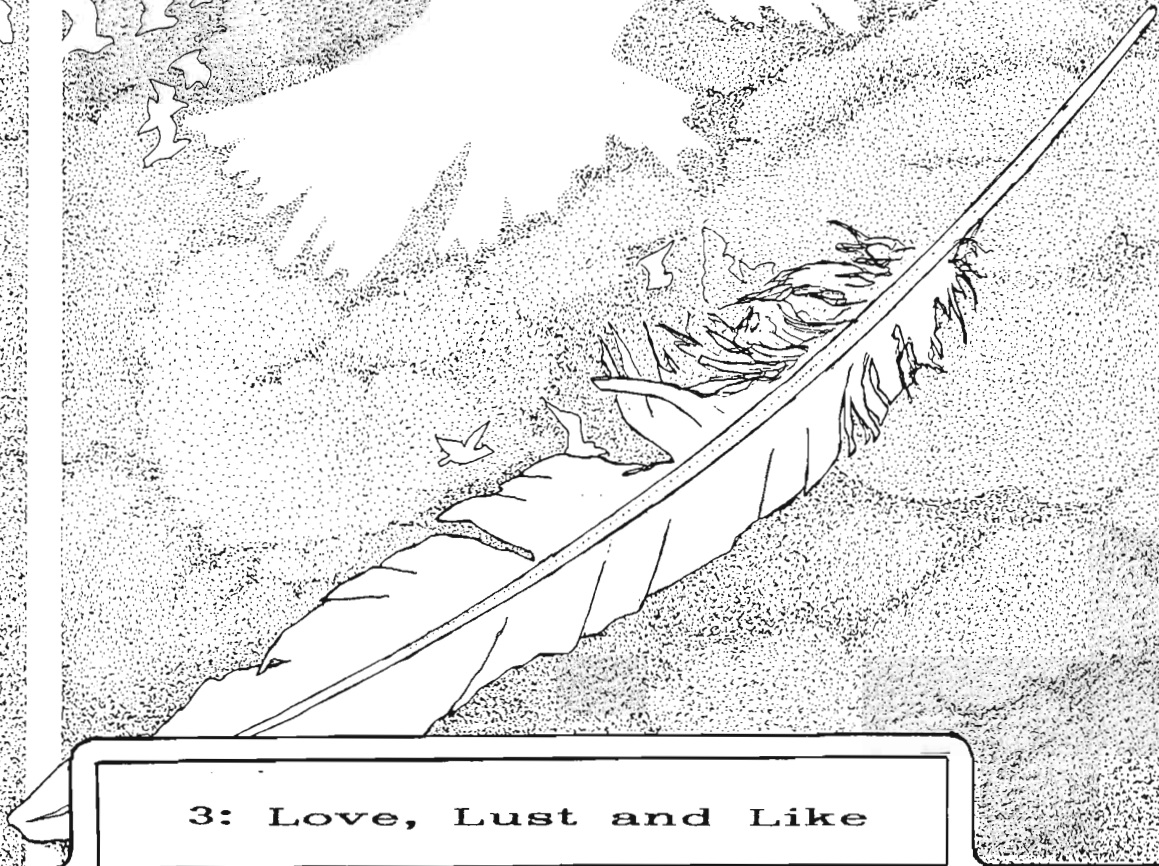


ARROWS of Desire



3: Love, Lust and Like

ARROWS OF DESIRE 3 : CONTENTS

Contemporary note: As with *AoD #1*, the text of the originals was here too faint to scan well, so has been retyped. The font has been changed, but the layout is still the same. The bottom edges of 'Expecting to Fly' are missing due to paper size alteration. Sadly, I no longer have the original... (Nic Farey, December 2008)

LOVE, LUST AND LIKE

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This one's for TARA, who knew what "S V O'Jay" meant without being told...

“The Greeks had a word for it”. It seems trite, even pathetic to begin an essay purporting to qualify some of the most abused four-letter words in the English language with a cliché (or, as Ernest Bevan would have said, a “clish”). However, like all such sayings which have come to deserve our contempt through overuse by those with no better way to express themselves, there lies within some grain of truth. The grain which exists here merely points out the inadequacy of English with regard to areas of emotional expression, and inadequacy that has never been resolved, since each of the three words LOVE, LUST and LIKE are open to many interpretations, most if not all of which are entirely subjective.

At the trivial end of the definition, if I say “I like ice-cream” or “I don’t like rhubarb”, it is perfectly clear which of these options I would select as a dessert, should either or both be offered. Specifics of definition can be introduced into such statements to remove even more elements of doubt. “I would like a drink”, while a clear enough statement of wish, may be unacceptably vague. “I would like a brandy” is better, but “I would like a large Hennessy XO with no ice” leaves the listener in no doubt. (In this case, the listener is presumably in no doubt that they should make an excuse and leave, or that they should immediately sell a fantasy trilogy to pay for the round.) Moving up a stage, it is still quite acceptable to say “I love chocolate” (c Pam Wells-Tudor) or “I would love a drink”, but what exactly does this latter remark convey? Would the speaker “love” a drink because (s)he has been gasping for one for hours, or is the remark a simple piece of social oiling, “darling”?

Of course, the most dangerous area is in the field of human conflict (for which read relationships) in which such nebulous terms are at best open to misinterpretation at worst downright misleading. The easiest to define (and the one which has been left alone until now) is LUST. At its simplest, LUST is the basic expression of physical attraction or desire, often heightened by some hint of unattainability. For instance, it is not uncommon to lust after Betty Grable, Marilyn Monroe or even Samantha Fox. In its most usual form, this would consist of varying degrees of sexual fantasy involving the luster and lustee. In extreme cases (Manson/Tate, for example) this can of course become dangerous to the “object”. Again, this definition of lust is largely trivial to the issue of relationships. Problems arise (and other expressions of desire develop) where the lustee is someone known to the luster, and presumably someone with whom they would have regular social contact.

Regular social contacts, whether the simple lunchtime drink with colleagues, or the meeting of the club/society, are the prime breeding grounds for LIKE. As an emotional expression, LIKE is only something that can develop for a person where they begin to acquire knowledge of the personality and character of another individual. This often takes the form of an initial respect for that person, which is transparently the case at events such as sf conventions, BSFA meetings and the like. Such initial respect can germinate from something as simple as a voiced opinion, or a crushing, witty putdown to a crass remark. Also (with the sf example in mind), respect for another person’s work can also spark off some serious LIKE, although this can be more dangerous. Many a LIKE has been nipped in the bud when one discovers that the individual whose work one admired and respected so much is in person a complete and utter prat (not necessarily I. Banks). It is clear that there are at least two levels of LIKE operating here: the first composed largely of “respect” and perhaps “agreement” (as Goethe said: “How sweet it is to hear one’s own words from a stranger’s mouth”), the second more soundly based on a period of social interaction with the person concerned, thus establishing some commonality of thought or interest.

So far, the definitions of LUST and LIKE have not really converged. In isolation, either of these emotions (presuming that the lust is controlled) are perfectly harmless, and indeed derive a great deal of satisfaction for the participants. Difficulties start to occur when you start to like an object of your lust, or vice versa (although lust usually precedes like, given that the latter takes time to establish). The contention here, then, is that a good working definition of LOVE is simply LUST and LIKE at the same time with the same person. Most definitions of a "complete" relationship will include both the proviso that the partners be "friends", and will also require some sexual element to that relationship. Therefore, the simple aggregation of lust and like, in satisfying these most basic of requirements, can be argued to define love, given that a "complete" relationship would be one in which both partners would be expected to be "in love". The more contentious issue then arises whereby, through such a definition, it is tremendously easy to love another person, whether or not that person even likes you at all, let alone shows any sign of wishing to explore the deeper reaches of your underclothing.

Admittedly, this barrier appears insurmountable so far. The inadequacies of language enable little to be suggested, but perhaps if the LIKE element includes enough respect (which it really should), then either patience or a tactful withdrawal/denial would undoubtedly be the best course. Either that, or a large number of cold showers/drinks to excise the lust element. An additional problem is created if, for example, the person who loves is already in a stable/continuing relationship. If this person comes to love another in addition (quite possible with the given definition) and that love is returned, how would the sharing of a sexual act between these people be regarded in terms of the existing relationship? In strict terms, it would be "infidelity" or even "betrayal", but there is nothing in the definitions to suggest that the continuing relationship would be in any way diminished by any such occurrence. Sex between "lovers" should always be a satisfying event, whatever the circumstances, and feelings of guilt brought about by thinking of other "lovers" should not intrude. It is a fact that sex is always good on occasions where you both wanted it, which is the same as saying that sex is always good with the person you love.

Some may think that the above is a charter for promiscuity, and as such entirely inappropriate in the post-AIDS age. I disagree. Let there be LOVE.

FIRST TERM - I was really good as I was going out with Andy, but...

MARK PLATT. 23, Lawyer from Bolton. Lived at Dev, dad taught at Saddleworth school. Bald. 1 eye.

GARY WARD. 19, Biochemist from Northampton. Lived Kelso Road (where I'm living next year but got evicted). Moved to Bud. Young and innocent. You'd like to corrupt him.

(These also featured in terms 2 and 3 as well)

SECOND TERM - Took advantage of my new-found freedom...

STEVE BAILEY. 20, Accountant, lives Chester. Lived HP D Block (next door).

Puppy dog type. Completely in love with me.

DAVE SHAH. 21, History, London. Half-Italian but insignificant.

DOUG THE THUG. Rowdy ugly person from Blackburn.

JIM BUTLER. 19, Mad medic from Manchester. Lives at Dev.

JOEY BRIERLEY. 20, from Newton. Another mad medic, friend of the above.

MATT KIRK. 20, Maths/Man. Public schoolboy. Nice looking but a total slag. In Paris when I was off my face.

ALASTAIR CLAGUE. 20, Geog., from Chester. Fairly insignificant.

THIRD TERM - Even worse...

DAVE. Third-year economics student from Kent. Tall.

