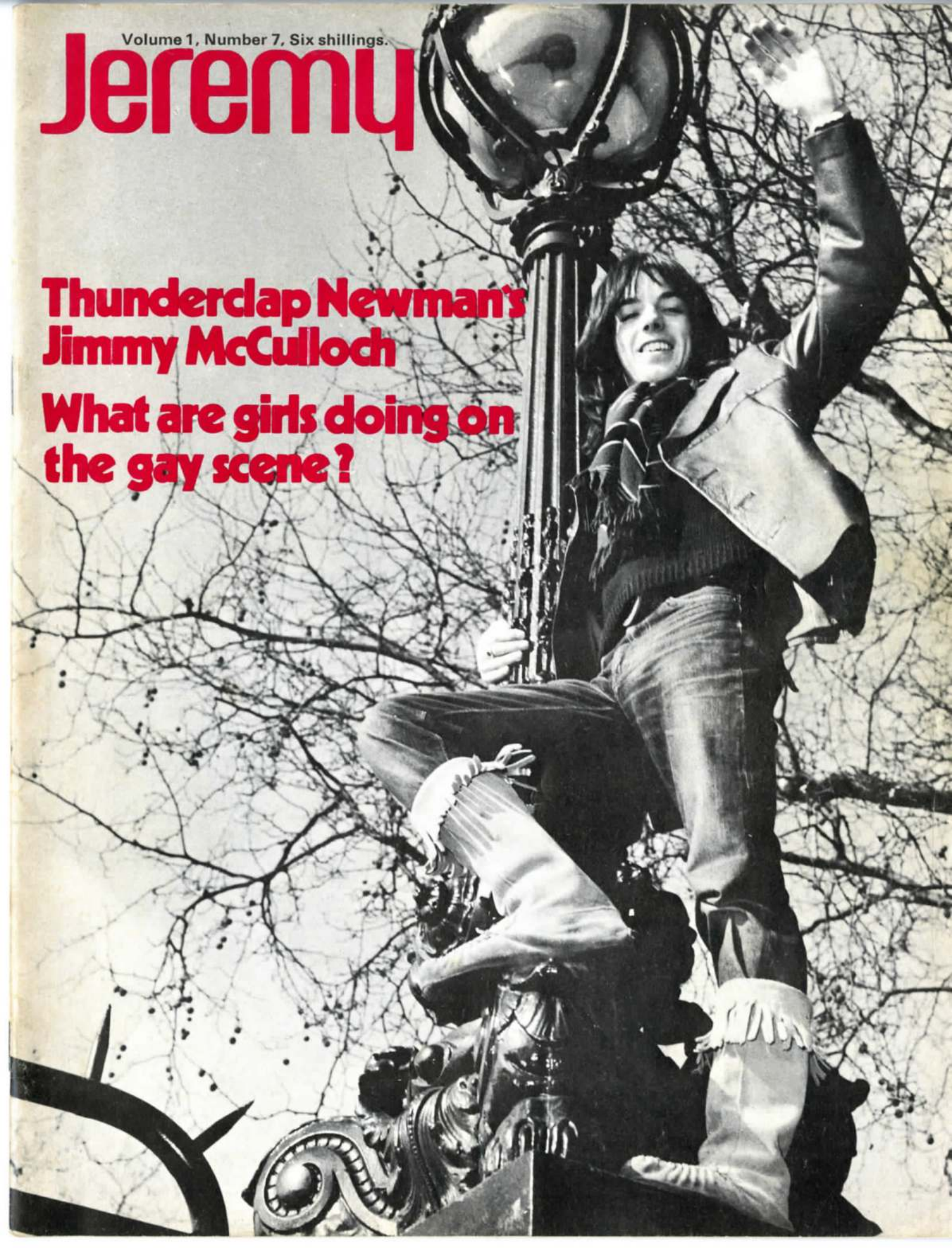


Volume 1, Number 7, Six shillings.

Jeremy

**Thunderclap Newman's
Jimmy McCulloch**

**What are girls doing on
the gay scene?**



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Editorial

Once again we find ourselves forced to raise the banner of liberty in our supposedly free society. A number of incidents have occurred recently which suggest that the forces of reaction are making a concerted effort to check and, if possible, reverse the freedom enjoyed in the arts and letters in our country since the famous 'Lady Chatterly' trial.

The arguments for and against censorship have been repeated so often and so tediously that there is no need to set them out here. In any case we do not wish to insult our readers by presuming that they are not acquainted with them, or that anything we say might change their views on the subject.

It is the sheer chaos of the present situation which is most disturbing. It has become clear that the obscenity laws are being applied in an intolerable manner. Films, books and magazines are seized quite arbitrarily; mail is opened at the ports; telephones are tapped; extensive files are kept on recipients of 'pornographic literature' and advertisers in 'small ads' columns. Nor are the police entirely to be blamed for these shameful practices. They are after all being asked to operate laws which they are frankly incompetent to handle.

Our friends on *International Times* face a serious charge of conspiracy to debauch public morals for running a homosexual 'lonely hearts' column. A similar heterosexual column has escaped this fate. Apparently you may (if you need to) advertise for a boy-friend if you are a girl, but not if you are a man.

The seizure of Andy Warhol's '*Flesh*' (featured in *Jeremy* in January) might be considered farcical were the issues at stake less serious. This film, by a widely respected director, had already been shown at several cinema clubs and at Cambridge University. It had run for some weeks to club audiences at the Open Space when the local police (on whose initiative no-one knows, though certainly without the knowledge of Scotland Yard's vice squad) decided to move in.

One of the strongest arguments against censorship is that it is impossible to agree on a censor. No individual, whether the Lord Chancellor, the Director of Public Prosecutions or some local police official, is really in a

position to decide for others what they might or might not see or read. Even if there were a competent censor accepted by all, how would he *prove*, as the law demands, that a film or book had actually depraved or corrupted anyone?

If our society is corrupt by former standards (which is in itself arguable) it is because the traditional Christian moral standards are no longer held by the vast majority of people. The temptations are the same as they ever were: it is the grace to withstand them which has diminished in our secular society.

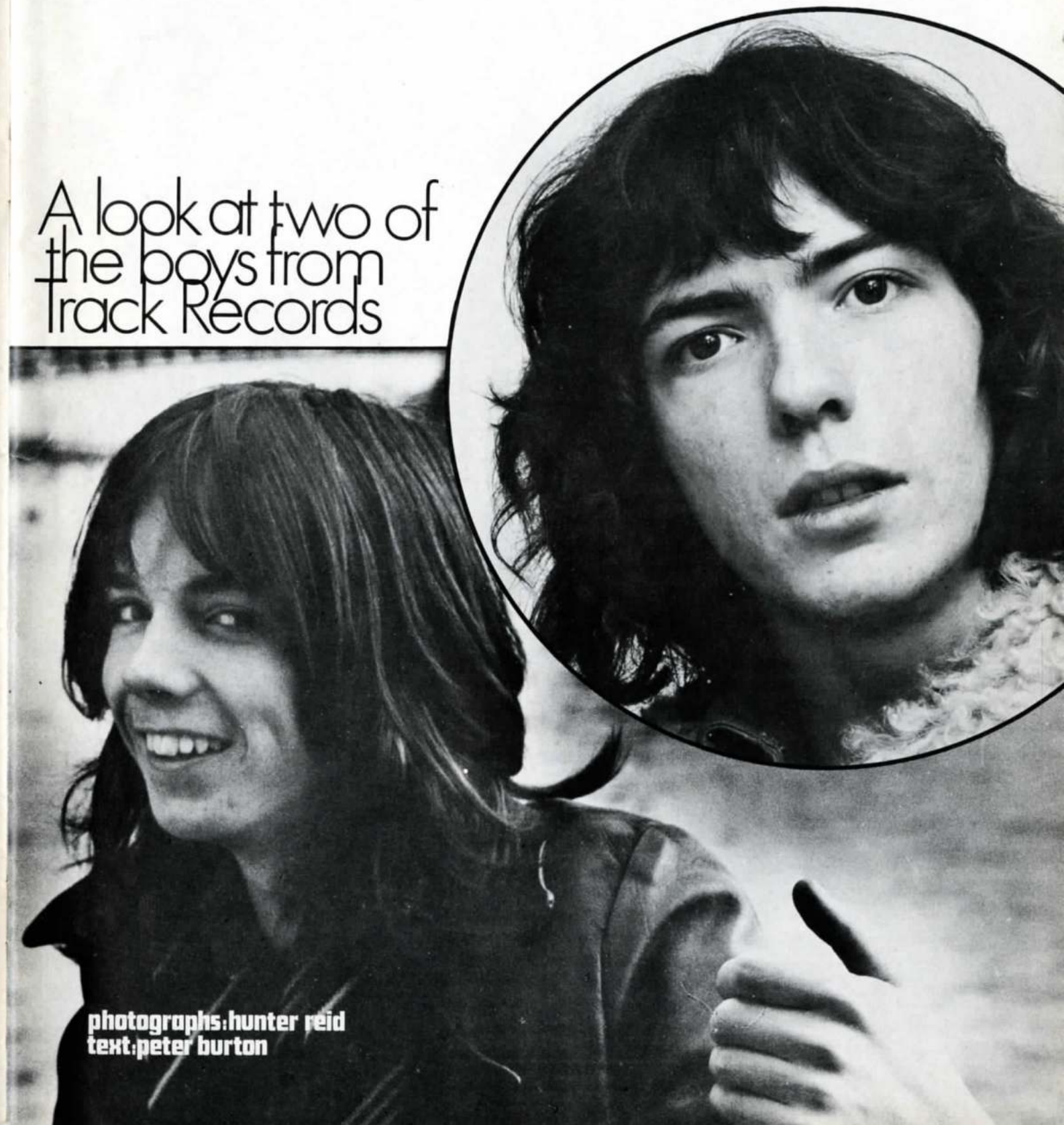
It has been jocularly suggested that the present spate of reactionary activity is in fact instigated by those who would like to see the obscenity laws abolished and have hit upon the idea of exposing their more ridiculous elements. It is an amusing notion. What is far more likely, unfortunately, is that the police are being encouraged to take action by a small band of well-known diehards in and out of Parliament. It is disgraceful that they should assume the right to dictate to others in matters of taste. They have lost case after case in the courts, but their last ditch mentality gives them strength to face martyrdom for their own limited definition of morality.

