubbish.

Even when publishers have had outstanding books, as Hart-Davis had *Camp Concentration* by Thomas M. Disch, they have been hidden amongst the dull anthologies and predictable novels on the rest of the sf list, nothing has been done to promote them individually and one has the impression that they were embarrassed rather than pleased by the odd piece of decent fiction.

The better books which have been decently promoted have come in the main from publishers not traditionally connected with sf - Hutchinson, Allison and Busby, Cape - who have published one or two titles not because they decided that the sf bandwagon was worth jumping on but because they thought the books were worth publishing because they were good. Sales for these have generally been satisfactory.

Admittedly, very few decent books are presented to publishers in any year, but it seems that those publishers traditionally connected with sf in this country have by and large chosen mediocre work in preference to good. We can think of many cases where outstanding books have been offered to the obvious publishers, have been turned down and then accepted, on their merits, by companies who have no special sf category on their lists. Sadly, however, there are still some books of merit by young British and American authors which have either found poor publishers or none at all.

But the chief complaint against the hardcover sf publishers is not that they have refused to publish 'progressive' sf but that they have seemed actively interested in publishing very bad sf and have thus depressed what could have been a consistently lucrative market for them. This state of mind is what killed the sf 'boom' of the fifties.

Perhaps it would be all for the best if publishers did drop their sf lists, as such, and concentrate on publishing only the few good books if and when they receive them. However, having failed to make decent profits by publishing bad books, it might be expected that the publishers will now decide that no sf book will sell - and where they were willing to publish almost any rubbish because they believed they could make money, they may now refuse to publish good work because they see sf as a category that is no longer commercial. This was the pattern of the fifties.

It would be a great shame - particularly for new, talented writers who depend on the hardcover firms for publication - if it became the pattern of the seventies.

**MICHAEL  
DEMPSEY:**

**Monsieur Gimpel  
and the  
bohemians**

**A**RTISTS LIVE LIKE PIGS: they have VD, TB, etc. They don't respect their betters; La Tour was disgracefully rude to Louis XIV. Also, they are only in it for the money, and when they make it, have been known ungratefully to demand better percentages from their dealers, who, as everybody ought to know, are only in it for altruistic motives. After all, wasn't Hitler an artist?

These are some of the more cogent arguments Jean Gimpel puts forward in *The Cult of Art* (Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 42s), his petulant attempt to get back at the monsters he had to put up with as a

lad, growing up as he did in the house of the doyen of all art dealers, Rene Gimpel. Young Jean was lucky enough to be able to form his own collection of modern art, then to reject it and concentrate on other things. He thus finds himself able to assure those less lucky that photography, television and Hollywood movies are the only arts that people should be bothered with in this day and age. After all, they are getting it across, and that's what counts.

He has no conception of how serious artists respond to the world they live in, and no conception either of how those responses are communicated or how 'mass' art feeds on 'minority' art. But for someone who believes that the impressionists invented abstraction, and that painters reacted to the camera (which, according to M Gimpel, could do their job for them) by becoming 'decadent' and painting yellow trees and pink dogs, that is hardly surprising.

For one who must constantly have had his nose rubbed in bohemia from an early age, Gimpel retains an ability to be shocked by the antics of these creatures, even those of bygone days, which is almost touching: Douanier Rousseau 'respects neither anatomy or perspective'; Picasso sticks old newspaper cuttings on a canvas; Duchamp sends a urinal to an art exhibition. What will they do next? M Gimpel has now emigrated to London, presumably in the expectation that his ideas will go down better over here. He may well be right.

**JOYCE  
CHURCHILL:**

**broaden  
your horizons**

**I**NQUIRING MINDS CURRENTLY await full-colour publication of *Fluid Dynamics For The Family*, a revolutionary new picture-encyclopaedia in one hundred and one weekly parts. Generalised and served up in this fashion, 'knowledge' makes the smooth transition from fact to fiction, science to superstition. On the other hand, a dip in the cheap information pool has its advantages: unadulterated material is available at reasonable prices, as in Granada's series of *Paladin* paperbacks.

The initial release is of twelve volumes, most of which have been previously published in considerably more expensive form. Grouping is impossible, but the socio-political and historical seem to predominate: Timothy Leary's acid apologia *The Politics of Ecstasy* (10s) rubs shoulders with *Russia In Revolution*, (15s), Professor Norman Cohn's *The Pursuit Of The Millenium* (15s) and others. In fact, the only two books here dealing

with the arts — Erwin Panofsky on *Renaissance And Renascences In Western Art* (15s) and Fiedler's *Love and Death In The American Novel* (15s) — have the flavour of a concession. Presumably Paladin will expand in that direction.