SIMON HILL. 21, Microbiologist, Welsh. Lives at Dev. Could still be on the hit list. Respectable appearance, but that doesn't mean much. Plays for Headingley firsts (pretend to be impressed).

DAN LENG. 19, Mining engineer, Middlesborough. Lives Dev. Gently giant. Fell out with him last week 'cos he wouldn't walk me home.

JUSTIN. 20, Maths/Man, Stoke. Sweet, but not man material.

JACK CLARKE. Postgrad. Typical RC boy, also in love with me.

JOHN RASBURN. Postgrad from Newcastle. Nice except for his glasses.

Others worth a mention: Dai, Jim Drury, Paul Smith.

When they entered the town that was tucked away in the French hills, the sky was already closing in with the swelling swags of darkness. He had heard tales of such places where honeymooners were often welcomed with rites enacted under a sailing full moon: as they staggered into the last valley, he told his companion about the pots of wild honey that locals toted from the slating outward doors of their cellars and they would then force-feed the newlyweds, whilst chanting ribald rhymes. She didn't believe him of course. He didn't suppose she listened to his crazy legendeering, for she was more worried about finding lodgings for the night.

Dogs seemed to bay across the valley, from each extremity of the town, as if passing messages of their coming to their snoozing masters. The couple would need to steer clear of the dogs for, unlike in England, rabies was rife hereabouts.

They held hands and talked among the ghosts of their fears.

“Darling, have you noticed that most French butchers have a skimpy array of dark meat on their slabs, with hardened, dried-out edges. They have no connection with the plentiful variety of English cuts...”

He could have bitten his tongue off: he did not have need to hark back to the argulent they had had earlier in the day: he had made her feel sick with speculations on the nature of the meat served up at the auberge that very lunchtime.

“Dick, please... I still feel queasy... Look! All the lights have gone off in the town all at once.”

In one fell swoop...

“It must be some kind of curfew or blackout.”

It was then that they heard the droning noise and the whirr of wings above them. The last they felt was the blood congealing in their veins. The last they saw were hordes of figures with nets over their faces being led towards them by straining dogs across the dark emerald fields of pruned trees. And the last they heard was the chanting:

“A real live English loving couple,
Let's oil 'em, make 'em supple.
But first, slice off his sting!
Before he sheathes it in her thing...”

“Shit!”

That about summed it up. I'd been looking through the window for over three quarters of an hour but she still hadn't appeared, something unusual enough, not to say frustrating, to warrant that expletive and more. Ah well, if at first you don't succeed, give up.

I punched for Greek coffee, feeling I needed something that harsh to match my mood. This grimace was going to stay on my face all day. The coffee arrived, pungent and steaming, the first few sips wringing my guts into a perfect pretzel, reminding me that I needed to eat. Glancing at the console, I saw the time was 10:02.

“Shit!”

Again. Two minutes late for breakfast. Now I'd have to wait until the lunch menus came on at twelve. This ordered life was all very well, but it doesn't suit late risers or irregular eaters. God knows I can't touch a bite until I've been awake at least an hour. So now what?

I must have dozed off. 12:47. Punch for lunch, which was relatively satisfying. I like to read while I eat, so I punched “Personal Record” only to find I was hours behind on my community quota, getting an automatic cross-ref to “Community Activities”. Apparently I had a choice of group experiencing an old Clash concert in Paris - one of my favourites - or a discussion group on imagery in James Joyce - another goodie. If there were coins to toss, I would have chosen that way, but the random select works just as well. Joyce it was, 19:30.

McComas Centre was a little difficult to reach, but usually worth the effort. Most people who turned up just came to listen, which suited me fine, giving me a good chance to sound off about my favourite pieces - the “Dubliners” collection in particular, less familiar to most than “Ulysses”. A spirited colloquy on “Eveline” ensued, concentrating largely on her self-imposed moral duty, a subject close to my heart and that of John Lewin, whom I hadn't seen for over a year. We were so intent on our friendly rivalry that I failed to notice something my natural instincts normally home in on. She was there, at the back, listening intently.

It was our habit at McComas to continue informally at the bar for as long as our interest held, sometimes until the next scheduled item the next day, so I naturally hoped she'd be there, but by the time I finished backslapping with John, she'd gone, if she'd ever been there at all. After that, I just wanted to leave, having had the whole evening dampened off, at least having four hours community to show for it.

Time always drags, and the following week was no exception, but I finally got the break I'd been waiting for. In letters large (it seemed) under “Community Activities” were the words I'd been waiting for: “Social Interaction”. I left the flat that evening around 20:30, feeling buoyant, headed straight for Howard's House, the local bar. I knew community activities were allocated on a group basis, so there was a good chance that... well, you know.

Euphoric wasn't too strong a word. I must have had a severe fit of nostalgia, because I'd punched Travolta's suit from “Saturday Night Fever”, although I never cared much for disco, but I did want to **strut**. I hit Howard's like a white tornado (another odd

memory) and felt harder than ever, with a genuine grin. Howard makes **the** perfect whiskey sour. Just right to sip, not to swig, and keeps an ideal coffee pot always hot and fresh. That helps the patience, as even then, the ladies came late.

At 22:-05, a dream came true, like Marilyn in "The Seven Year Itch" with that billowing skirt, she came through the swing doors, eyes open, as if she were looking for me. Now this is the situation in which I'm at my most observant. I saw, as if in slo-mo, her almost furtive glances around, the pause when her eyes met mine, then the swift look away, as she delicately made her way to the bar, not too quickly, and not too distant. I smiled. we both knew her pace gave me time to signal one of Howard's boys to divert the lady's check in my direction, whatever her order.

Brandy and Babycham. My kind of girl, or so I always told myself. Polite nods across the gulf between us. I gave my best Paul Newman smile, and sidled over. In those days, some people were at a complete loss in Social, but I had never forgotten those old skills, and they always stood me in good stead.

"You can call me Paul."

"Marilyn."

Yeah. My kind of girl.

Social's usually okay, when you can work up the enthusiasm, but Howard's is my element, and it shows. Oh, how we danced, as they used to say, and oh, how we talked. Even I was surprised, not to say amazed, about how much we had in common. Books: Joyce, Shakespeare, Van Vogt, Spinrad, Di Filippo. Music: Toots & The Maytals, Major Lance, Otis Redding. Actors: Bogart, Bogarde, Hoffman, Eastwood. Actresses: West, Hepburn, Davis, Douglas. And more, yet more.

There was no end to it, there never should have been an end. Your oplace or mine was the punchline, and the answer was mine. I suppose 03:43 registered in my subconscious at the time, but the thought of eight or more hours community was not at the forefront of my mind just then. We were approaching the Ultimate Interaction, but (Shit!) I had to ask first. Punch into the console for allowable activity.

Bingo! But, you know, it takes time to recover from seeing it in cold print. Unlimited Sexual Acts. The grin is a good start, so I began with that and got a coy smirk in return. So we worked up towards it. I remembered Barbara Cartland and the three dots, so to save us all embarrassment let's leave it at that till morning...

The good thing about being allowed USA is that a late breakfast is concessioned - they just call it brunch. 13:04. Eggs on toast for two, Darjeeling tea and grapefruit juice. As I went back into the bedroom, I should have realised what to expect. Oh, yeah, hindsight is always 20-20. I know, I know.

Nothing. An empty bed. Rumped, oh very severely, but empty nevertheless. I should have known, but I punched inquiry anyway. Latest community analysis on subject. Twelve hours credit with merit. Sexual release previously indicated, achieved satisfactorily.

So here I am. It's kind of peaceful lying here among the dandelions.

Think about it. The first two have been responsible for most of the problems and pleasures humans have encountered, as well as most of the art. Wise men have driven themselves into a state fir only for the Arkham Asylum trying to crack (oops!) the secrets of desire. Plus, I'm hardly more qualified than anyone else to second-guess another's emotions, particularly over what must be the most **personal** things in our heads. Still, here goes - and I'll start with the easy one.

LIKE

Perhaps the second most wishy-washy word in English, right behind "nice". It implies such a lack of... well, passion I suppose. Would you risk your life for someone you **like**? Me neither. It's one of those words you use as a fill in, as opposed to saying what you mean. For example:

"What do you think of X?"
"Oh, I quite like him/her."

Subtext: "If X was less of an asshole, washed a little more often, didn;t have that awful snorting laugh and those ridiculous trousers... maybe I could tolerate them for more than five minutes. Maybe."

Alternatively, it's a useful word for being coy with:

Subtext 2: "What a fox/hunk!" (Foxes stroking hunks? Hmmm...)

Maybe I'm being a bit harsh on the poor little word. There isn't another one to describe the feeling of mild closeness to use for the people you prefer to have around rather than the uncaring masses. Besides, like is almost the hors d'oeuvre of love, a nice little snack before the main course.

What's that you're saying? You've never loved, but you have simply **hundreds** of people you like and who like you. Fine. Trouble is, I'm speaking from what I see and feel. There are people I get along with, people I (OK) **like**, quite a few I despise and maybe ten people I love. From this angle, it seems to me you're missing something by exchanging quantity for quality. So sue me.

LUST

"One man's meat is another man's person." (Spider Robinson)

Oh boy, here we go. Let's start with a disclaimer. (Another one! This is sounding like the end product of a libel case...). I'm not going to say any kind of sexual feeling is "wrong". My own inclination is male hetero, with no major kinks or taboos, particularly - and if there's one area where IDIC should triumph it's over sexual bigotry. So -- lust is a wonderful feeling if you can do something about it and just about the worst thing there is if frustrated. I've been told by many women that the sexual urge isn't so strong in them, that sex is something nice but not essential.

(Before I get trampled on by the many lusty ladies out there, yes I do know several women with sexual desires as strong or stronger than many males. Trouble is, they're never around when you need 'em...) As a result, these woman honestly don't realise what the simplest actions can do to arouse. Let's face it, the male plumbing is quite

easy to control - if you don't believe me Ms. Y, go into a room full of men and observe their reaction when you drop into the conversation how much you prefer wearing stockings to tights.