Censorship has been completely abolished in Denmark. Sooner or later it will go here as well. We look forward to a more mature society in which people decide for themselves what is good for them and what is bad in matters of personal morality. Children have to be protected against all sorts of evils. Education teaches them how to protect themselves. Adults should know how to do this and in an adult society they should be free to do so.

Our society must rid itself of its more paternalistic and protective attitudes. It rests upon those who fear corruption and depravity not to inhibit choice but to offer positive alternatives which may be seen to lead to a better and a fuller life. We are not opposed to chastity, purity or fidelity, but to the naive concepts of unchastity, impurity and unfaithfulness upheld by our moral guardians. If they are so negative that they cannot see this, then it rests upon us to reinterpret the ancient virtues and to preach the gospel of liberation amongst the 'dark, Satanic mills.'

KEEPING TRACK

A look at two of
the boys from
Track Records



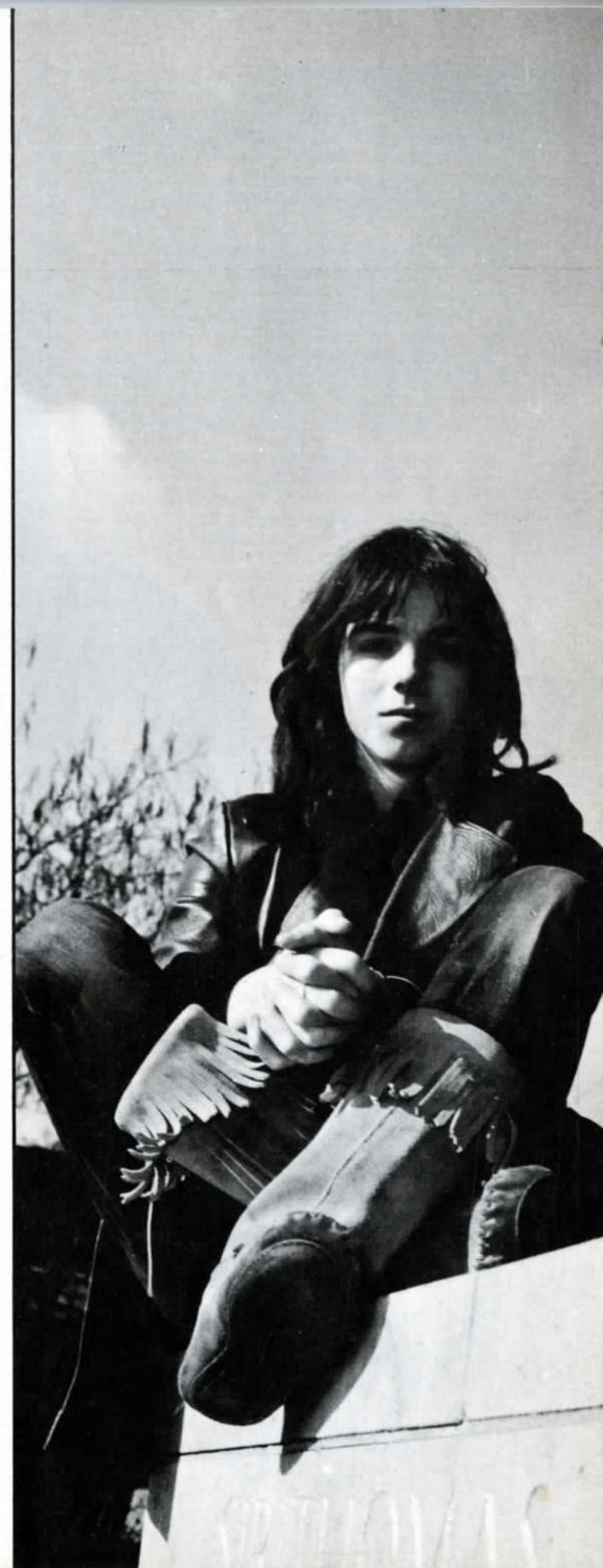
photographs: hunter reid
text: peter burton



Diminutive Jimmy McCulloch, lead guitarist of last years chart-topping group Thunderclap Newman, is just sixteen and comes from Glasgow. Though you wouldn't notice it. His accent is as slight as he is himself. He's been playing the guitar since he was eleven, when he was still in Scotland. Pete Townshend, of The Who, met Jimmy when he was playing in a group called One In A Million and was impressed by his playing. Later, when Jimmy had moved to London, he met Townshend again and was asked to make some tapes. Eventually Jimmy was teamed with Andy 'Thunderclap' Newman and Speedy Keene, who then formed the original "Something in the Air" lineup. The record was released at the end of May 1969 and, very soon, was at number one.

Thunderclap Newman haven't issued another record since then—but they haven't been forgotten. Fans will be pleased to hear that they have a new single lined up for release within the next few weeks and are at work on an album, this for issue in about two months time. Thunderclap are only a recording group and don't do gigs, but those wanting to see Jimmy in person should watch out for the new group he's formed: Mahratta Ghats. Jimmy's formed this group because he wants to do gigs and get together "a good show, not just plain music, a good stage show."

Jimmy, who still lives with his parents, is very intent on his music. Unlike many of today's pop stars he doesn't have ambitions to take to the stage or break into movies. It's his music which is important to him. He wants to expand musically, and, even though he's now got five years of playing behind him he feels, modestly, that he wants to get a lot more musical experience. He'd eventually like to develop away from pop, "Get into the progressive music scene. I admire groups like The Mothers of Invention and admire Frank Zappa for what he's done. But I've got to get it together a lot more before I can do anything like that."



Paul Burns is only eighteen and has recently taken over the Vince Edwards role in the hit musical "Hair". But he has been on the stage since he was thirteen, when he played the Artful Dodger in "Oliver". When he finished "Oliver" he went into a drama school but won't say where. He doesn't believe in drama schools and thinks they do kids a lot of harm.

From his nameless school Paul went on to become, for a while, one of the Younger Generation on the Rolf Harris Show, and, after a period of "resting" moved into the short-lived West End production of Peter Terson's football play, "Zigger-Zagger". He did some work on a couple of movies, including "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang" and then, after a long break, went into a group. He was with them for about six months and then left.



"I decided I wouldn't work until I got what I wanted to do." And then along came "Hair". Paul auditioned originally for the touring company, but was accepted for the London company after thirteen auditions. Shortly after he'd gone into it Vince Edwards—who played Wolf—left and Paul took over his role, the fourth lead. "Now I'm considering making a record. I want to say some of the things John Lennon's trying to say, but I want to say them my way. He does records about Peace and Love, I want to do the same sort of thing . . . get all my friends together, to put their soul into it, really feel it, the gospel sound of God Bless The Children." Paul has very strong feelings about people and their attitudes. He is, in fact, in every sense, one of today's committed young men. His final sentence compressed this neatly and pointedly, "If people are happy with themselves they can be happy with other people; but until they're happy with themselves they can't be happy with other people . . ."