Heuvelman: neat

Without doubt, the most fascinating of the series is Bernard Heuvelman's *On The Track Of Unknown Animals* (12s). Beginning with a smart attack on Cuvier's 1812 dictum 'there is little hope of discovering new species of large quadrupeds' Heuvelmans details a mass of incident designed to point out that present-day zoology is as conservative (and, by implication, blind) as that of a century ago. His prose is neat and entertaining without descending to the scientific-chatty, and his drawings (I presume they're his; no-one is credited) are splendid. Even if the brain-stealing geteit of equatorial Africa is never proved actual, its myth is a phenomenon in itself.

The arms trade is a four-generation bogey, born in the tales of the unscrupulous Sir Basil Zaharoff, the archetypal Greek 'death merchant' who began life as a brothel tout in Constantinople, and maturing through the Krupp excesses to the governmental trading of the present day. Richard Thayer presents some of the flamboyances and horrors of the business in *The War Business* (10s), tracing the careers of individuals like Zaharoff and Francis Bannerman, but most concerned with the high-level national market.



Leary: acid revelations

The book is fascinating when discussing the private foibles of Samuel Cummings of Interarms (who conducts his sales demonstrations personally, with the aid of tracer bullets and cans filled with kerosene), and disturbing when examining the lineage of the Mannlicher Carcano (No C2766) that made the Kennedy myth; but it rapidly becomes a welter of acronyms and statistics of unquestionable importance but low readability.

Space permits only a brief mention of

other books in the series: Leary's *The Politics of Ecstasy* is as interesting to the unenlightened as most acid revelations; Eysenck's *Crime And Personality* (10s) concludes: '... modern psychology holds out to society an altogether different approach to criminality, an approach geared only to practical ends such as the elimination of antisocial conduct', which is something of an unfortunate choice of words; Robert Taber's *The War of The Flea* (7s) is a study of guerilla warfare which pays a bit too much attention to the politics behind modern revolution for a book that purports to be concerned with overall theory.

With a little extension into the arts and hard sciences, Paladin could become a very worthwhile reference library. At present its appeal seems to be to the student rather than the general reader.

## JOHN T. SLADEK: voting games

A review of *Theory of Voting*, by Robin Farquharson.  
Basil Blackwell, 40s.

**T**HIS IS A TECHNICAL BOOK which can be read almost all the way through with ease by the layman.

It discusses voting as a branch of games theory, and shows how many of the classical assumptions can be simplified or even discarded, for this special case.

The running example throughout the book is from Pliny: A decision is to be taken on whether suspected murderers should be: (A) acquitted, (B) banished, or (C) condemned to death.

Six common voting procedures are then examined. The first, in one version, is common in today's courts: A ballot is taken on (A) first, and if the defendant is not acquitted, a second ballot decides between (B) and (C) between (B) and (C). The second, or "Amendment" procedure is well-known in the U.S. Congress: The first poll is taken between two of the three alternatives. The second poll is taken between the third and the winner of the first poll. Thus senators are likely to vote for unpopular amendments to a bill, then vote the bill down. That is, they seek to defeat it by attaching amendments which will oppose others to the bill.

In the third procedure, everyone just votes directly for his first choice, and the remaining three have more complicated scoring, as in committee voting. Mr Farquharson distinguishes between straightforward voting (adapting a strategy which gives one either the preferred choice or a second best, and which avoids altogether one's last choice), sincere voting (adopting a strategy naively designed to give one's best choice) and sophisticated voting (acting on information about what the other voters are likely to do).

Sophistication can have levels, however. Farquharson mentions an example of J.M.Keynes's, in which a voter must decide not only what his colleagues will do, but what they think their colleagues will do; and not only that, but what they think their colleagues think their colleagues will do; and not only .....

## PETER WHITE: urban life

**I**N HIS NEW NOVEL *THE CITY Dwellers* (Sidgwick & Jackson) Charles Platt tells of the gradual but irrevocable collapse of our urban economy, and the accompanying erosion of our humanity.

This process is followed in four episodes, separated in time, in which the city slips from the near-present to future total ruin. Starting point is the pop-world of the next decade or so, where even the frenzies of the mid-sixties have been amplified. Screaming teenage girls are now sub-teen, twice as hungry for their idols, and the audience assaulted by Total Experience sound.