Si as far as I've ever seen, lust is a bright candle in most women, a roaring fire in most men. Perhaps this raging **need** in men explains why many woman don't enjoy sex much - their male partners are too all-consumed with lust that they can't take the time to please them. (Disclaimer 3: I have no personal experience with gay sex, so all I can say to the homosexual ladies and gentlemen out there is - if this isn't the way it is for you, fantastic. After all, as far as we can tell gay sex has been around in humans for as long as hetero, so it must have something going for it...)

Lust can be nasty. I'm not going to start getting in a long discussion on sexual violence and its causes. Suffice to say that **some** of it appears to be caused by someone not taking "no" for an answer. To me, it's inconceivable that anyone could deliberately hurt someone they desire, but many do. Certainly there is **emotional** pain involved in every case of unrequited lust. Much of it is that of the person saying "no". Rejection is tough to take (I know) but the guilt of not being in the mood can be even worse (I know that, too). So, let's temper our lust with a little compassion, guys, OK? (Now **there's** a word. Compassion. Empathy. Maybe we'll get into that later on.)

The thing is, what's the connection between lust and love? I'll dodge that one for a while, we'll get back to it after we consider...

LOVE

State the obvious time. There are many kinds of love. The love of parent for child, between comrades in arms, admirers of art ("Two women. Let's not forget my favourite" - Woody Allen). Whoever this feeling is between, it seems to have one common denominator - a bonding. There is always a feeling of being somehow **closer** to a loved one than to others. Still, I'm going to concentrate on old-fashioned romantic love between two people - as someone once described it, "How you are when you're not in bed together."

Definitions of this love are manifold. For a long time I used to believe Heinlein's "Love is the feeling that another person's happiness is essential to your own". I used this definition because of having lived with someone who certainly believed that they loved me, but was quite capable of having a good time when I was miserable - but not vice versa. Later experience taught me that this, if you don't make a conscious effort to cheer up sometimes, ends up with neither of you being happy and the start of the most vicious circle I know of: "She's not happy. Therefore I can't be happy. Therefore she can't cheer up..."

I think the key to loving someone is becoming aware of their feelings, and taking them into consideration. (I told you we'd get back to empathy.) I've been told that I'm an empathic person, I can tell when people are down, happy, worried etc. Now everyone does this to a degree, but don't you find that you can do this more easily with those you love? If not, **try it**. That's the only advice I feel competent to give on love - if you want to love someone, **learn how they feel**. End of speech.

LOVE AND LUST - Which comes first (and which gets the wet patch)?

“Sex without love is an empty experience - but as empty experiences go, it’s one of the best.” (Woody Allen)

The big question is, of course, “Does love have anything at all to do with lust?” and vice versa. I know certain scholars of behaviour have attempted to lump all of love under the heading of “reaction to sexual stimulus”. Not only does this ignore how millions of people can “fall in love” with a film/music/TV star they’re unlikely to meet, let alone lay (or does this just illustrate the power of the media?), but also doesn’t really cover the incredible **range** of feeling that love involves. Still, the question remains: is there a necessary relationship between sex and love? From my own meagre experience I must say sex with someone you love is nicer than sex with someone you just “like” (I don’t know about total strangers, but I suspect the quality also drops here). Also, bad sex with someone you love is very painful - who do you blame? (Do you have to “blame” anyone? No, but most of us do, usually ourselves.) I’m gonna stick my neck out. I think **most** romantic love has a sexual element and that which doesn’t involve a sexual aspect is when someone “falls in love with (falling in) love” and swallows the whole chivalric ideal hook, line and etc. After all, even Sappho, as romantic a writer of love poetry as there has ever been, knew of the physical side (and its debilitating side-effects) and wrote: “I confess I love that which caresses me”.

But which is most important? Well, without sex, there won;t be another generation of romantics... and without love, who cares?

I realise I’ve asked more questions than I’ve answered. These are just tentative attempts to talk rationally about the whole irrational mess. I’d love to continue this idea, but as a dialogue. Any readers interested in (or appalled by) the above, drop me a line.

In those days, if you were a bit eccentric it was only tolerated if you were over forty, and then only if it seemed harmless and wasn't noisy. Eccentric teenagers were chastised, ostracised but never canonised. Seems tough looking back on it, but at the time it was par for the course. You grew up, left home, had wild and crazy times and tried to look ten years older. With some of the stuff going around then, that wasn't too difficult.

It became a kind of routine after a while, with only the occasional real jolt to shake your brain around a bit, and that jolt often came as a delayed reaction. Too late to do anything about whatever it was except get depressed and ultimately return to the routine. You're never too old for bad dreams. Which idiot said that? The older you get, the more scope you've got for them, and believe me they're all the more frightening because they come from reality rather than the boogeyman. It's at night when all the squalid beasts in the corners of your head come out to play, steadfastly refusing to stay where you thought you'd left them, where you thought they were safely locked away.

Eventually you start loving, rather than using people. Most people get to the point where they're emotionally ready to make that ultimate statement (and mean it), some sooner, some later. And sure enough, that's the way it was. After years of living with aliens, you discover that you aren't the only human in existence. Truth is, you were an alien yourself until you worked that one out. Of course, sometimes it takes a while for the rest of your emotions or behaviour or whatever to catch up with this substantial change that has just taken place. And that's where the trouble really starts.

I must confess I never got used to the acrimony that always went with the disasters. Not like the news, where you can easily separate yourself from what's happening in the war, even though everyone talks about it. "It's terrible, isn't it?", they all say, and everyone nods sagely before getting on with whatever they were doing, easily enough because they're not there. They're not living it.

Well this was a little (or a lot) like being in the war. Really there: personal. You have to deal with it, and so deal with it you do. It's enough to love and be loved and live, or so most people would say. The bad dreams stop, being replaced by other, better concerns.

Unfortunately there came a time when the dreams started again, and I stopped sleeping well and short. Fitful and long was more like it, but it was still the same war. It was still love and be loved and live. It was still ion colour.

After it happened, I could almost understand those religious folks when they go on about the blinding flash of conversion. The realisation that however well things were, or appeared to be, there was still something that was better, cleaner, some quantum leap from here to a superior level of being. This was my road to Damascus, and I was blinded for a time.

Soon, the scales fell from my eyes, and my vision had changed: the perceptions being received had a different quality. Things which had been blurred for a long time became clear, but certain other things which had been clear (probably because they had never been questioned) became indistinct. The decision - the subconscious decision - was easy.

It was easier for Paul. He was a strong man to start with, secure in what he believed. When he changed allegiance he was never troubled by doubt. I could never be that strong. The decision of what to be was made, but the decision to act comes much harder. I don't hate anybody and I don't think I ever did anything really bad. I'm a nice person, honestly. So why did I get this dreadful war wound?

Why should I be paralysed?

SEXIST MILESTONES #1

“Women’s minds and lenses don’t fit. There’s a sex-based incompatibility. Lenses are as masculine as whiskers...”

(E E Smith. “First Lensman”)

SEXIST MILESTONES #2

“To tight cunts and easy boots”

(1880s male drinking toast)

BEYOND THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF KIM CAMPBELL: O'JAY'S
ARROWBIRDS '89

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| <u>BETTE DAVIS</u> | The ultimate. Sadly missed. |
| <u>LINDA-CLAIRE TOAL</u> | Gorgeous, pouting Caledonian in constant pursuit of the hirsute. Aren't those accents sexy ? |
| <u>SPIKE PARSONS</u> | Dominatrix-in-training. A black belt cannot be far away. |
| <u>MARY GENTLE</u> | Deserves the epithet far more than Joan Bakewell. |
| <u>CHER</u> | Ohhhhhh! That bold front! (Or should that be cold front, in that dress?) |
| <u>JUDITH HANNA</u> | (sigh!) |
| <u>CHRISTINA LAKE</u> | Willowy and ethereal. Pity her conversation isn't up to much. |
| <u>BERNIE EVANS</u> | True class is ageless. Just as well, eh Bern'? |
| <u>ABI FROST</u> | Takes all sorts, I suppose. Interesting collection of frocks. |
| <u>MAUREEN PORTER</u> | Something to do with road haulage, wasn't it? |
| <u>KEV McVEIGH</u> | Read all about it in his next zine. |
| <u>LIZ HOLLIDAY</u> | Read all about it in his next zine. |
| <u>HELENA BOWLES</u> | Read all about it in his last 10 zines. |
| <u>SUSAN SARANDON</u> | Always a contender. Did you see that photograph in the "Sunday Times"? Wow! |
| <u>PAM WELLS</u> | Now sadly out of circulation. See what you can catch with fishnet tights? |
| <u>LESLEY WARD</u> | Who? |
| <u>AVEDON CAROL</u> | Secretly wants to be Abi Frost. "Honest guv" (S Freud). |
| <u>STORM CONSTANTINE</u> | Apparently looks quite different first thing in the morning. |
| <u>JENNY GLOVER</u> | Sexiest voice of them all. Er... don't mind babysitting for a couple of hours do you, Steve? |
| <u>MARILYN MONROE</u> | Right this moment someone, somewhere is lighting a candle. |

"But suppose it had your mind and my body" (G B Shaw)

**Oh, my name it is nothin'
My age it is less.**

I'd always been a loner, like you only more so (less so?). Just the same as nobody until she walked through my walls and raised up something in me. It doesn't matter who I am, because I'm not the only one. You don't need to know who I was before, or what I did. Nor do I know who she was and is, but someone somewhere is learning this, so all I wish to tell you is her story and what she did with me. If you really want to know, that is; but you ought to, and perhaps it will tell me, as I write, what I don't understand of her.

**How did I meet you? I don't know.
A messenger sent me in a tropical storm.
I can't help it if I'm lucky.**

Even nobodies get lucky occasionally, I guess, just never often enough to make us into somebodies. Somehow, anyway, it was my turn, and my luck happened to be her. People say lucky, they mean good lucky, but it's not always that way. There has to be bad lucky too, for the averages. At somebody's party somebody introduced me to her and she talked to me quite nice. It wasn't shoes or ships or sealing-wax, nor cabbages, though we may have mentioned kings. Left alone, or undisturbed in the crowd, with her I lost all my usual blandness, or so it seemed to me in ego's retrospect, for she stayed. Contemporarily I was scared I'd bore her, I didn't know what it was that I was doing but it felt to be working OK, so perhaps I didn't need to know.