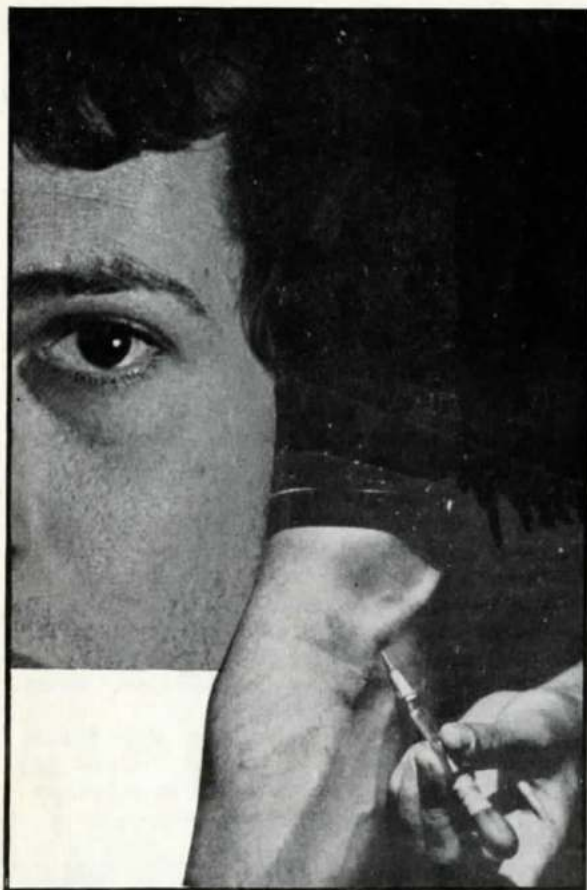
UNDER THE AUGUSTUS JOHN

a short story by James Swann

Mark had stumbled on a new line through which he could market his only available asset—himself. He went to a small bookshop off the Charing Cross Road and watched the customers, all male, who were buying his photographs in "The Londoners". Often they didn't associate the young man browsing beside them with the butch youngster in the magazine they had just looked at. One day, whilst still pondering how to capitalize on this 'gay' market—without having to resort to pornographic films and photographs—he was spotted by an elderly gentleman and asked if he would "come for coffee" at that gentleman's house. Mark appraised his solicitor, and, on accurately estimating the cost of the latter's suit to within fifteen shillings, agreed. The house was in Mayfair. A tall Georgian building just off Curzon Street. Mark was impressed by the luxury of the decor and impressed by the effortlessness that the gentleman employed in his conversation and motion. He swept along physically and conversationally and, before Mark could begin to put his plan into operation, he found himself seated in an opulent armchair, a drink in one hand, and a file of photographs in the other. Pinky Beauchamp hovered and fluttered around his guest like an anxious mother hen, murmuring breathlessly from time to time, "Dear, dear, sweet thing . . .," and "I just adore ordinary people; I'm so extraordinary myself." "Look, Mr Beauchamp, shall I come again, then we can discuss some plans for the future. I know what would be right for the both of us. A little holiday in the . . ." "Pardon?" The question hung like an ice frond in the atmosphere of the room. The word was repeated again, scorn harmonizing with the icy tone to produce a duet of regal dissonance. Pinky looked at the young creature opposite him. This common rough thing that had just suggested possible duality in their separate plans. Then he realized with horror that he'd fallen again. Where had he found this one . . . the station? the lavatory? the bookshop? the amusement arcade? . . . he couldn't remember, but the silly creature was taking advantage of these moments of reverie to reiterate his infamous schemes for them. What horror! What revulsion! Pinky trembled inwardly at the infamies that this young man was planning on perpetrating. Mark was now well established in his monologue—expounding long, loud and lewdly on the pleasures they would find together in Cannes, Monte Carlo, Nice . . . Then he stopped, his inventory of the high spots of the Cote D'Azur exhausted. He finished his tirade with a few delicately chosen, titillatingly related, dirty anecdotes about nudity and its seemingly incessant recurrence along the South Coast of France.

Especially susceptible to this vice, it appeared, were the beautiful and the ordinary. At this choice of word Mark felt he had exhibited great tact and subtly. "Enough. Enough. I have heard enough. I do not know who you are young man. Please . . . I have no desire either to acquire that information. Now. Or at any later date. I am Hugh de Chauvelly Beauchamp. Mine is a name not unhallowed in the halls of theatrical design. That is the only name you will require for your departure. Your own is, no doubt, overly familiar to you. I have no idea how you ingratiated your way into my company, and why you should then assume that I would desire to travel further than to the door of the lavatory with you will remain forever a matter of conjecture to me. Your lack of tact, finesse, sophistry and even the basest of social graces 'la politesse' can lead me only to suspect that you are one of those dreadful common people. I do not like social aberrations. Your entire class is one. I'm so glad you've only understood one sixth of this conversation, it meets you even richer than it left me, and I think it is the only element in our brief encounter that will prove profitable. Good afternoon young man. The door is straight down the hallway." Mark was completely overwhelmed by this verbal broadside. This assault on his only meagrely attuned sensibilities. He left the room in a daze, backing away from Pinky as if to loose sight of him would result in loss of balance. As he retreated into the hall a small, slightly breathy, rasping voice called out, "Young man, in the pottery bowl on the Louis Quinze gilt inlaid occasional table which you will locate by lowering your eyes, you will find an envelope. Take it. I think you could get a nice package deal holiday in St Tropez for fifty pounds. Only for one I'm afraid." Mark found the table . . . "It's located beneath a portrait of my maternal grandmother, by Augustus John, quite hideous . . ." Mark made small noises of assent. "Only fifty pounds. Don't slam the door. I feel a migraine coming on and I really must rest. Goodbye."





johnny quicksilver was my friend

a fantasy by Peter Smalley

make it plain.)

He had been following me, this cop, and I hadn't noticed. He followed me for another hundred yards, then sidled seedily into position at my shoulder. I flicked a quick peep and caught his mad, pale, cropped eyes. A genuine we're-going-to-stamp-them-all-out crusader. Dressed (costumed) for the part, of course, of course. There was cigar on his breath and the lotion he thought smelled like perfume was repulsive. Almost certainly one of those thick-veined disguise experts down at HQ had arranged the hair. It was his own but looked like a cheap, fuzzy wig. Back-combed thus, powdered, scented, monstrously groomed, he clearly regarded his fraud as perfection. My God, he looked like Harpo with a hangover.

"Know somewhere we can have a little drink?" The voice was so affected I almost cackled in his face. How often had he polished that grotesque simper on his chief's portable Grundig? "Sorry," I said, and kept walking. He followed.

"I'm a stranger, actually." He minced the words with his front teeth. "Down from the North. You could . . . show me around . . . sort of . . .?"

"Not me," I said, and walked faster. He followed. That was his job, his religion. Provocative Agent, Ah-jong Pro-vock-a-tour. The private wink in the public loo; the knowing smile outside the body-building shop; the pornographic sip from the saloon lounge gin and tonic; the whiff of bad scent on the last tube. We've all had it. (And so have those charge-nurses, probably.)

Anyway, I had a remarkable escape from this persistent creep. I was beginning to believe, after he'd followed me lispily for another ten minutes, that I would never get away. This cat was going to run me in. He was bent on it. So finally I did the sensible thing. Booted him in the shins and ran. I went between a car and a bus, swaying and dodging like a champion dribbler, and lost him. Then, lo and behold, Johnny Quicksilver slid into the kerb abreast of me in a long, low, vicious white Cobra AC and beckoned. Wow!

He took the boulevard, winding along the river. A beautiful road at night. The still air hung like incense as we rushed baying through the glades of darkness. The river flashed and snapped with reflected light, the high-arching sprinklers sluiced across the glow of the city sky, the rocks under the bridges, monoliths, whizzed dangerously by, and the sinewed, thin-thewed, silver snake of the road uncoiled sensuously in the quartz-iodine beams. Once a flight of insects, dazzled, leaped at the last instant like sharded diamonds in the sun.

Five miles later he took the Cobra on to the airport highway and we hovered madly over the instrument panel at a hundred and thirty miles an hour. Our hair almost peeling from the scalp, our eyes gouged and streaming, our breath sucked in buffeted gulps through the corner of the mouth. Where was that nasty little cop now? Or that open prison/hospital in the Sahara, eh? Somewhere past the airport, the nostalgic, rabble-raising, holy-roller sound of early Elvis came down through the night and out of the radio. A jet hustled screaming across us at two

hundred feet and Johnny took his foot off the pedal, letting the banshee wail of the high-octane writhe down through the revs. Christ! It was nice to be smashed and thumped by noise and to be aware of the instinct of death. (They never let you get over-stimulated, you know. They come trotting grimly with their goddamn syringes.) Wowee! The blood popped in my ears. If a tyre had exploded then I would have rejoiced.

In a bar, the one I had been walking to when the cop fell into step, we had several big drinks. Johnny drank very quickly and deceitfully. Double whiskies, amber waterfalls with ice as jagged rocks. Altogether seven. My guts tumbled like a space-man, weightless and clumsy. In turn I felt large, thin, enormously fat, lazy, whipcrack-alert, muscular, flaccid, impotent, bilious.

"Come on," said Johnny.

"Where?" I said thinly and in an uneven timbre.

"I know a party."

"Couldn't . . . go a par . . . go a party."

I put my head down on the table in the harsh, wet-ringed, yawning, bellowing room. That is to say, I was brain-damage drunk. Then I heard the sickly-sweet, musk-odoured voice of the cop.

"Well, well, well. We did have ourselves a nice little drink, after all."

"You're a . . . fat pig . . . cop. Buzz off . . . fuzz," I said forcefully, except that it came out pathetic.

"He isn't a cop," said Johnny Quicksilver. "He's Diamond Delores, only there aren't any diamonds left."

Painfully I lifted my forty ton head and focussed my Jodrell Bank eyes on Diamond Delores. Yes, it was the cop. I decided to escape, since Johnny seemed to be on his side. Perhaps, all along, Johnny had been a spy, a collaborator, working hand in surgeon's rubber glove with them. I tried to stand. It was impossible. I had forgotten about the nine hundred ton weights in my shoes. My small, palpitating pump, aided by adrenalin, was getting the blood to all the right places, but there was a weighty charge-nurse atmosphere developing.

"There's a weighty charge-nurse atmosphere developing," I hissed, imitating the tones of the phoney Diamond Delores exactly. "I am not going through all that stuff again with you."

"The naughty little bitch kicked me," said the cop, looking more like Harpo now. Johnny Quicksilver shook his head and smiled tolerantly. A silly thing to do, as it gave him irrevocably away. With a superhuman grunt I attempted to stand. The weights were still in my shoes. I bent and took them off. I had the impression that sooner or later someone with a syringe was going to advance, pushing through the crowd that had gathered around the table. I thought about it, imagined it, added little details, hunched over my shoeless feet. The syringe would weep as the charge-nurse tested it. Out would be whipped the familiar wad of cotton wool, drenched with germicidal spirit. My hands secured at my sides in the rubber manacles. The frosted glass of the light overhead quite clear. A bell ringing insistently. Mirthless teeth as the charge-nurse

squinted with concentration. I could see the whole thing. Fancy Johnny Quicksilver turning me in.