Greg, a Total Experience singer, has a brief and unhappy affair with Cathy, a high-class call-girl. She is drawn away, like a Lawrence heroine, by the primal masculinity of Tony, the leader of a group of slum-living dropouts. Here, Platt says, already implicit, are the forces which will bring our urban culture down. Modern city pressures either destroy vitality and creativity, or force the individual to withdraw from society. Both alternatives produce an apathy so deep our culture will run down, even the birth rate slowing to a crawl.

This argument progresses in the next section. Julius, an artist, and Hilary are left town to live in the country, slipping into lethargic hand-to-mouth living. They are visited by friends from town: electric sculptors, alphabet harpists, poetry machine operators, not forgetting Kristine Kate, her body a perfect product of plastic surgery, whose arts are rather more traditional. During a wild party Julius' cowshed is smashed and the pregnant cow frightened to death, which is an echo of the crisis back in town. The birth rate has dropped so low that the population is contracting, bringing a collapse of the consumer economy from which there can be no recovery. Julius and Hilary head North to live a solitary crofter's life, while their artist friends fly back to the doomed city.

The remaining two sections are set after the collapse, with people still emotionally dependant on the city, foraging amongst its decaying fabric, while the few youngsters form violent self-destructive hot-rod gangs. The shade is finally laid to rest in a grand climax when Wilkins, a crazed prophet, firebombs the remaining buildings, forcing people to find their own future and ending the novel on a note of hope.

This story is colourful and entertaining, with plenty of action, some violence, and a little sex. Most of the many characters come to life through subtle and unexpected revelations of personality, and only occasionally indulge in the wooden philosophical exchanges that seem so typical of the sf novel. Without being a masterpiece, it is the sort of writing one could only dream of two decades ago in science fiction.

But there is a central and interesting weakness. Platt insists on rationalising his premise of psychological pressures in city life reducing our capacity to create and reproduce, and so destroying our civilisation; an idea which I find harder to accept than an apathy-inducing ray from Mars. Here we have a young writer of increasing promise, whose creation is somehow muted by his unwillingness either to embrace or reject entirely the conventions of sf.

Old-style half-baked scientific speculation seems less pretentious than quasi-sociology, and easier to ignore, allowing one to enjoy better the real intentions of the author. Ballard has shown that it is possible to retain the real power of science fiction while abandoning all rational conventions. Aldiss has shown (though not recently) that the traditional trappings do not necessarily restrict. Platt pulls his punches and this disappoints only because one feels he will achieve so much more when he decides exactly what he wants to do.

## the individual is always right

**P**ENGUIN HAVE JUST brought out Boris Vian's *Froth on the Daydream* in their Modern Classics series (6s) – published as *Mood Indigo* by Grove in the U.S. This translation by Stanley Chapman is infinitely better than the American translation, even though a certain amount of up-dating of the pun names has been required (the book was written as *L'Écume des Jours* in 1946 and now contains references to the Beatles and Clement Freud). People who want to get the full flavour of the original and who do not read French would be advised to buy this well produced Penguin edition. The book could be likened to a mixture of Ronald Firbank and Mervyn Peake and its method has marked similarities to the methods of certain New Worlds writers – the Ballard of *The Beach Murders*, the Moorcock of the Jerry Cornelius short stories, the Langdon Jones of *Eye of the Lens*, the James Sallis of *Kazoo* etc., the Thomas M. Disch of *The Colours, Quincunx*, etc, the John Sladek of *Masterson and the Clerks* etc. Readers should not judge the book by its first chapters which

seem whimsical and without substance – the novel develops a mood of deep tragedy while using a tone of light comedy. It is a strange, idiosyncratic book and it is highly readable. Vian was a translator of Chandler and Van Vogt, among others, and traces of their influences emerge in his work. In a preface to *Froth on the Daydream* he says:

“The main thing in life is to leap to every possible conclusion on every possible occasion. For the fact is that individuals are always right – and the masses always wrong. But we should be careful not to attempt to base any rules to be written down before we follow them...the story is completely true since I made it up from beginning to end. Its material realisation – to use the correct expression – consists basically of a projection of reality, under favourable circumstances, on to an irregularly tilting, and consequently distorting, plane of reference. Obviously it is a method, if there ever was one, that can be readily divulged.”