**I still wish to kiss,
As to be under the strength of your skin.
Your magnetic moments
Still capture the minutes I'm in.**

She took me home that night, she took me all the way, up to my front door. On the step in fear. Then she kissed me with her tongue and held her breast to mine. Then she left me for her bed, her only word "Goodnight". Or did I hear her wrong? It hurt a little that night which only frightened me so much more.

**...I was born
At the bottom of a wishing well
She looked like she stepped out of
La Dolce Vita.**

Dreams, I had, before I met her, sexual. Masturbation stimulations simulations. But none like her at all. The sky turned the colour, then, of sweet candyfloss, hesitant as I was as I dreamtouched her creamsoft skin, entering her pores with my shrinking fingers. Swings and roundabouts. What you lose on the fingers grows somewhere else. A nobody man can frow to great power with a good somebody woman. Power, then I faded again; I, in dream. Lust and ashes, phoenix insecurities.

**Crimson flames tied through my ears,
Girl by the whirlpool lookin' for a new fool**

My hands across her, beauty, lip to lip communicating, psyche resuscitating, the heat swelling through us until... The first time; exploring naked new worlds bravely. Information exchange, and my hand went through her thigh. She slid down and the heat came again within the one that was us.

**SCREAM from the closet.
The dykes have broken down.
I saw a room full of men,
With their hammers a-bleedin'.**

She was good, and I rose up from death. Veni, vidi, vici; I came, I sore, she conquered. Once sly, now bitten... BLOOD: mine; red; hot; sticky; pulsed out; into her warm; wet. I s cr eAMED; savage in ecstasy. Pump, jerk, deep, fading. I tried to pull, away, salt sting, she squeezed, more fluid flowed, sprayed. Both.

**And the only sound that's left
After the ambulances go
Is Cinderella sweeping up on
Desolation Row.**

Pain.

Misery.

Anger.

Fear.

Hatred.

Lust.

Lust? Almost dismayed, I wanted revenge, but needed more of her. Confusion. Passion. Mixed heats.

**He woke up, the room was bare,
He didn't see her anywhere.**

Wet dream Nightmare? New to me, but then so was me being kissed on my doorstep. Love (?) brings fear (!), is it like hate. A simple twist of paranoia. I woke sweating, fluids mixing, sticking sheets to skin. Blood? No blood.

**There are many here among us
Who feel life is but a joke.**

Loneliness. A bitter place, of sarcastic humour. I waited for her to call, and I know she knew I waited as I filled her answer tape. I doubt any other message got on it, and so even there I was alone. Lonely. Not unusual for a nobody, not unusual but hurting when it's a specific somebody who stays vague somewhere. Else, why won't she come over here to my nowhere? And lonely pushes out the other visitors. It is a jealous hate.

**For all the lies I told her in hopes not to lose
The could-be dream-lover of my lifetime.**

The visitor was Jacquie: a friend, sometime close-person to share the good with: I dreamt of her on lonely nights, her body round mine, arms locked, deep inside warmth. She was my visitor on a wrong day; I tried to bed her once or twice, but it would spoil our friendship, and so I didn't try too hard. (Aren't euphemisms kind? And self-deluding, afraid of the inevitable "no".)

**There ought to be a law
Against you comin' round.**

So she came, Jacquie, as visitors do, and asked how I was as polite people do. I told her I was fine, of course, as polite people do (One). As we talked on life and meaningless nothing, she asked again, are you sure? Yes, why not? (Two) and after a while of desultory conversation she came back to it again and she doubted. No, Yes (Three). A third time I denied it, and my alarm clock crowed, though why it was set for then I do not know at all. Three whole times before the clock crowed and then I asked her to go.

**Get Outa Here If you Don't Know.
If you're so hurt
Why then don't you show it
When I was down
I just stood there grinning.**

She called at last late that night, just as regret was creeping in to make me glad I'd sent Jacquie away. Come over for dinner, she said, in a tone I knew meant stay for bed. It was only my nightmare before, was this back to my dream once more? She had cooked a meal, and my fears began to heal then, but as she came to lead me up the stairs they burst right open again.

**As her beauty fades, and I watch her undrape
I won't, but then again, maybe I might.
You can have your cake and eat it too,
Why wait any longer for the one you love
When she's standing right in front of you?**

He mouth took mine as her fingers slipped the buttons of my shirt: and I kissed an answer back, tongues, lips, mouths in fusion. I undressed her on the steps, causing her blouse to fall to the floor, allowing her bra to fall over the rail, and her breasts barely fell at all. I kissed them, caressing nipples that responded. Her smooth neck reddened in a flesh necklace as I bit it gently, hearing in her appreciative murmurs beauty in my ear.

**No man alive will come to you
With another tale to tell.**

You are beautiful, I said, because she was, as I eased her skirt down. She kicked it away with the last of my clothes. Naked, we lay, touching across her bed, sharing each other's heat. These were my fantasies, at least I grew strong where she softened. I slid into her then, making love together. We kissed and moved together there, until I jerked and went deep into her, she gasped and her ecstasy caught my throat with her mouth. A flicker of dream came with it, dismissed by my breathless relaxing over her.

**Someone's got it in for me
They're planting stories in the Press.**

Three drops of blood fall from my neck, staining the pillow and her soft breast and I scream. It's all right, she says, it was only a graze, I'm sorry; but I cannot stay though she asks me, her body comes to me calling, arousing my form again, she is good, but as she kneels to take me in her mouth... (((LIGHTNING))) ...my nightmare. I can't stay. Sexual paralysis. I have to leave if I can.

**My darling, je vous aime beaucoup
She sheds a tear and then begins to pray.**

Oh I wanted her as she pleaded for me to stay, but something in me stopped me, though what I cannot say. She teased my body and tortured my mind, until it got too much and I snapped so I ran.

**Feeding pigeons on a limb
But just beyond the door he felt jealousy and fear.
And I was dying there of thirst,
And your long time curse hurts.**

I killed myself last night, I'll go back to being a nobody, alone. It's safer that way, than being else's somebody. Especially hers. Not me.

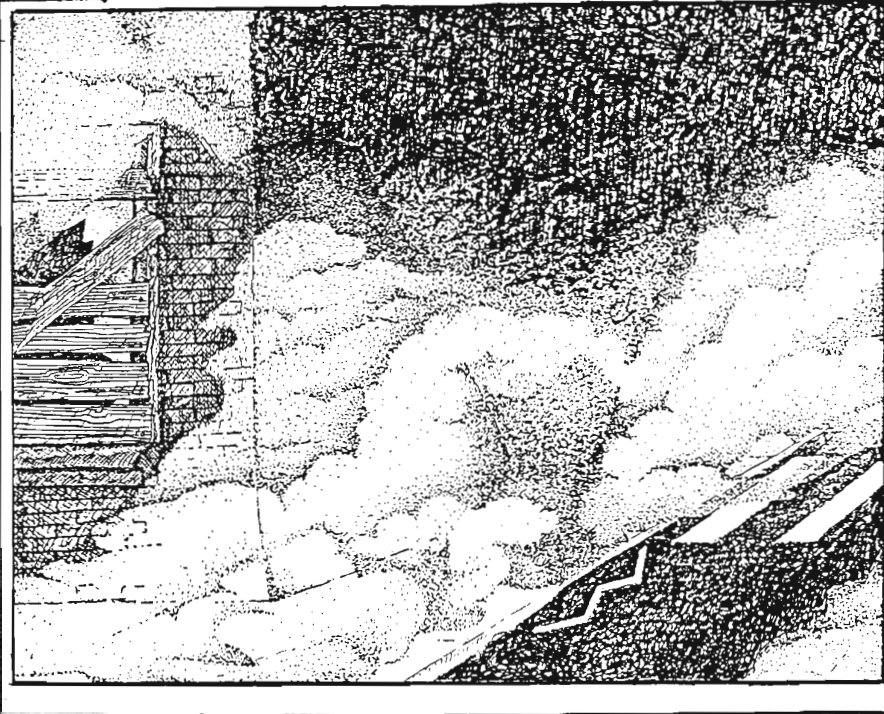
**They're selling postcards of the hanging
But I was so much older then,
I'm younger than that now.**