Well, I wasn't going to let it happen without resisting. I pretended to faint. Johnny Quicksilver lifted me up in his arms and carried me out to the fresh air.

The crowd came along for the ride. Sniggering, snarling, giggling, frothing, farting, belching in the manner of all crowds. A uniformed cop approached. They'd sent for assistance. And the damn crowd was acting as a wall, a human wall, preventing my escape. Then it dawned on me. The uniformed cop was obviously the charge-nurse in drag. The syringe was hidden in his breast pocket, behind the notebook and teargas pencil.

With a violent movement I wrenched free of Johnny and fell to the pavement, hurting my knee and my elbow. Then they were on me. Arms stretching, feet shuffling, they all grabbed at me, pulled at me. Of course they did. They were all charge-nurses. (There are 27,461 full-time charge-nurses registered, you see.)

In court this morning, Johnny Quicksilver was character witness. Oh, they've been very clever, extremely subtle, wonderfully devious. They've trained him so well, moulded him so assiduously, that he almost believes he's my friend and mentor and one-and-only passion. Except that, like Delores the diamond Harpo cop, he has electrodes implanted in his skull to keep reminding him mechanically at certain intervals of his true mission: to shatter my id and personality into a million shards. In the rough-and-tumble of his white-walled bedroom, amongst the polar-bear rugs and the white satin curtains, all was implemented. I refer again here to his training. He seduced me cunningly, with the appearance of innocence, in the guise of straightforward lust. The guile of it! He had had all the nuances of a forest in spring. All the fragrance and savagery of an acre of bloodstained violets. You think I exaggerate? Listen, I'm entitled to. I have been mentally liquidated, spiritually flogged, ethereally castrated.

Last night, it was one of those summer nights without even a breeze. I could see the sabre-tooth tigers prowling on the hill from my window. There was no movement in the air except for gnats and intergalactic thought. The charge-nurse didn't see me writing to Johnny Quicksilver until it was too late. Even though they confiscated the letter, my muted thoughts buzzed electronically out to Johnny from the radar scope implanted in my chest, forgiving him. He was under their spell, had been surgically assaulted and used for their purposes. I realize that.

So far, the charge-nurses have not discovered this writing. It is forbidden to write. Sometimes I write by candlelight, hidden in one of the shower cubicles. The night charge-nurse is too lazy to check the bathroom more than once. The water drips on my face and arms and it is cool and pleasant.

I think perhaps the mop-cleaner, the old, balding, greasy-faced, ugly man, has sympathy. Perhaps he will smuggle this out, concealed in his wellington boot. And pass it to Johnny, perhaps, so that he will understand his position. He was my friend, after all.

It was one of those summer nights without wind. Simply the relationship of your skin to the air. In the trees lurked the ghosts of huge jungle cats, waiting to pounce, to burst in kinetic explosions. It was the quintessential night of the cricket. The hot, expectant, trickling sounds of insects hidden. A night when my blood beat to a no longer dormant drum. I stood beneath the trees in front of the house. The sprinklers had been on and the leaves dripped on my face and arms. It was cool and pleasant; I stood for several minutes, breathing quietly, letting the night get through to me. A small animal slithered through the branches over my head and I began walking.

I felt a sudden enormous frustration. It was as though planets, due to collide for seventy billion years, had not. What was the point of being alive and well on a night like this? Nowhere to go, nothing to do, everything outrageous, masterful, fantastic happening somewhere else. I felt like an inmate in an open prison situated in the middle of the Sahara. Or a hospital. I thought about Johnny Quicksilver. That first time (and this is relevant); how I had stumbled and fumbled into the white-hot emotional sandstorm that propelled him, apparently helpless. I, a quivering person, beyond my capacity and judgement, hopelessly out of my depth. With visions of ridiculous physical contortions. And of course when it came to the point I failed. Miserably, heaping, flabbily. I recoiled from the memory as I walked now towards the bar where I would probably meet him. This recoil, this shudder, forced me to stop and breathe deeply and wriggle my toes to keep a sense of proportion. (Charge-nurses have a penchant for syringes when senses of proportion are being bandied about, let me

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At the time of his murder playwright Joe Orton had just about hit the big-time. Two of his three full-length plays have recently been filmed, **Entertaining Mr Sloane** and **Loot**. Our cinema feature this month looks at scenes from them.

Peter McEnery stars with Beryl Reid, Harry Andrews and Alan Webb in the recently released film of **Entertaining Mr Sloane**. Orton's macabre comedy about an eternal triangle involving a sadistic young man, Peter McEnery, with a middle-aged nymph, Beryl Reid, and her homosexual brother, Harry Andrews, is brilliantly funny and has lost little of the impact it had when first staged six years ago.

entertaining young men



Loot, Hywell Bennett, Richard Attenborough, Lee Remick and Milo O'Shea, has yet to be seen. These scenes from it should, however, whet appetites.





GIRLS

on the gay scene

**What's in it for them?
Peter Burton interviews
two of the ladies who
brighten up the gay
scene in London.**

Ten years ago in London, and no doubt too, outside the capital, it was a rare sight to see a girl or woman in a gay club or bar. And if any female was in one she had to be pretty brave and thick-skinned to override the hostility directed at her. Women—a decade ago—in those specialised circles—were just not welcome.

Things have changed a lot, however, and these days the situation is completely reversed, though there are still a few last strongholds of homophile masculine society. A lot of this change must be put down to the Youth Revolution, which has affected sex, homo and hetero, strongly, vigorously and healthily. These days sex isn't an exclusive province, for either boys and girls, girls and girls, or boys and boys, or men, but something general, something to be enjoyed for its own sake and not because of any previously, rigidly, imposed sociological or psychological reasons.

These days if there weren't girls on the gay scene it would seem pretty strange. They've finally broken in—some think for the better, some for the worse—to this last exclusive "club". Below are interviews with two girls who've been on the London scene for some time, one since she was fourteen and one since she was seventeen. Iris is nearly twentyone. She was born in, and still lives in, Bethnal Green. She's small, about five foot, slightly dumpy, always casually dressed, and a very definite original. It's hard to tell what the years will do to her but there's a strong chance that, if she carries on the way she does, she'll make it as a genuine London character. Her overwhelming characteristic is her cockney exuberance and sense of fun, yet to talk to her is to discover a depth of sensitivity and understanding the casual on-looker, or acquaintance, would not expect.

"I was going out with this boy, we were engaged. Then he went in to prison and I went out with a girlfriend of mine and discovered I had Lesbian tendencies.

"A friend came up from Stevenage and took us all to *The Discoteque*, which was open a few years ago, and then, when all those clubs shut down, someone said, "There's a nice new queer club down here"; but it wasn't new, we'd only just discovered it. So we all went, Tommy included, who at the time I didn't know was queer. So we all went down there and there was such a nice atmosphere, and we loved it, that I stopped taking lots of pills... I used to take hundreds of pills before, when I was about seventeen, but when I started going to the gay clubs I stopped taking them, because I didn't need them so much, the people were so nice and friendly, I thought.

"Then this girlfriend of mine, Jane, not a Lesbian girlfriend, just a friend, she used to be madly in love with

Tommy, who's the sort of boy next door I grew up with and love passionately, and she used to say to me, "He's going off with a man, he's going off with a man." And I'd say, "No he's not. Don't be silly. He's normal." I wouldn't believe it. After we'd been down there a couple of weeks, *The LeDuce*, I got to know a few people. All the boys were saying, "He is queer" and I was saying, "He's not, he's not." But I knew all the time that he was. "Then one day he said, "I'm going to Morden with this boy, that one with the white bumpers I told you fancies me." I didn't believe it. I had this imaginary pigeon on me shoulder"—(she chuckles)—"I used to have fantasies about pigeons—and I was walking along the street talking to me shoulder. Because I couldn't believe he was going off with a boy... and I thought I had this pigeon there and was saying to it, "He's going, he's gone and left me." And he went. And I didn't know what was going on because he went with two girls and this boy, Bill, who wasn't a queen, but he was camp in a way. He had short hair and white bumpers and big ears. So he went and when he came back Tommy kept saying, "I've got something to tell you." For weeks. Every time I asked him what it was he'd say, "No. I'll tell you tomorrow." Then one day I decided he must tell me that he was gay, cos I knew that was what he had to tell me, but I wanted him to tell me himself. So I took him on a bus and I gave him some pills. We were going to Morden, to see his boyfriend... fucking Big Ears. We got on the bus and I gave him these drugs and I was saying to him, "You're not gay are you Tommy?" and he was saying, "No, course not." "You would tell me if you was?" "Yeah. Course I would," he said. When we got there I thought: "This is going too far". And there were these other two girls, one of whom was supposedly going out with fucking Big-Ears and was pregnant at the time, having screaming dramas over Tommy, which I didn't know about—cos I wasn't supposed to know he was gay.

"I just happen to mention that some boy had said he'd been to bed with Tommy, and Tommy said, "Iris. Come here, quickly." And he told me. And I said, "That's all right, I knew." But when I went back into the other room I burst into tears. I was horrified at the thought of it. I couldn't believe it. Not my Tommy, who I'd known ever since I was knee high, or whatever it is you're supposed to be. I couldn't believe it and I cried for six weeks at the thought of it. Now when I look back I think I must have been silly because it's better for him like that.