James Sallis originally reviewed the hardcover edition of this book in *New Worlds* 183 (Oct. 68) and unreservedly praised it. I highly recommend his essay on Vian (*New Worlds* 181) and I highly recommend *Froth on the Daydream*. I hope that Penguin will, in time, publish Vian's other three novels, one of which (*Heartsnatcher*, also translated by Chapman) so far exists in a British edition. W.E.B

## BOOKS ALSO RECEIVED



*Chthon* (Macdonald, 28s.) by Piers Anthony: a sentimental allegory containing a lot of references to Wordsworth and Oedipus, constructed so that you miss the catharsis. *Chthon* is an interplanetary prison. *Magellan* (Gollancz, 28s.), by Colin Anderson: the old dystopic utopia theme. The population of *Magellan* is shifted out of reality by a computer. The hero's name is Euripides Che Forthojuly, which just about sums it up. Alejo Carpentier's short stories collected in *The War Of Time* (Gollancz, 30s.): none of them have the oppressive power of *The Lost Steps*.

*I Sing The Electric Body* (Rupert Hart Davis, 30s.): Ray Bradbury has recovered none of his early ability to tread the line between poetry and pap; these stories fall firmly into the latter category. Poul Anderson's *Let The Spacemen Beware!* (Dobson, 18s.) is a good solid read, and, oddly enough, there's no propaganda for feudalism. What's the secret of the cyclo-thymic inhabitants of the lost colony of

Gwydion? *Changeover* (Macmillan, 30s.), by Diana Wynne Jones: diplomatic 'comedy' set in an emerging African state. Is Mark Changeover a political activist or a slip of the tongue? Does it matter?

H P Lovecraft's maturer short stories are collected in *The Lurking Fear* and *The Haunter Of The Dark* (Panther, both 5s.). Beautiful, insane stuff. Two volumes from Penguin Modern Playwrights contain three of Peter Terson's plays *Zigger Zagger/Mooney And His Caravans* (7s.) and *The Apprentices* (5s.). Since Terson prefers to amend his script as the play is produced, they lack the dynamism of the end result. *Mooney And His Caravans* is very funny indeed.

Also from Penguin, *A Fan's Notes* (7s.), by Frederick Exley: another Big American novel. The jacket notes, of course, mention Ulysses, Orpheus, the American Nightmare, Scott Fitzgerald, and so forth. Weidenfeld and Nicholson also publish *A Fan's Notes*, at thirty-five shillings, along with *Sick Friends* (35s.), by Ivan Gold, Norman Mailer's play *The Deer Park* (40s.), and *The Octopus* (30s.), by Rudolph Wurlitzer, the latter being a combination of Beat, Beckett and Burroughs.

Edmund Cooper's *The Square Root Of Tomorrow* (Hale, 21s.): maudlin short stories with titles like *Nineteen Ninety Four* and *Judgement Day*. Like Piers Anthony, Cooper is a literary name-dropper. C.S.W.

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Mon 23/3	N.H.	7.00 9.00	Strip/Carousella/ Arousing Wild Angels
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Tues 24/3	Place	6.45 8.15	Forum Here is Your Life
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**Coming shortly:** Glauber Rocha's ANTONIO DAS MORTES; Marco Ferreri's DILLINGER IS DEAD; Robert Lapoujade's LE SOCRATE; John Llewellyn's EVENTS; Eric Till's A GREAT BIG THING; Norman Mailer's BEYOND THE LAW; Louis Malle's CALCUTTA; Pat Holland's THE HORNSEY FILM; Richard Mordaunt's VOICES; Midge McKenzie's WOMEN TALKING; Ody Roos' PANO WON'T HAPPEN; and more discoveries, more from the underground, more for the forbidden film festival.

# MUSIC

## RALPH T. CASTLE:

### breathless rats, tedious byrds

THERE IS ONLY ONE VOCAL section on *Hot Rats* by Frank Zappa (Reprise), and it goes like this: "I'm a little pimp with my hair gassed back/Pair a khaki pants with my shoes shined black/Got a little lady, walk that street/Tellin' all the boys that she can't be beat/Standin' onna porch of the Lido Hotel/Floozies in the lobby love the way I sell/Hot meat, hot rats, hot zitz, hot wrists, hot ritz, hot roots, hot soots..."

The rest of the record is music. Serious music, warm, powerful, breathless and exhilarating music, impeccably arranged, played and produced.

*Uncle Meat*, the previous Mothers of Invention LP, used improvisation but inserted it in chunks separate and distinct from the other passages. Zappa's new album makes improvisation an integral part of the scrupulously exact arrangements. And the combination works brilliantly. The usual immaculate studio sound is there, layers of music super-imposed with obsessive precision; but on four of the six tracks it breaks into sustained bursts of guitar, violin, keyboard and sax improvisation that possess the fire and spontaneity of a live performance.