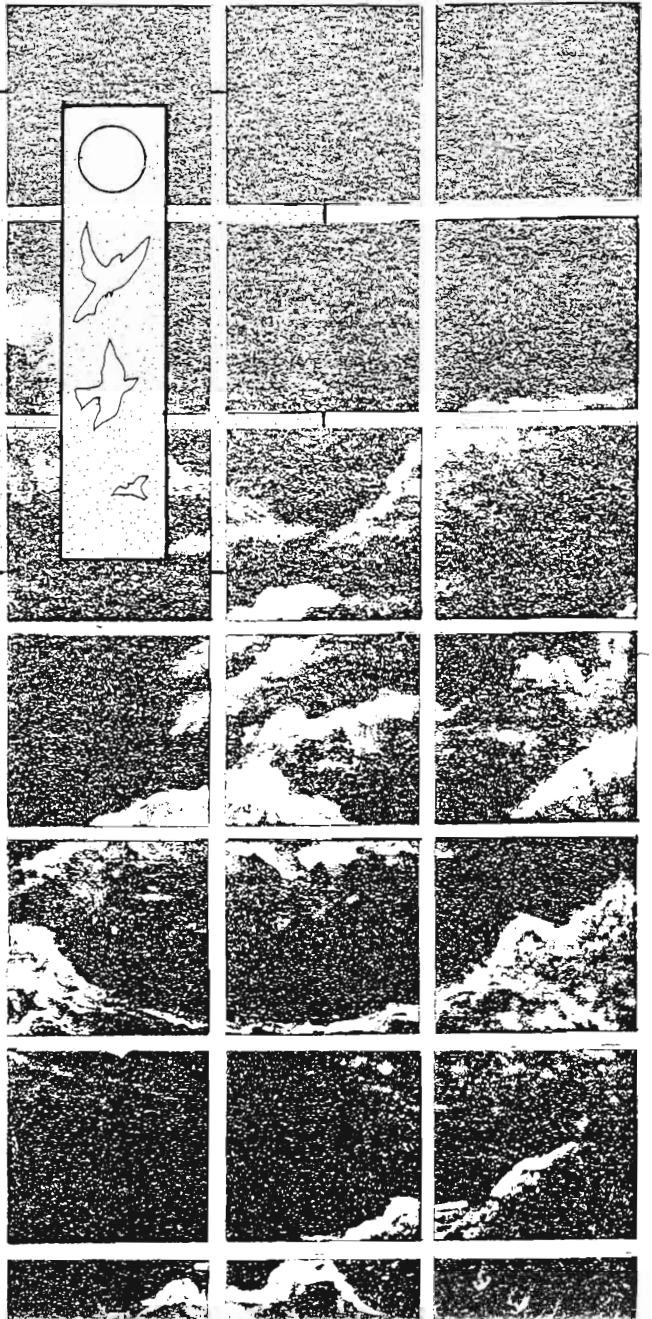
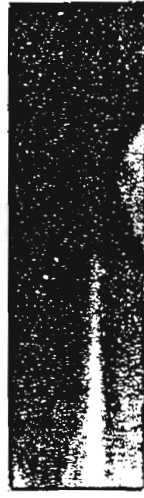
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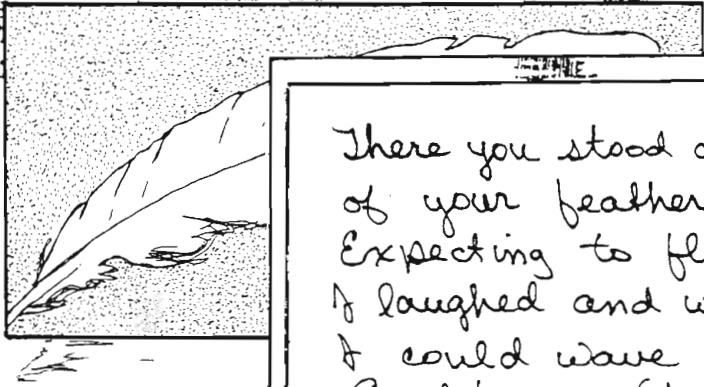
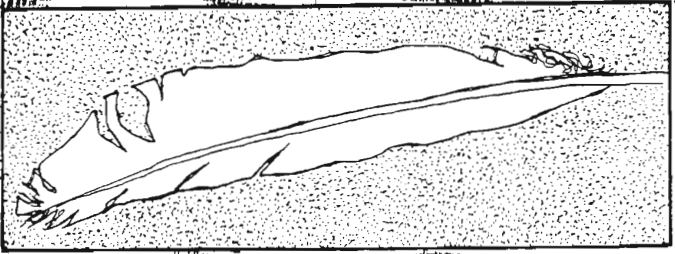
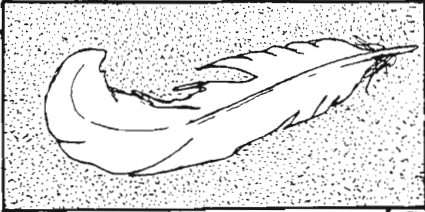
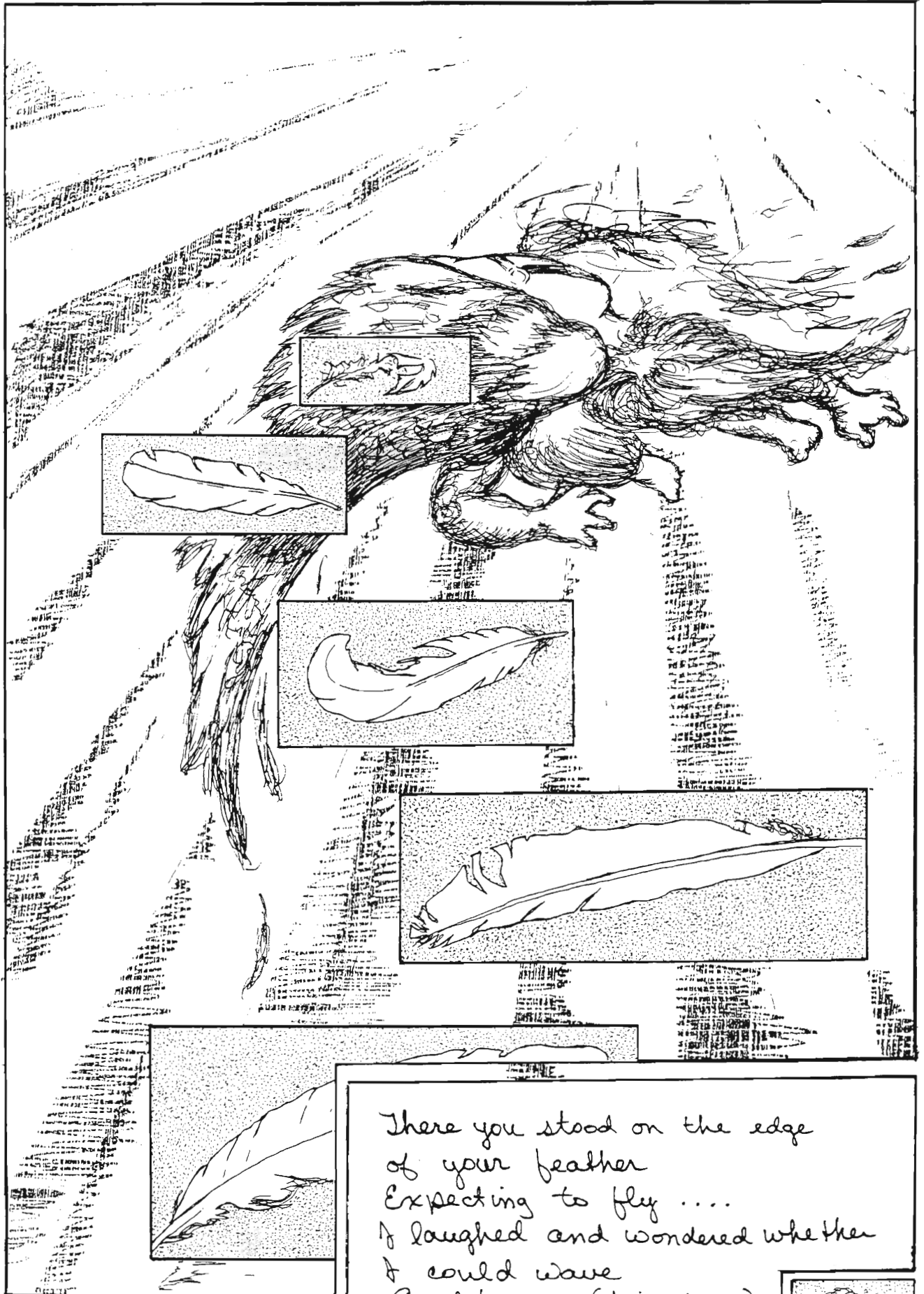
...repeated?



Expecting
to FLY....







There you stood on the edge
of your feather
Expecting to fly
I laughed and wondered whether
I could wave

LOVE, LUST AND LIKE : PLAYLIST

LOVE ACTION (Human League)
THESE MY DREAMS ARE YOURS (Marc Almond)
DUEL/JEWEL (Propaganda)
CAUTIOUS MAN (Bruce Springsteen)
SENTIMENTAL FOOL (Roxy Music)
IN EVERY DREAM HOME A HEARTACHE (Roxy Music)
STAY FREE (The Clash)
LITTLE ROCK 'N' ROLLER (Steve Earle)
AFTERGLOW (The Small Faces)
YOU DON'T MISS YOUR WATER (Otis Redding)
CRY ME A RIVER (Julie London)
WITHOUT YOU (Harry Nilsson)
YOU WON'T LET ME WAIT (Major Harris)
LOVE CATS (The Cure)
MOONLIGHT SERENADE (Glen Miller)
SEX MACHINE (James Brown)
WE BELONG TOGETHER (Rickie Lee Jones)
TOTAL CONTROL (The Motels)
YOU CAN SLEEP WHILE I DRIVE (Melissa Etheridge)
COOL FOR CATS (Squeeze)
IS YOU IS OR IS YOU AIN'T MY BABY (Louis Jordan)
GLAD TO BE UNHAPPY (Billie Holliday)
THE END (The Beatles)
WHEN A MAN LOVES A WOMAN (Percy Sledge)
TUBULAR BELLS (Mike Oldfield)
A LITTLE BIT MORE (Chicago)
McARTHUR PARK (Donna Summer)
YOUR SONG (Elton John)
VIRGINIA PLAIN (Roxy Music)
COME UP THE YEARS (Jefferson Airplane)
YOUNG GIRL (Gary Puckett and the Union Gap)
NO LOVE (Joan Armatrading)
ANY KING'S SHILLING (Elvis Costello)
RELAX (Frankie Goes To Hollywood)
WAKE UP AND MAKE LOVE TO ME (Ian Dury and the Blockheads)
PULL UP TO THE BUMPER (Grace Jones)
I WANT YOUR SEX (George Michael)
MARTHA (Tom Waits)
THESE BOOTS WERE MADE FOR WALKIN' (Nancy Sinatra)
WONDERFUL TONIGHT (Eric Clapton)
BABY'S COMING BACK (Eurythmics)
PRECIOUS MEMORIES (J J Cale)
BAND OF GOLD (Freda Payne)
NORWEGIAN WOOD (The Beatles)
VERONICA (Elvis Costello)
SLICK LITTLE GIRL (Lou Reed)
PARADISE BY THE DASHBOARD LIGHT (Meatloaf)
ROSE (Mott the Hoople)
I SECOND THAT EMOTION (Smokey Robinson and the Miracles)
DOCK OF THE BAY (Otis Redding)