"I couldn't bring myself to come to terms with him for about two years after that. He went with this boy for seven months, lived with him, and they had dramas and things and I witnessed them. But I became quite friendly with this boy, Bill, and I still am friendly with him and one day I might marry him... cos he's quite nice really and he hasn't got big ears, well, he has but...

"Then a boy I knew from the "Scene Club", another normal club, came down. He was sort of rather beautiful

and I'd once had a mad crush on him for about a week . . . but I hadn't seen him for a year. He came down with his ex-girlfriend. We were sitting in the restaurant upstairs. His name was Roger. We were sitting in the restaurant with this boy Stevie, who was a waiter there, and I had my arms round Roger and he was playing with Roger's neck. And Roger was horrified at the thought of being touched by a man. Then I went for a long walk with him and he said, "I want to go back to that place." He liked it. So I found out another one of my close friends was queer. I thought: When is it going to stop? two of my closest friends queer.

"So I really am involved in it . . . I can't just stop going on the gay scene, it's not just for the fun of it. Roger's not like he used to be now, and Tommy's away at sea . . .

"I've been on the gay scene for three years now and I think I've come to terms with it. Sometimes I think I'm queer and sometimes I think I'm not. I do fancy girls occasionally; but I wouldn't go with them. Although I have been with one or two in the past, but that was long before I was ever on the gay scene.

"The people on the scene now are all very young or they're all old, there's no in-between . . . they're all either very, very young and being going for about six months or a year and think they know it all, think they're beautiful, but after a year they suddenly go to pieces . . . after having various affairs, v.d. etc . . . find they're spotty and aged and can't cope. Then there's the older ones who've been around for six to ten years. Some of them are a bit piss elegant, cos they think nobody can know what it's like unless they've been around as long as they have. A lot of these older boys don't like the girls . . . they think they interfere.

"I like some of the young people who go to the *LeDuce*, I go there a lot, and *Yours or Mine* . . . I don't like *Yours or Mine* because it's full of grotesque trying-to-look-young pretentious beings. Whenever I go there I feel out of place . . . I come from the East End and they all seem to have money. If you haven't got something new on every week, you know, they talk about you and if one of your hairs is out of place they're all whispering about it. I like *LeDuce* now, but it got a bit bad there last year. I sometimes go to the gay pubs. I don't really like the *Boltons* and *The Pink Sisters*.

"The girls on the gay scene? Some of them are okay, but only the ones that have been on it for a long time. Most of the younger ones think that the boys are queer but that they haven't "Met me yet", and think they can turn them normal. But, you know, you can't turn them normal. They're queer and that's the way they like it. That's why I said that when I look back on it, about Tommy, I'm glad that he's gay. Because I'd have lost him otherwise, to another girl, and I think I would have disliked that more than to a boy.

"I suppose I'll grow up one day, cos I don't really think I'm grown up, although I'm twenty, nearly twentyone. I suppose one day I'll stop doing all this but I don't know when, can't see it coming, perhaps I'll kill myself. I don't think anybody grows up on the gay scene . . . at all . . . whether they're a boy or a girl. They never grow up.

"I don't like the slagging, the way people slag each other on the gay scene. Although I do quite a bit of it myself. And I don't like people who scheme, though I do that as well. But you have to. To survive. Otherwise they'd crush



Pam

you into the ground. I suppose I'm a bit of a bully with some of the gay boys, because I know I can push them around more than I could the normal ones.

"I don't like normal boys at all. I've gotta brother . . . and whenever I bring queens home he just . . . my mum likes queens, but he doesn't. Even though Tommy who was my close friend was his close friend for just as many years as he's been mine. We all grew up together. He just says, "Well, Tommy's different." But he's not, he's not different at all. He won't realize this. This is what the point is about normals. I don't like them at all. I once brought some gay people home on a Sunday morning. And this boy who's rather bold sat there holding one of my brother's friends, who's supposedly normal, holding his hand and groping him and kissing him. In front of my mum. She didn't like it very much at all, she didn't mind gay boys kissing, but when it came to gay boys touching up my brother's friends she didn't seem so keen. She



Iris

forbade the boy to come ever again to the house and my brother said that he'd beat him up. But it wasn't really fair, because the other boy was entirely agreeable to what they were doing, and even took the boy to the door and kissed him goodbye. When I asked him about it I said, "Are you queer, Alan?" He said, "No, I just wanted to try it out . . ."

"This is a load of old cock if you ask me . . . nearly every boy must be gay. They must have a little bit of it in them . . . most of them. And that's why they don't like it."

Pam is twentytwo, was born in the East End, but lives now, with her parents, on the fringes of Epping Forest. She is of medium height, about five six, tends to be a bit over-weight, but it suits her, rarely dresses casually. She is usually seen in something stark and startling, in an outfit to make heads turn. It's difficult to tell, with her as with Iris, what the years will do. Her slightly odd family

background might mean that she's carrying on a kind of tradition and will suddenly settle down and marry one of her gay boys. Though it doesn't seem very likely. She doesn't come over as the marrying type.

"I first got onto the gay scene when I was about fourteen. I had a Saturday job in a local poodle parlour and the two girls who ran it were both dikes. They used to take me out with them, to Earls Court and clubs like *The Place*. My dad's queer anyway and I never needed to be told that my older brother was gay. I just knew it. Female intuition if you like. But going around with dikes and mixing with queers anyway, I didn't need to be told.

"Then when I stopped going to the poodle parlour I started to go around a bit with my brother and his boy-friend. We used to go to some really horrific clubs. Once I was sitting on my brothers lap and actually got told off for it. But there were

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some blokes down there practically having it off in the the corners. Maybe they thought I was a transvestite or something. In those days there weren't many girls on the scene and the reaction to them was always a bit peculiar. I've often found myself the only girl in one of the drinking clubs.

"Really it's quite nice having a camp dad; most of my friends who know him say he's a laugh, and me and my brother tell everyone about him. He's kind of a seventh wonder of the gay world. People are always asking us how he is and when friends of mine ring up he's always chatting them up and inviting them over for dinner.

"At one time I used to go out with a lot of normal boys but now I only go to the gay clubs and pubs. I much prefer the company of gay boys, they're so much more polite and more fun, and at least you know that if they take you out it's because they like you and not just to get their hand up your skirt. Not that that's always even true these days. Everyone seems to be experimenting and there aren't many of the younger gay boys, those under twentyfive, who've not been with at least one girl. Mind you, it's ever so easy to get off with gay boys.

"There aren't any good clubs to go to now. The ones that are open are either too piss elegant or so grotty that it's an embarrassment to be seen going in them. There doesn't seem to be any happy medium. It really is time someone opened a good new club up, cheap, pleasant and inexpensive.

"I've never had any Lesbian experience, though I did mix with Lesbians when I had my Saturday job. Never fancied it at all, they always seem so bloody aggressive. The ones you get around the West End certainly are. I've had quite a few affairs with gay boys but you have to realize that you can't turn them normal. I lived with this boy John, everyone used to call him Samantha, who looked more like a girl than me. Except he didn't have tits. He used to wear most of my clothes, blouses and things. I thought I was in love with him at the time and we lived together for quite a few months. We were always having the most horrific dramas and, in the end, he just abandoned me. I thought I was in love with him at the time but when I look back on it now it really embarrasses me. Especially if people talk about it to me. They must have all thought I was an absolute fool. Mind you I was only a "gay young thing" at the time.

"Then I had this thing about a junkie queen, and that was

only last year, but I put that down to a brainstorm on my part. He's in a right state now and we all expect him to die at any minute.

"The girls on the scene nowadays are such a scatty lot. I'm sure half of them don't even realize the boys are queer. At least you can say that the older girls have a certain amount of style. But it's all changed. Once the girls were there as rather glamorous ornaments. To dress up and preen. To make an entrance with. Now girls are just girls. Most of them seem right little scrubbers—I sometimes seem to one of the few left who bothers to dress up at all. But all these silly little things at the clubs now . . . round and round in circles for the first person who pays them a bit of attention. They all think everywhere's so good. They don't know how good it all used to be.

"Where do I go? Oh, *LeDuce*, *The Union*. I even once went to one of those grope-arama cinemas with some friends. And when the lights went up everyone was trying to work out if I was some big drag number.

"I go around with this darling little boy now. He's only seventeen and everyone thinks that we're knocking it off. But we're not. I'm like a mum to him, and wouldn't like to see him get into trouble. I enjoy his company and he always looks so nice. Not scruffy like a lot of people. That's the trouble with my brother he always looks as if he's fallen off the back of a corporation dustcart. We have a funny sort of relationship. In a way we're much more friendly than most brothers and sisters but we don't mix with the same crowd too much. These days I go to the clubs and that more than he does. But then he's getting old, he's twentyfive, and probably thinks it's time to retire gracefully.