Track one, side one, is gentle and smooth — a simple melody, almost over-sweet. It gives way to guttural Captain Beefheart growling the lyrics against a relentless, insistent beat which persists hypnotically through Zappa's subsequent 8-minute guitar solo. His playing is intricate and effortless, accomplished and sensitive, and makes the most intelligent use ever of that much-abused gadget, the wah-wah pedal. Most of all, it moves — it is hot, emotive, evocative.

The final track on side one takes a theme from the *Uncle Meat* album and builds on its simple four-chord structure. Various instruments phase in and phase out: Hammond organ, vibes, percussive effects, saxophone, guitar. The ending returns to the strings tone used on track one, and satirises the ending used for this theme on the *Uncle Meat* version.

Side two opens with a vivid string-bass line breaking naturally into a Coltrane-flavoured theme with a soprano saxo-

phone sound. A slow, thoughtful fusion of jazz and formal music. Track two is harsher: saxophone and violin take solos against a driving, well-balanced, well-arranged percussive backing. Ian Underwood plays a more listenable and melodic saxophone than in his protracted strivings on side four of *Uncle Meat*. It merges into a violin break which, though excellent as violin improvisation goes, is still harsh and edgy to listen to. But its texture is consistent with the overall mood of this track.

The final track opens with some of the serenity of the first, but the peace has been adulterated by jagged, nervous percussion. Saxophones carry an atonal theme moving slowly through shifting landscapes of sound. There are many distortions and reflections of Zappa's earlier work. This is a very complex, thoughtfully structured piece, deeper than the rest of the album, still based fundamentally on strong 4/4 syncopated beat, but ranging wide in subtlety of mood and technique.

*Uncle Meat* was a big showcase: the various talents and obsessions of the Mothers of Invention. *Hot Rats* is concentrated, directed, uniform in aims and mood. A painting as opposed to a collage. The result is brilliant, rich, disciplined yet uninhibited. The Who are the only group comparable in technique and talent; yet their music is intuitive, where this is based on a solid grasp of every aspect of composition.

All the personnel are first-rate musicians in anyone's terms — particularly Ian Underwood, who plays all organ, piano, saxophone, clarinette and flute parts on the album.

But Frank Zappa stands out as unique in his grasp of composition, playing, and the mechanics of putting it all together on record. Every frequency in the 50 to 15,000 cycles range is used; the mixing, separation and even the pressing of the record are perfect. An impeccable, beautiful production.

The rest of this month's records seem especially poor by comparison. Best of them is Rod Stewart's *An Old Raincoat Won't Ever Let You Down* (Vertigo). It is easy listening. Stewart has been on the

scene for years, back to before his time with Brian Auger's *The Steam Packet*. He sings with confidence, songs including *Street Fighting Man* and *Handbags and Gladrags* (accompanied by Mike D'Arbo on piano.) Stewart's strangled voice is not a gimmick. He sings well. A very pleasing, honest album.

Also in a cheerful mood is *Just We Two*, by Edwin Starr and Blinky (Tamla Motown). Motown are getting a little pretentious, with orchestration and a slicker sound, but the unmistakable ambling beat persists. Happy music.

The Byrds, however, present a dreary and mournful collection of country camp and tedious, trivial pseudo-folk sounds on *Ballad of Easy Rider* (CBS) which has little if anything to do with either the content, or, more important, the spirit of the film. Reminiscent, believe it or not, of the Everly Brothers; but with pretensions.

*A=MH<sup>2</sup>* by Clark-Hutchinson (Decca-Nova) has a good write-up from John Peel on the sleeve, but it's nevertheless hard to think of anything at all nice to say about this monotonous and uninventive and not particularly well-played series of electric mantras.

*Black Sabbath* (Vertigo) seems to be both the name of the group and the record. Crashing thunder and guitar lead into Arthur-Brown-style, morbid explorations of witchcraft and all that. Unfortunately they lack discretion and talent; anyone can produce an imposing sound with open chords and lots of echo. But, just as easily, anyone can go on too long and become boring.