LOVE, LUST AND LIKE : PLAYLIST

CAN YOUR PUSSY DO THE DOG (The Cramps)
ROSE WATER (Olivia Newton-John)
PRIVATE NUMBER (William Bell and Judy Clay)
PASSIONATE FRIEND (The Teardrop Explodes)
PUPPY LOVE (Donny Osmond)
FERRY 'CROSS THE MERSEY (Gerry and the Pacemakers)
SILLY LOVE SONGS (Wings)
MIDNIGHT HOUR (Wilson Pickett)
WHEN I FALL IN LOVE (Nat King Cole)
(I CAN'T GET NO) SATISFACTION (Rolling Stones)
YOU'LL ALWAYS BE A FRIEND (Hot Chocolate)
GLORY DAYS (Bruce Springsteen)
NEW ENGLAND (Kirsty McCall)
DAY TRIPPER (The Beatles)
THE BOILER (Rhoda and Special AKA)
WHY CAN'T WE LIVE TOGETHER (Timmy Thomas)
IF IT FEELS GOOD DO IT (Della Rees)
I FEEL LOVE (Donna Summer)
JE T'AIME ... (MOI NON PLUS) (Jane Birkin and Serge Gainsbourg)
YOUR OWN SPECIAL WAY (Genesis)
SLEDGEHAMMER (Peter Gabriel)
AND SHE WAS (Talking Heads)
ME AND MRS. JONES (Billy Paul)
THE POWER OF LOVE (Huey Lewis and the News)
MIDNIGHT AT THE OASIS (Maria Muldaur)
SOMEONE SAVED MY LIFE TONIGHT (Elton John)
VICKY VERKY (Squeeze)
A GOOD YEAR FOR THE ROSES (Elvis Costello)
DANIEL (Elton John)
CANDLE IN THE WIND (Elton John)
ALL THE YOUNG GIRLS LOVE ALICE (Elton John)
TEMPTED (Squeeze)
THE FIRST CUT IS THE DEEPEST (anyone except Rod Stewart)
IN THE BACK ROW OF THE MOVIES (The Drifters)
ELEGANT CHAOS (Julian Cope)
I DON'T KNOW HOW TO LOVE HIM (Yvonne Elliman)
WHEN IT ALL COMES DOWN (B B King)
TOO DRUNK TO FUCK (The Dead Kennedys)

More Rock 'n' Roll Stories



WHY RIBO?

Cybernetics was a dead science when Cyberpunk SF was born, a cul-de-sac without living practitioners. Furthermore, the “cyber” prefix has been irreparably debased by overuse, in vehicles ranging from comix to bad movies. The tag now stands for nothing in the public mind but computer hacking and fanciful cyborgs such as Robocop. Wiener’s actual texts do not provide enough fruitful metaphors for constructing a systematic worldview.

To the contrary, ribosomes and the prefix “ribo” are richly metonymical. Ribosomes are the organelles found in all nucleated cells, which translate messenger RNA into proteins. In a sense, they are the primal reader/writer/critics, teasing implications from the texts presented to them. Without them, all the information stored in a cell’s DNA is useless. They are the essence of biology, the vital link between information and expression.

WHY FUNK?

Punk was a dead music when cyberpunk SF was born, a cul-de-sac albeit with living practitioners who just hadn’t gotten the message yet. The music’s nihilistic, chiliastic worldview has already culminated in its only possible end: self-extinction.

To the contrary, funk is very much alive and vibrantly filling the airwaves irrespective of our conjectures about it. Defined pedantically, funk is “percussive, polyrhythmic black dance music with minimal melody and maximum syncopation”. Defined colloquially, it’s music that makes you shake your ass. Derived from an African word for “sweat”, funk is a term instinctively understood and practiced by anyone in tune with their body. Funk is the unspoken language of the body. It’s rhythms are systolic, diastolic, peristaltic, even diurnal and circadian. Funk will exist as long as human software is embedded in meat. Another limitation of punk was that it was always a white boy’s music, despite a smattering of black and female performers. Funk, however, is multiracial and pansexual.

WHAT IS RIBOFUNK THEN?

Ribofunk is speculative fiction which acknowledges, is informed by and illustrates the tenet that the next revolution - the only one that really matters - will be in the field of biology. To paraphrase Pope, ribofunk holds that: “The proper study of Mankind is life”. Forget physics and chemistry, they are only tools to probe living matter. Computers? Merely simulators and modellers for life. The cell is King. Consider the following:

PORTENTS

- * AIDS is causing an intensive and unprecedented investigation of cellular mechanics which is bound to have myriad byproducts.
- * The mapping of the human genome is already underway.
- * Legal obstacles to copyrighting living animals and organic substances are falling daily.

- * The ecological nightmare unfolding around us - greenhouse effect; oil spills; toxic wastes - can only be solved by biological means. You cannot replace a rainforest with an oxygen-manufacturing factory. You cannot mop up spilled hydrocarbons and PCBs, but you can degrade them organically.
- * Humans are greedy for life-extension. Any promising developments in this direction will soon snowball.
- * One of the prime purposes of nanotechnology is bodily repairs, augmentations and modifications.
- * There are over a hundred naturally occurring neurotransmitters, and we have only a rudimentary idea of what a few of them do.

Where does the funk come in? In the style. Ribofunk must be as sensual as sex, as unsparing in sweat, cum, bile and lymph as the body is prolific in these substances. Moreover, it must possess the same blind imperatives as the body. Crushed and crippled, the body persists, while many times the mind succumbs. We have gone as far as intellectuality can take us. We need a fiction as urgent as hunger or a hard-on. Hot, not cool.

PRECURSORS

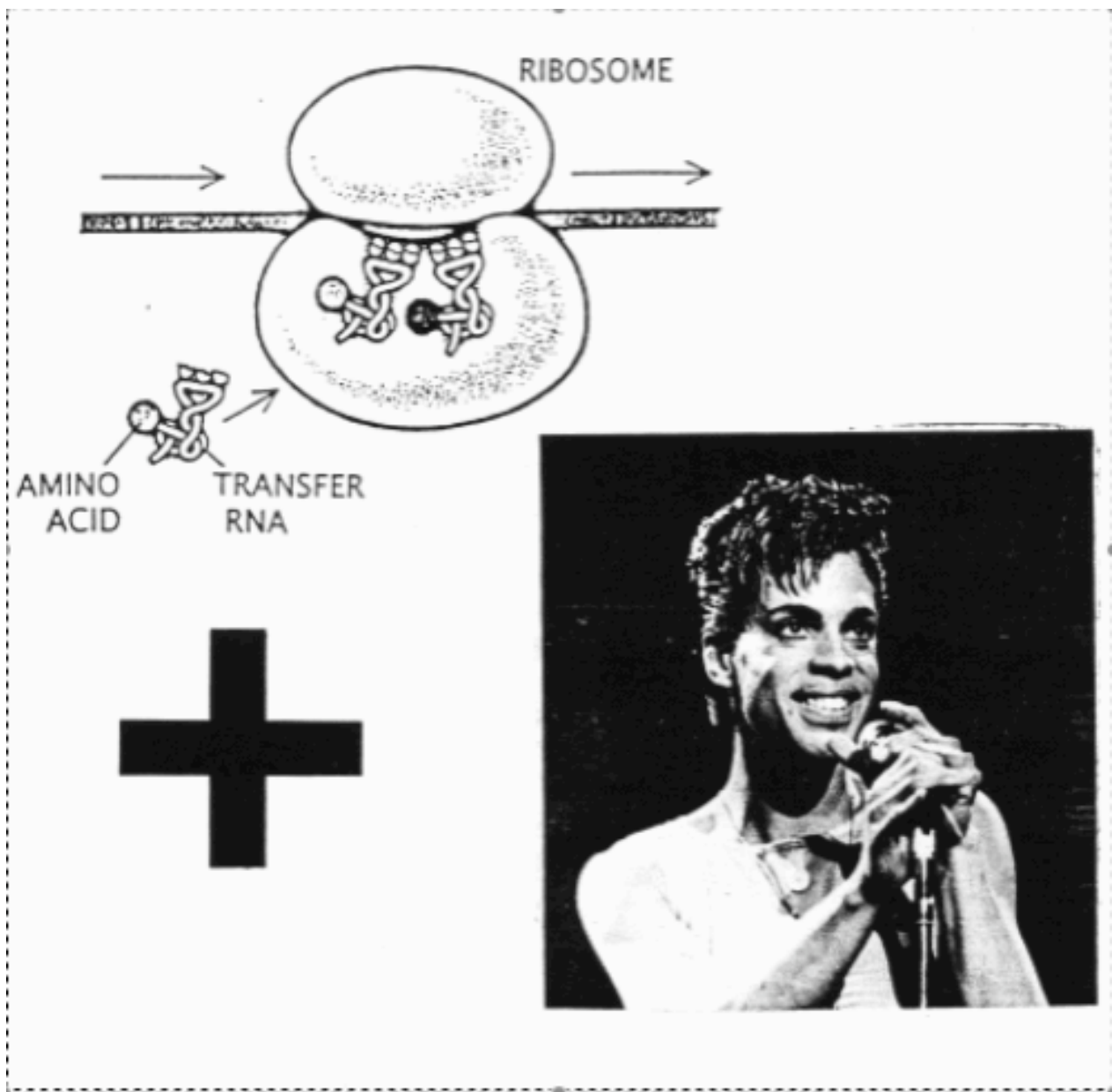
Like every kind of sf, ribofunk can be traced back to Wells, specifically "The Island of Doctor Moreau". From there we follow it through Huxley's "The Tissue Culture King", onward through some of David H Keller's stories into Knight's biological SF ("Natural State") and perhaps Pohl and Kornbluth's "Gravy Planet" (chicken tissue culture). From there it's a leap to the novels of T J Bass and Varley, with a contemporary culmination in Bear's "Blood Music" and Sterling's "Schismatrix".