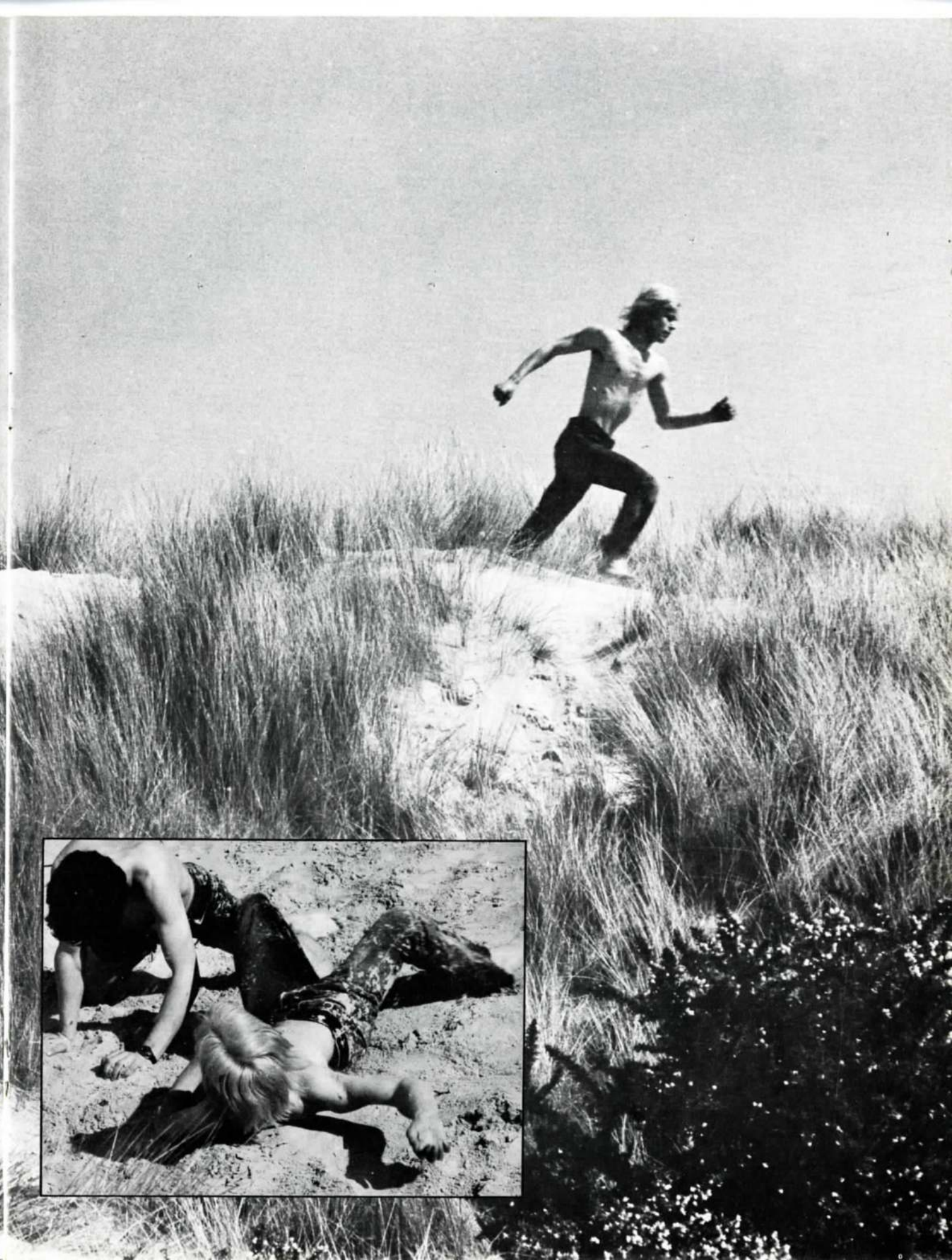
"I'm one of the oldest girls on the scene. None of them seem to stay around after twentytwo or three. God knows what happens to them. They can't all commit suicide and I'm sure they don't get married. Maybe they just become cranky old women somewhere. I can't imagine what's going to happen . . . I'm almost too old for all this now and the kids on the scene get younger and younger all the time. It's nothing to be in the West End these days at fourteen. And when I was fourteen twentytwo seemed ancient. It's different for the boys, this is their natural habitat . . . but what about the girls when they get older. You always hear boys saying "Get that old geezer over there" but do you ever hear them saying, "Get that old bird over there, she must be fifty if she's a day"?"

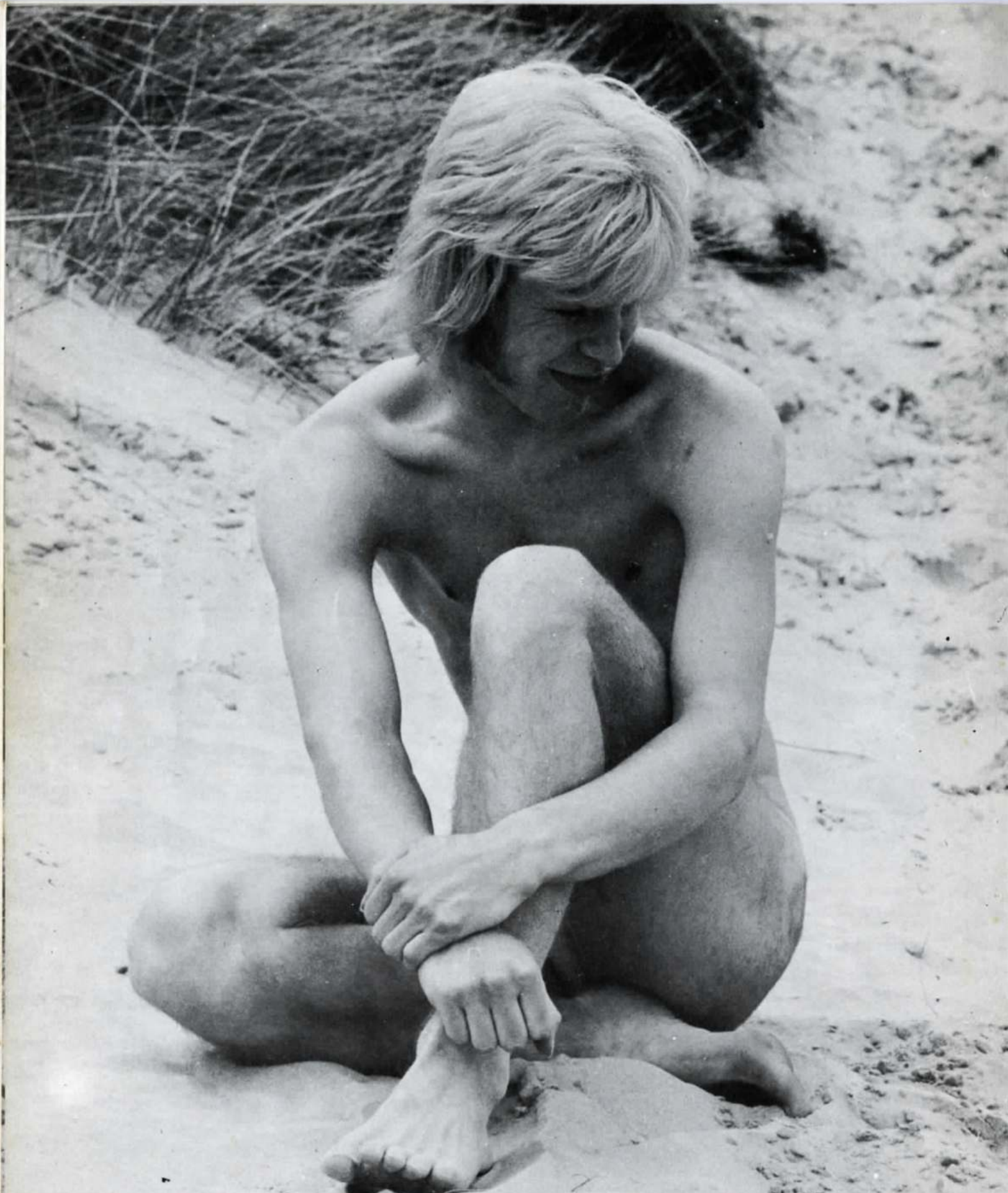


sand dunes



Hair by Michael, Dukes Hair Studio





HUNTER REID



Unpublished B/W photographs of "Sand Dune", 6½" x 8½", available at two pounds per set of ten post free. Or if you prefer, ten 35 mm. colour slides for the same price. Please allow seven to fourteen days for delivery.

ATTI INNOMINABILI

The newspaper reported the affair in the phrases which Italian journalism keeps for the sexual involvement of the young. The two boys were *mini-bruti* – “mini” being the current adjective for anything exiguous or juvenile, and “bruto”, beast or animal, the invariable pejorative for a person sexually interested in the immature, even if immature himself. The girl, a sweet-faced but hardened whore of fourteen who got no worse than a slight stab wound, was in one paragraph the “dainty victim” and in another a “mini-Messalina”; and all three of them, in the headlines, were *ragazzi terribili* – almost any youngster before a judge is “terrible” from the word go. The catalogue of accusations which the Press found the boys guilty of long before they got to Court was so carefully comprehensive that while acquittal was probable on most of the charges, conviction was certain on some. The charges included: *atti innominabili* in a public place; obscene behaviour in public; abetting prostitution; abetting prostitution by a minor; carnal violence; libidinous assault on a minor; corruption of minors of both sexes . . . since, in this affair, all three were minors, though in different grades of minority, the police could construct a triangle of cross-corruption. (The “unmentionable acts” of the first charge generally connote in police language some form of masturbation, solitary or in company.) Against the younger boy who unluckily flourished the knife, these charges were preferred in addition: attempted murder, malicious wounding, armed assault, possession of an unlawful weapon, carrying a blade more than so many centimetres long . . .