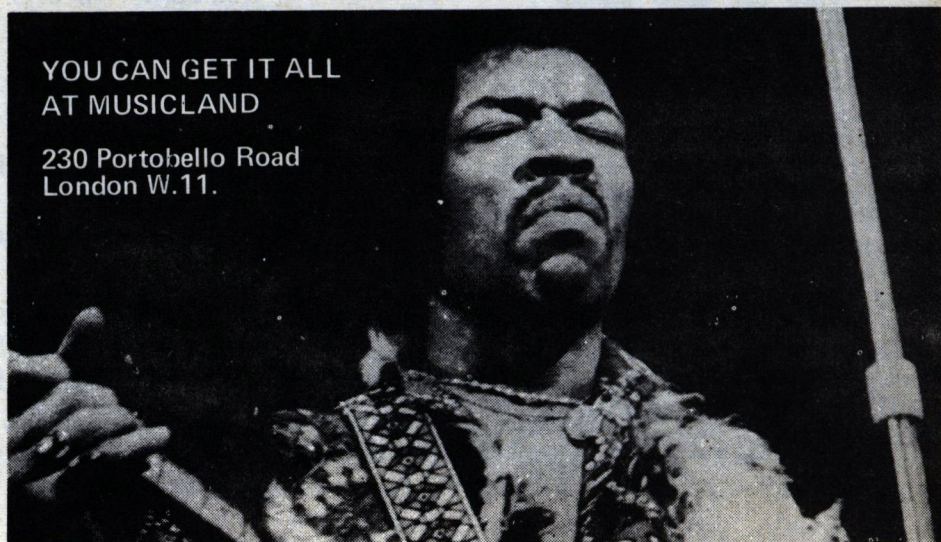
*Cressida* (Vertigo) at least shows some taste and musical ability, choosing romantic love as subject matter, rather than witches and wizards. But the LP as a whole has the soporific effect of what is best described as hippie muzak.

Lastly *Victims of Chance* (Stable). A random mixture of nondescript backing-track music and random, rather boring sound effects. The purpose of this record is unclear.

The moral this month, however, is obvious: spend your money on Frank Zappa's hot rats.

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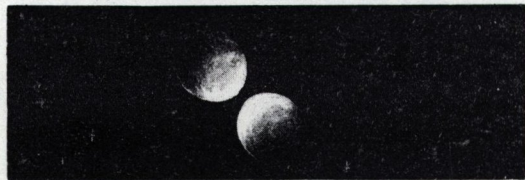
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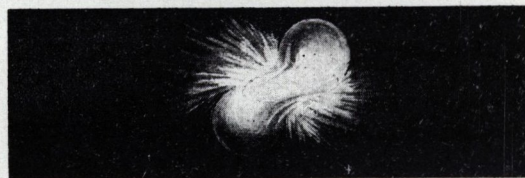
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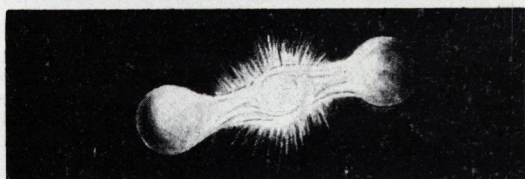
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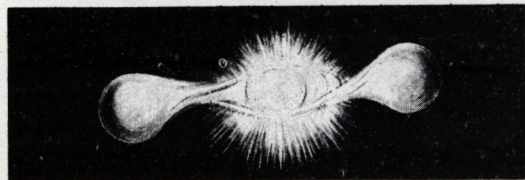
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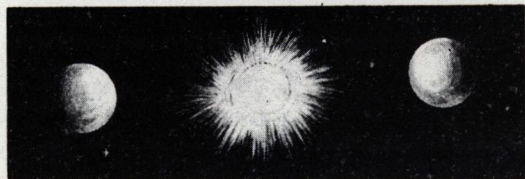
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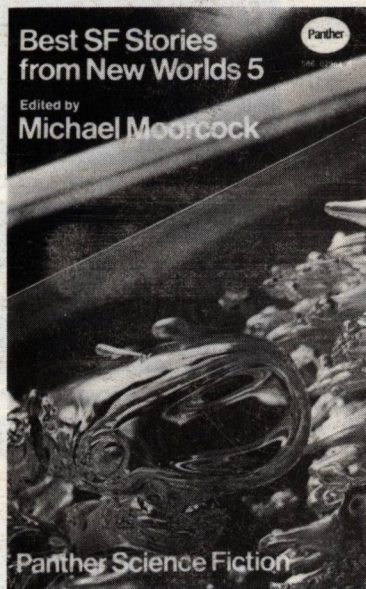
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# Michael Moorcock



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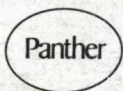
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