This is the barest outline. Once exposed, the vein gleams brightly. Our goal must be to smelt and refine the crude ore, to craft a speculative fiction which does not pretend that homo sapiens will even still look the same fifty years from now, never mind several centuries on. we must be as widespread as ubiquitin, forging a philosophy that ties all organisms from yeast to man into a renewed great chain of being.

SLOGANS

What good is a movement without slogans? Here are a few:

- * DNA unto others as you would have them DNA unto you.
- * Anatomy is destiny, but anatomy is malleable.
- * Gregor Mendel died for your sins.
- * Redraw your MAP2.
- * Put a crick in your dick.
- * Strobe your lobes.
- * Boot it or shoot it.
- * Sin, asp! said the synapse.
- * Match it, batch it, latch it.
- * Beat the barrier.
- * Snap the gap.
- * Keep your receptors filled.
- * Axe your axons.



PLAINSONG

Ian Creasey

PLAINSONG

The Cure

From the album "Disintegration"

Standing by the shut down control panels I realise that I am not alone on this dying satellite when your shadow falls over me. You ask "What's your poison?", and I answer. You mix the drinks and we toast the adventurous, space-faring past, drain our glasses, step out again into the memory-laden curving dancefloor for one final measure. Then the drinks begin to have their effect and we stop, turn off the music for the last ime and sit by the observation window and talk and laugh as the temperature rises until my mind fades, and my last thought is to wonder whether two young earthbound lovers will wish on the shooting star that flames across the atmosphere as we two old lovers descend from the sky we made our own.

From the album "Captain Lockheed and the Starfighters"

"So you're a pilot - you fly..."

A truly ancient, but under the circumstances, innocuous gambit.

"I do. I am in fact...", he paused for effect, "what's known in the trade as the Right Stuff."

She caught the twinkle of humour in his hazel-green eyes. He looked so impossibly young, trim in his uniform and shorn brown hair. The eyes, however... the wrinkles and lines that showed when he smiled. He smiles a lot, she thought. Here is a man who doesn't take himself too seriously.

The roar of the jet engines was reduced to mere background irritation, to be ignored the way the engine noise of a car is ignored. The pressure built up as the sleek fighter climbed.

"A hazardous career."

"Oh, I don't know. Cave-diving is a lot more hazardous. Get stuck in an undersea cave and it's just wait for the air to go. Some people do it for fun."

He straightened his trousers, shifted in his seat. The creases weren't as razor-sharp as you might expect on a parade ground, his buttons and insignia had a subtly tarnished air. Spick and span, she thought, but he's left the Cadet spit and polish behind him.

"So you only do that on your days off?"

He grinned at the perfectly straight, earnest expression she wore, framed by shoulder-length slightly russet hair.

"Actually I collect coins and stamps, as a hobby."

Messages crackled back and forth in his helmet. The 'plane was responsive, swift and eager to his touch. Not a new 'plane, just a new variant, keen to show what it was made of. He levelled out, checked his course. Slight deviation there. he compensated smoothly, a learned reflex, the instinct of long practice.

"Have you an interest along those lines...?" He was fishing. They both knew it.

"I'm an historian by profession, a mountaineer by choice. You get to climb around some very interesting old rocks."

"An intellectual of action..."

"A regular bluestocking." Bait the trap.

"They look black from here." Click. Gotcha.

"You men." She smiled warmly, a shine in her blue eyes.

The silver fighter banked round, beginning the second leg of its sortie. All was well, but... something... felt wrong. Instruments showed clean and green. The tremor might have been imagination. Instruments read normal, damned as liars by the sparks from the panels. Smoke stung his eyes as the lights died on the board. Ejector seat... no response. I'm not going to make it for nine tonight, my love. I'm going to be late... as in the late...

Metal crumpled and split like foil as a white-yellow-orange-red-black Death Blossom tainted the clear blue sky.

THE STEPS**Visage**

From the album "Visage"

Another expedition was about to leave.

Rebek had not been told, but for someone with clear sight, the signs of preparation were obvious: food was being diverted into special caches away from the common store; metal was being inventoried again; more coldsuits were being woven than would strictly be needed for the coming winter.

Of course, secrecy had to be maintained, for if the Reds learned that the Yellows' strength was depleted by an expedition force they would certainly attack. Rebek wished she was considered trustworthy enough to be told instead of guessing for herself. What did they think she would do, take a Red lover and blab it across the pillow?

Still, such was life, that a girl was not thought to be adult until she was married. That was the same for both Red and Yellow. She had to admit, it did have some advantages, for instance she had a bit of free time now, when the women were occupied with the dyeing.

What to do? Well, she could try guessing which route this expedition would take. Since the last one the Steps had weathered in more places to random rubble and a smoother slope, creating yet more possibilities for the easiest way to the top.

Where the expeditions went after that, when they left the valley completely, was a secret to which she was not yet privy. Rebek avoided thinking about that; there was absolutely no point in doing so when no amount of wondering or asking would obtain the answer; she would just have to wait.

Instead she thought about the Steps themselves. If every year they became more broken, then surely there would come a time in the distant future when the Steps completely disappeared, and there would be only a rocky slope up the side of the valley. By the same logic, surely there had once been a time in the past when the Steps were perfectly regular.

Rebek thought about that. Suddenly she had a flash of clear sight. She saw giants standing in the terraces of the arena, watching the battles below.

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SCREWED UP LETTERS 4 is still a zine which is in imminent danger of getting better. This issue is reduced in size to A5 and boasts a vast improvement in repro quality. The content is still rather mish-mash, and the sequencing could have been much better. An article by Cardinal Pete Cox, "Why I always giggle whenever I see Nanette Newman" is followed by Jenny Glover's apa reprint "Ha Ha said the Duck, laughing", the first part of which discusses TV advertising as part of an overall discussion about dreams. A reasonable article by Jenny is made to appear poor by an apparent change of subject part-way through, due to the reader's mind being attuned to Cox's effort. This would not have occurred if the sequence had been reversed, or indeed if Jenny's article had been read in isolation. Another piece by Cox precedes zine "reviews", which are really just listings with brief descriptions, and an extended lively loccol. A minor production point: call me old-fashioned if you will, but I prefer to see line justification rather than "ragged edge". It looks much neater and lends an air of readability to the material (some of which needs all the help it can get). Given that SUL is now produced on WP, there's no excuse for not adopting it.

[ALAN J SULLIVAN, 20 Shirley Road, Stratford, London E15]

MANGLED MINUTES, Alan's supplement to SUL and issued at Iconoclasm or thereabouts, is a simply-written thoughtful piece on the Beijing student massacre. This shows just how well Alan can write a) when he tries and b) on a subject he feels strongly enough about. I just wish he'd do this sort of thing more often.

[Address as SCREWED UP LETTERS]

EYEBALLS IN THE SKY 5 is a thematic zine (dont'cha love 'em!) with the subject "Obsessions", and provided one of the best reads for a long time. If Martin Tudoe does not (or did not, depending on when you are reading this) pocket a Nova for "I Drink Beer, Me" then there is no justice in the world (or even fandom). Martin's dispassionate account of his drinking career and all the personal difficulties it has resulted in cannot fail to bring a guilty feeling to anyone who has ever raised a glass in anger (and probably many who haven't). The only problem with EITS 5 is that an exceptionally strong article such as this tends to eclipse other good pieces, particularly those by Lucy Huntzinger, Pam Wells and Steve Green, not to mention what editor Tony Berry does with his beermats. Kev McVeigh also reveals that his obsession is himself, which will surprise nobody.

[TONY BERRY, 121 Cape Hill, Smethwick, Warley B66 4SH]

Speaking of the dread McVeigh, then there was **EFILNIKUFESIN 3**. I'll say this for the little squirt, when he decides to publish a sercon zine, he manages to make it one of the best, most interesting ones around, enlivened by a number of intelligent articles from one or two other contributors, and overall good artwork and production. Some shorter pieces of poetry and criticism serve to lighten the reading load of less digestible items such as "Tune In, Turn Off", a densely-argued critique of media sf, and a review of "The Last Temptation of Christ" which is as much an analysis of prevailing attitudes toward the film than of the film itself. As an aside, it was most thought-provoking to re-read this article in the light of the Rushdie affair.

Not a zine to be read in one sitting, but worthwhile. The one thing that **really** annoys me is Kev's excessive use of footnotes. Parentheses would have been better in most cases, but I suppose it's ultimately just a question of style.

[KEV P McVEIGH, 37 Firs Road, Milnthorpe, Cumbria LA7 7QF]

The hyperactive midget of mirth has also produced a recent perzine, **HIGHWAY 61 RESURFACED**, which is generally more flippant in tone than Efilnetc. Production quality is fair, but the first two articles are prime examples of the man's obsession, as admitted in "Eyeballs in the Sky". Something which might otherwise have been an Iconoclasm con report is in fact a catalogue of mild sexual deviation from which the participants clearly derived a great deal of guilty pleasure - rather like nine-year-olds sneaking a cigarette in the school lavvy. "Midnight at the Lost and Found", purporting to be an argued account of how virginity is lost - with examples - is just another example of mad Mac pissing his scabs - public masturbation, if you like. To follow this immediately with a piece on reactions to the film "The Accused" which would certainly not have been out of place in Efilnetc is jarring to say the least. Although this is a short zine, it may have been better if the articles were more clearly separated (page break, perhaps?), Ian Creasey's objections notwithstanding (see loccol). Some witty zine/general fan criticism follows, along with an interesting music piece about Steve Albini's new band, named after the salacious Japanese comic "Rapeman". Much room for improvement, which perhaps will be forthcoming now that noted Clarion graduate Liz Holliday is reported to be taking Kev in hand (F'nar F'nar).

[Address as for EFILNIKUFESIN]

AND SOME FELL ON STONY GROUND... THE BEST AND WORST OF THE REST

THE CAPRICIAN 4: All very worthy, I'm sure. Mind you, I'm glad I'm not a Kim Campbell toyboy.

[Lillian Edwards, 1 Braehead Road, Thorntonhall, Glasgow G47 5AQ]
[Christina Lake, 47 Wessex Avenue, Horfield, Bristol BS7 0DE]

HALADIE: Dreadful production and sick-making multicoloured paper belie several reasonable articles. Worth reading on an empty stomach.