The bigger boy, seventeen years old, was sent to prison. The judge said that no young person of either sex in the town was safe from moral contamination so long as he was among them. The other, just under sixteen, was put away in an “institution for re-education”, the judge remarking that he was corrupt, violent and perverted and required a long period of re-education. The girl, “for her own good and that of boys in her neighbourhood”, was placed in the care of some nuns who specialised in the “re-education” of delinquent girls as well as in their spiritual salvation. The newspaper called the affair a mini-drama of juvenile jealousy over a girl. In fact, it was a story of a boy’s jealousy over a boy.

A small fishing town, hardly more than a village, called San Cataldo del Golfo stands just inside the south-eastern heel of Italy, in the Gulf of Taranto, where the Italian waters of the Ionian Sea quickly merge with the Greek. The houses, stacked like dominoes over a low rocky plateau and bright with balconies, are washed in pale tones of blue, lemon and pink and seem to hang twenty feet above the harbour. Two paved jetties of solid stone enclose the port; in the morning the fishing-smacks lie alongside and their catches of the night are auctioned there and then to the wholesalers waiting on the quay. Almost the whole town lives from fish,

a short story by Michael Davidson

the catching or canning of it or the selling and packing and freezing and marketing of it, or from the culture of mussels for which, like Taranto further up the Gulf, San Cataldo is famous. At certain parts of the foreshore, where the sea-bed is suitable and the water shallow and sheltered, the mussels are strung from poles in festoons like flowers garlanded over a pergola, a kind of marine rose-growing which one might fancy some retired triton taking up as a hobby in his old age. With Taranto, too, San Cataldo shares as patron saint the adventurous and frequently miraculous Irish missionary after whom the place is named.

A high sea-wall screens the southern jetty from the south-east gales; and is reinforced on the weather side by a tremendous bulwark of concrete blocks piled along a foundation of natural rock. These rocks and huge cubes of concrete make a perfect scampering ground for certain boys of the neighbourhood and also, in the parched days of summer, provide innumerable couches of stone on which they can lie supine between swims. Throughout the three baking months, the same group of boys daily speckled these rocks with their bodies – like a club, they were, exclusive and clannish; they all lived in the *palazzo*, a modern block of flats clad in brutal ferro-concrete, which towered above the sea-wall; it wasn’t often that a “foreigner” to these flats came on to the rocks. By climbing on to the top of the wall, the boys could shout messages to their mothers and sisters hanging out the washing on the balconies.

One of the first to arrive on the rocks in the morning, once the school-holidays had started, was Dante: a solemn yet cherubic blond who by July had the skin off his nose and a fantasy of freckles over his white shoulders. Though hardly fourteen, Dante was already at a high school, a studious and insatiably lubricious scholar; he would bring an armful of books and pass the hours in studying either Latin syntax or his own genitals. His friends called him “Dand-day”, an inflexion puzzling to a stranger. Asked what this nickname stood for, he repeated “Dand-day”, himself using the local pronunciation, and added crushingly: “Alighieri you know.” Towards eleven o’clock, Alduccio (a double diminutive for Cataldo) would arrive. He was about fourteen, had left school and was working as a *pesce-vendolo*, a fish-hawker, a mousy, silent person whom everybody liked and nobody bothered about. Next Tonino and Tanino (Antonio and Gaetano); they almost always arrived together, but if one was there first, he would seem restless and distracted until joined by the other. Tonino, who was seventeen, was employed at night, watching over an uncle’s “mussels garden” a mile down the coast. Tanino, not quite sixteen, helped his father in the fruit-market in the early hours of the day.



Then half a dozen more, Mimino, Ninino, Pepino and the rest. The biggest was Mimmino, who must have been eighteen, and the youngest his eleven year old brother. They were all friends; their few little quarrels but loud and short. Along this sequestered “lido” of concrete and polished brown rock, the boys disposed themselves over the most comfortable slabs they could grab – first come, first served; or in the niches between. Only Tonino and Tanino had a pitch tacitly reserved for them, a smooth slope of rock, ample and slightly concave and looking full into the southern sun.

At one point the foundation rocks of this rampart were indented to form a tiny creek, its sides just right for flopping into the water like a seal or leaping from it like a salmon. One overhanging boulder made a good diving platform. This was a perfect bathing-place, where few strangers intruded. Dfoves of large jelly-fish called “medusas”, fortunately without sting, swayed slowly by with the current and their own curious muscular impulsion, like obese and slightly tipsy dowagers. Under the lip of the little creek, sea slugs lay blindly, like disagreeable sausages; and a cuttlefish was sometimes dozing, ready to vomit ink if disturbed. Sea-urchins encrusted the rocks below the waterline, limpets and the like above; the boys would borrow Tanino’s knife for gouging these creatures free so as to eat them raw. On a still day the translucent sea was like glass through which every detail of the bottom could be seen and clouds of

small fish flashed. Fifty yards offshore a small “mussels garden” stretched its garlands; and beyond that a reef of dark rock ran parallel with the coast, just topping the water so that in a breathless sea the lapping ripples were like fingers running through brown hair. In this channel, between shore and reef, an old grumbling boatman laid his crayfish pots, shaped like wicker lanterns and weighted with stones. He dropped his pots in the evening; and each mid-morning, when the boys were on the rocks, sculled himself over the course, picking up each pot with a boathook and extracting his prey. This sour octogenarian daily accused the boys of interfering with his pots: they did often dive down like ducks to have a look, as any boy would; but never hauled one up nor touched a fish. Yet a continuing war was fought between this crusty old man and the young tritons of the rocks; he ranted at them and told them he would “tell their fathers” and they replied by shouting back obscenities and derisively wagging their cocks. This put him in a frenzy of exasperation; he would row in close and try to hit them with an oar; and he’d scream at them about the indecencies he had seen them performing: he knew what they got up to among the rocks and he’d tell their fathers about that too! Porkers, animals, that’s what they were! He must have forgotten the games he got up to some seventy years ago.

In these circumstances of titillating indolence some display of sensuality was to be expected (they’d have been odd boys if there hadn’t been); the luxury of nakedness; the feel of burning sunshine on the body and the dazzle of a white-hot sky; the warm submission of the velvet waters; the sensuous roughness of hot concrete (whose pitted surface would leave patterns like poker-work on the boys’ flesh); the voluptuousness of physical liberty: these were pressures of delight few adolescents could be tempted to subdue. But mainly it was a mild boyish sensuality that hardly merited the word sexuality; and basically it was a manifestation of one of mankind’s earliest mystic preoccupations. When boys find themselves free of the prohibitions of convention, they instinctively reveal that same fascinated curiosity about their own and their friends’ phallic attribute which is identical with the age-old obsession with the eternal phallic mystery. It isn’t “sex”; it’s an involuntary probing of the vast quandary of sex. Of course there was sexual performance too: ‘na bella pugneta (“a nice little fistful”) was a recurrent matter for merriment and often for action. Occasionally a general, almost competitive, session would spontaneously be held; or one of the boys, perhaps two together, would slide their thin bodies through the slit loop-holes of the “pill-box” that stood above the junction of the seawall and shore, a forlorn relic of the war. Tonino and Tanino would clamber up to this chamber now and again: their friends tactfully let them go without comment, as if they were a pair of *fidanzanti* going off hand-in-hand for a cuddle. But most people who felt the need of *una pugneta* did it in front of their mates as unashamedly as blowing their noses. And yet, although such things were pretty frequent and though one could almost smell the suffusion of sensuality that seemed to rise like a heat-haze from the very stones of this languorous sea wall, frankly sexual exercises took a back place: the boys usually were too absorbed by their exertions or delicious inactivities: in and out of the water or simply lying luxuriously doing nothing; absorbed too in their endless gossiping about schools, work, themselves, their friends and the doings in the *palazzo*. Their conversation sometimes soared towards the metaphysical, but it seldom condescended to women and never slumped to politics: probably none of them could have given the name of the ruling prime minister.

"I wonder . . ." began Alduccio one morning, in that tone of his which indicated that he'd thought a lot before opening his mouth. "I wonder if there really are women with fishes' tails living on the rocks near Punta Grossa?" "Sirens, you mean," said Mimino with authority. "Of course there aren't. That's all legend, just stories they tell you." "But after all," Alduccio pursued, "there's San Cataldo, and the Madonna, and God - they're real . . ."

"Oh God," said Mimino contemptuously. "I grant you San Cataldo and Maria, yes . . . we know they're real. But the rest's all legend."

"Well," said Alduccio with something like Catholic logic, "if we know San Cataldo and the Madonna are real, why shouldn't the fish women be real too?"

Here Dante lifted his head from a close scrutiny of his scrotum and observed: "Our *maestro* says the sirens weren't fish-women. In Homer, he says, they were half-women, half-bird."

"E cazzo 'l tu' *maestro*," said Mimino flatly. "Your *maestro*'s a prick. Of course they were fishwomen, the mermaids were, everybody knows that."

"But you said just now they weren't real, Mimino," Alduccio complained.

"Of course they aren't real. They were fishwomen in the legend. Dand-day's *maestro* is a prick . . ."

At that moment Tonino and Tanino hoisted themselves like jack-in-the-boxes out of the sea, so that water gushed off their bodies.

"Well anyway," said one of the others, "Tonino's got his tame mermaid . . . look how the water's running off Tanino's arse like off a fish's scales . . ."

And indeed Tanino's purple-brown skin (so deeply had its natural swarthinness deepened under the sun) was darkly glistening like a dolphin's, while water ran in runnels from his buttocks to his ankles.