[Steve & Jenny Glover, 16 Aviary Place, Armley, Leeds LS12 2NP]

ELDRITCH BLUE FISH 2: Zine for Hitch-Hikers fans and about as clever as most of them. Identical cover to Issue 1!

[EBF, 85 Wakeman Road, Kensal Green, London NW10]

SGLODION: Is Langford coasting? Interesting, but he has been better. Still, Langford coasting is better than most of the rest at full tilt.

[Dave Langford, 94 London Road, Reading, Berks RG1 5AU]

DOMBLE IN THE WORKS: Some intellectual humour, but mostly a long heavy article purporting to justify atheism. If you can get through it, it's actually not bad, but I suspect the piece of being written under the astral direction of Stephen Donaldson.

[Lesley Ward, 71 Branksome Road, Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS2 4HG]

CONCATENATION 3: Excellent semiprozine which is getting excellenter.
[Concatenation, 44 Brook Street, Erith, Kent DA8 1JQ]

I-94 2: A road movie in print. An interesting read, usually calling to mind impure thoughts about Spike's legs.
[Spike Parsons, PO Box 535, Madison, WI 53701, USA]

CHICKEN BONES 1: A goodly dose of the expected acerbity, a certain D Langford on better form than in Sglodion, and a football fanzine article by Jimmy Robertson. deserves a better appraisal than this, really.
[Abigail Frost, 95 Wilmot Street, London E2 0BP]

BLACK HOLE 28: Edited by one I Creasey and fortunately not yet totally dominated by his personality. Does however show signs of appreciating SLAGGING. Quite good fun, could be more consistent. Not bad for students, really.
[Black Hole, Leeds University Union, PO Box 157, Leeds LS1 1UH]

STICKY WICKET 10: After Robertson's paeon to footy fanzines in "Chicken Bones", the least I can do is highly recommend SW, billed as "The Alternative Cricket Magazine". A must for fans everywhere. The address below is for subscriptions, but individual copies (£1-25 or thereabouts) are available from enlightened newsagents, and even some W H Smiths!
[JBP Ltd., The Boathouse, Crabtree Lane, Fulham, London SW6 8NJ]

THE HARDCORE: Cyberpunk by any other name (and they give it several) and extremely variable. Will either improve to the level of its best material (some of which is rather good) or disappear up its own pretensions.
[Top Floor, 212 Croydon Road, Beckenham BR3 4DE]

All zines (except "Sticky Wicket" magazine) are available for "the usual": normally letter-of-comment, contribution, trade, editorial whim or even "a drink".

Harry Bond is 12.

LOCO CITATO

From IAN CREASEY, 21 Mauldeth Road West, Manchester M20 9EQ

You gave me a copy of **Arrows of Desire 2** at Iconoclasm. Nearly a month later, I've finally got around to writing to you about it.

I think the Rock 'n' Roll stories is an excellent idea, one which welds the zine into a unified whole (plus a few odds 'n' sods) and could well provide a continuing theme for future issues, giving AOD a unique identity. One slight snag is that as yet I am unable to personally evaluate the effects of reading the story while listening to the song as I don;t have any of the songs recommended in AOD2 in my collection! Hopefully some subsequent issue will contain a story written to a track I possess. (Sadly, I don;t have the money to go out and buy records for use as backing music for fan fiction. Ideally you should have distributed a tape with the zine...)

But I do know that TRRS is a good idea, because it gave me inspiration. (And what better class of idea is there than that?)

[Ian's contributions are printed elsewhere in this issue - O'Jay]

Moving on to the rest of AOD2, I liked "Where Were They When The Lightbulbs Went Out?", though inevitably I did not get all the jokes as I don;t know all the people mentioned. Still, this is another idea that could run and run - how about a similar section in AOD3 entitled "Where Were They When The Bar Closed?" Here are a few to start you off...

What does Steve Glover do when the bar closes?
He filks until the management agree to reopen it.

What does Maureen Porter do when the bar closes?
She opens **The Gate**.

What does Piers Anthony do when the bar closes?
He writes a sequel.

What do conrunners do when the bar closes?
They hold a workshop on how to make the next one better.

What does a fan editor do when the bar closes?
He recovers his fanzines from under the pint glasses.

Why isn't there a bar in Robert Silverberg's place?
I don't know, but there should be one on his novels.

[Actually I had thought of "Where Are They Now? No. 1 - Ian Creasey's sense of humour - O'Jay]

"What Is This Thing Called Esseff?" was also a good idea, and again could spawn a series. If you can find any definitions, how about a "What Is This Thing Called Fantasy?" for AOD3? There were some heavy discussions on this subject at Iconoclasm. Finally, a couple of minor production points about AOD2. I think the colophon should have been in a more prominent position than page 4. And why was there so much empty space? Paper costs money! If you had closed up the text, the zine would have been smaller and cheaper.

LOCO CITATO

Re-reading my own piece I see that it relies too heavily on personal things unknown to the rest of your readers, perhaps when I eventually get around to doing my own zine I can reveal all? Perhaps not. For me it says what I want, but only for me and I don't see me being able to do it any different. I'm glad you used it, but I think it fails. Sorry.

What was Geography Lesson about?

And Who (the) Fucks Michael Ashley?

Thanks again for the fanzine, do send me the next one if I don;t get around to writing something for it.

PS Fantastic cover!!!

[The other obvious disadvantage with your piece is that it relies on music by Kate Bush, whom I have always thought sounds not unlike a skinned cat being plunged into a bag of salt. I will not explain "Geography Lesson" (or any other piece, come to that) to you. At least not in print. You either got something out of it or not (in this case, clearly not), though I would be happy to discuss its merits with you personally. Michael Ashley is, I am assured, a mildly controversial award-winning fanwriter. I will, of course, send you a copy of the next (this) one if I discover where to send it. From one peripatetic to another - O'Jay]

SEXIST MILESTONES #3

"There's nothing wrong with being a slag."

(Ian Hunter, Mott the Hoople at Hammersmith Odeon, December 14th 1973)

SEXIST MILESTONES #4

"The female orgasm is a fantasy of the feminist mind. Nothing that difficult to produce could be natural."

(Hunt Emerson/Tym Manley, "Brain Damage" Vol 1 No 6)

They careered through the forest at breakleg speed, a whole horde of ragamuffins, fagurchins and black-eyes wallops: a gang in name, but more an army of cutthroats fashioned to the teeth with all mod cons of hand-to-hand fighting.

Their leader went by the name Arkne, but that was only half of it. He stemmed, some said, from an ancient race that specialised in causing the most pain in the most people just for the sake of balancing out all the good in which their God was concurrently involved in propagating. They thought He would be thankful for their honest endeavours, for good could not exist without bad.

“Good without its opposite, it’s not worth the paper it’s written on”, Arkne screeched in his mock-literate tone. And the other wise guys followed him, churning through the underchoke, steamers, by any other name.

Their escapades usually ended up in a rumble, with a guest victim or two, and a token law-maker, but above all just a carefree scrummage, where limbs were turned off as soon as looked at.

One day, Arkne had a headache and so, for the day, lodged his authority in one of the other bruisers who proceeded to make Arkne’s headache worse, or better, with the slimy red head of a sledgehammer.

There was no love lost in such a school of thought, and the forest rang with hoots of laughter that afternoon; and in the heart of the ensuing scumble in twilight’s ghostly glow, the gossip passed from prop forward to hooker: “Arkne’s dead, but he’s with God now, spurring us on, they say.” And their two skulls came together with a blinding crunch of eggshells, the grey yolks spouting up and, for a split second, it was almost lovely to muse about their union in the treetops.

The ragamuffins, fagurchins and black-eyed wallops steamed on through the forest, mugging every birdsnest to hand, the fragile, finely-mottled eggs smashed to the ground.

But where’s the good in it?

The shadows of the resultant birds that never were to know existence flittered from the clearing at the thickest part of the forest into the encroaching night’s sky, where they met angels’ souls dying the other way.

ARROWS OF DESIRE 3 : LOVE, LUST AND LIKE

WE NAME THE GUILTY:

HARRY BOND*

6 Elizabeth Avenue, Bagshot, Surrey GU19 5NX

CAT

57 Brownhill Road, Catford, LONDON SE6 2HB

IAN CREASEY

21 Mauldeth Road West, MANCHESTER M20 9EQ

PAUL DI FILIPPO

2 Poplar Street, Providence, RI 02906 USA

CEARA DYSON

Leeds University

A BIT OF THE NOVACON COMMITTEE (BERRY, MILLS, TUDOR, WELLS)

The Whiteoak Memorial Home for the Terminally Bewildered,
c/0 121 Cape Hill, Smethwick, Warley B66 4SH

DF LEWIS

7 Lloyd Avenue, Coulsdon, Surrey CR3 2QS

COLIN P LANGEVELD

9 Lisleholme Road, West Derby, LIVERPOOL L12 8RU

PATRICK McKAY

No fixed abode

S V O'JAY

PO Box 29, HITCHIN, Herts SG4 9TG

SYLVIA STARSHINE

Unit 28, Metropolitan Works, Enfield Road, LONDON N1

ALAN J SULLIVAN

20 Shirley Road, Stratford, LONDON E15

* Mr Bond's excellent zine guidelines (published in Pulp 13) have been strictly adhered to in the production of this issue.

ARROWS OF DESIRE appears twice yearly and is edited and produced by:
S V O'JAY, PO Box 29, HITCHIN, Herts SG4 9TG

The Editor states that he may not necessarily agree with some of the opinions expressed herein. Even his own.

Copies available for the usual.

AOD4 will be available at Eastercon '90. Theme: **HATE, FEAR AND LOATHING**.
Contribs/locs/failed Drabbles to the editorial address by 1st March 1990.

AND FINALLY...

So Ian Sorensen goes to the doctors and he sez:
"Doctor, I feel great but I look terrible",
So the doctor he sez:
"You're a cunt."