At this remark, the corners of Tonino's mouth turned down in a small amused pout; but the perfect line of Tanino's dogged jaw seemed for a second to harden, as if tightening its grip.

Tonino was a big, loose boy of seventeen, with dark straw hair and the blue eyes of a northern heritage: a thousand years ago this Apulian south was overrun by Teutonic and Norman brigand-soldiers. Good-nature, indolence and a lazy delight in physical pleasure were written into his rather florid good looks; his body was still slim, but had the lushness of flesh that suggested he would grow over-plump too early. His affection for Tanino was evident; yet one could guess that, like the bee, he would take his sweets where he found them without a backward thought.

Tanino's temperament was as different as his appearance. The darkness of his skin was matched by an almost eastern beauty and by a perfection of profile that one sees in some

Indian dancers. The grace and subtlety of his body was almost serpentine. His devotion to Tonino seemed more emotional than physical: as if his desire lay rather in Tonino's gratification than in his own. It was he who lit their cigarettes, first Tonino's, then his own, between his lips; he who fetched bread from a pocket when Tonino was hungry, or, with his pen-knife, sliced off a piece of the water-melon they'd brought with them; he whose fondling fingers ran over Tonino's skin, giving him an ecstasy of luxurious sensation: and he never asked for similar attentions for himself. It was Tonino, not he, who gave the word for a move up to the "pill-box". This wasn't because he was younger and smaller and therefore the underling. It was his role to serve the person he wanted: he needed a soft and self-indulgent friend who would be made happy by his services. Tonino had become necessary to him, and so had Tonino's character. He wasn't quite sixteen: a stolid-minded boy, simple in most things and with few desires, but stubbornly tenacious of anything he wanted to keep. In the expression of his classic face there was something dogged and clenched, as if once he'd got a hold he wouldn't let go. He knew nothing of his own beauty; the only beauty he knew was what he saw in Tonino.

These two, though members of the *palazzo* "club" and friends of all the others, seemed somehow isolated within the circle of their own affections. They would shout and play and swim with the other boys, and yet always as a pair, never singly; and then they'd lie down to dry in the sun and slowly snuggle closer to each other in the warm concavity of the slab they'd appropriated. Then the other boys left them to themselves.

The long parched summer moved slowly round, apparently as endlessly as a chain of cogs, each fresh day a duplicate of its forerunner, yesterday forgotten and tomorrow never thought of. To the boys on the rocks the summer seemed to pass in a brazen haze of enjoyment, pass and yet never finish.

But for Tonino and Tanino, by the time the first heavy drops of thunder-rain were falling in August like shaken almonds, the end was abrupt. One morning they didn't come to the rocks; and they never came again. What had happened came out bit by bit in the boys' talk afterwards; and, later, from the stories of people who had been in Court. In one thing the boys were lucky: the case was heard within only a few weeks, instead of the months or even the year so many are kept in prison "awaiting trial".

A block of flats, in southern Italy, becomes a kind of hamlet on its own, a self-contained colony where people use the same shops and run in and out of each others' homes and where the boys find their friends within the flats and don't look elsewhere. A *palazzo* generally, therefore, has its *ragazza perduta*, its "lost girl": one of its daughters who, having had the ill luck to lose her socially indispensable maidenhood, with it loses all reason for not making the best of the loss and turning it to advantage. She becomes, that is, the resident tart. The *palazzo* above the seawall too had its *ragazza perduta*: a sweet-faced child of fourteen unfortunately named Fortunata; parents in these parts seldom realise until too late what perils may lie dormant in the choice of a name. She looked like a child-madonna but had a dangerous temper and kept her finger nails long. There had often been, on the rocks, a bit of banter about poor Fortunata, from crudely guessed-at details of her anatomy to gossip over which boy had been seen whispering to her and which returning conspiratorially from the bomb site behind the *palazzo*. Sometimes the others twitted Tonino: "Why don't you have a go at Fortunata?" they'd ask. "Tanino wouldn't mind, would you Tanino?" But Tanino would grin, with that little turned-down pout: he seemed to say: "I'm all right as I am - I've got plenty of time ahead . . ." And Tanino would pick up a stone and throw it, whether in joke or spite it was hard to tell from his set face.

Tanino happened to be passing the alley leading to the bomb site just as they were coming out of it. The back of Fortunata's dark red frock was flecked with the dust of rubble and old whitewash. Some boys who were watching said Tanino looked as if he suddenly flew right off his head. His face seemed to go white under its dark skin and his eyes looked "like a madman's". For a moment he stood without moving; then, moaning and blubbering, he turned and ran. Nobody saw him again till the next evening when the carabinieri brought him home . . . they'd found him on the road between Lecce and Brindisi. Some boys who went to his house that evening said he wouldn't utter a word, and looked more dogged than ever. He refused to eat; and left the flat almost at once, after getting some cigarette money from his mother.

He'd been waiting outside the *palazzo* half an hour before she came up the hill from the cinema. Fortunata had long made a point of knowing her neighbours' secrets; she kept, in reserve, a mental file on everybody in the flats, and there wasn't much she didn't know about Tanino. At that moment it was misery he was feeling more than anger; but when he began to plead with her, begging her not to take his friend, his mate, his *compagno*, she burst out laughing at him, perhaps out of pique because this beautiful male creature hadn't ever looked twice at her. She shouted at him a dozen brutal names in dialect meaning catamite and queer; and told him spitefully she'd even peeped through the loophole slits and seen what was going on. This turned his wretchedness to rage and he hit her; in a second her fingernails were out and then his knife. They were separated before she got worse than a nick in the arm and he a bleeding cheek. The families would have smoothed the affair over and hushed it up if left to themselves; but suddenly it was too late: the screaming had brought a

couple of police whom chance had placed in the nearest coffee bar, and once the police have come into an affair there's no stopping it, and the handcuffs are on.

The police came down to the rocks and questioned the boys, from whom they learned little. They also interviewed the old fisherman, from whom they learned a lot. The old man thought they'd caught one of the boys interfering with his crayfish pots, and he was anxious to help all he could with any evidence required.

People in Court said that Tonino, before and after he was sentenced, appeared totally bewildered; he couldn't understand how he'd done any harm to anybody, nor why he was being locked up. Fortunata kept repeating *ma perché? ma perché?* - "but why, why?" She wanted to deny their right to take away the liberty she'd gained by the great sacrifice of her virginity. As for Tanino . . . they said he simply looked dazed, as if he'd been left with a lasting concussion; he didn't listen to anything being said about him and wouldn't answer questions. He wasn't interested. That was how three young people started their re-education.

Down on the rocks the boys were talking. "A pity", said one, "Tonino had to have Fortunata. Or a pity Tanino had to mind when he did. Doesn't seem *right* in the *palazzo* now, without them . . ."

"Tanino was silly not to *know* he wasn't interested in her beyond the quick poke - like eating a bit of bread between meals . . ."

"They were saving up to buy a *motoretta* between them, cheaper than a scooter. They used to pool all the money they had . . ."

"Tonino used to say what he lost on cigarettes he made up on ices . . ."

"Don't suppose they're getting many ices where they are now . . ."

Then Mimino said: "It's kid's stuff really, two boys together like that. A man wants a woman, that's how it's meant to be. It's all right for kids . . ."

"It isn't *only* kids' stuff," said another. "Look at those men who come to the Ariston cinema and sit amongst us boys. And look at Signor Bevilacqua who pays for Vito's clothes and has bought him a *motoretta*. Vito's parents know all about it and don't mind."

Here Dante interposed: "It wasn't kids' stuff in the old days. Our *maestro* says it was the Spartan custom for a man to take a boy and teach him and all that, and we're all Spartans here, did you know? Our *maestro* says the Spartans landed at San Cataldo ages ago, and so all of us and our families are really from Sparta." And he added magisterially: "In 708 B.C., if you're interested."

"My mother didn't come from Sparta," said Mimino, "she's from Milan."

A wind had got up from the north-east, blowing across the peninsula from beyond the Adriatic. There was already a chilly bite in it, and the sea was slapping heavily against the rocks. It was time to go; the boys began lazily putting on their clothes. They were into September: the days of the rocks were almost over.

"It all just shows," Alduccio observed meditatively, "how even an ordinary *bella puggnetta* can lead on from one thing to another and another and another . . ."

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GAY GUIDE

Now that Summer is here, or as good as, we thought we'd have a further look around at the places London offers to the gay tourists. In the past we've commented, briefly, on some of the London clubs – but many readers will have missed our first issues – and want the information we carried in them.

The Union Tavern (Camberwell New Road, nearest tube is the Oval) is a sprawling South London pub, brash, over-loud, brightly lit, and very friendly. In fact the regulars claim it's the best gay pub in town. Various nights of the week are reserved for musical attractions of one kind or another, Sunday, Wednesday and Thursday are for drag, Monday is rock, and Tuesday is reggae and rock steady.

The drag nights vary in quality, but then drag's like that, sometimes absolutely marvellous, sometimes so rotten that it shouldn't be walking. Reggae nights, with Terry – a lanky, but friendly skinhead as disc-jockey (he calls himself *The Prince of Peace*) is a real eye-opener. All those butch skinheads aren't quite what they seem, and certainly at this particular tavern there's very little to worry from in the way of aggro.

The nice thing about the Union is that it isn't in the least pretentious, and everyone there is friendly. There's none of that tight-little-band feeling noticeable in so many of the clubs and bars. On

almost any night of the week it's possible to find South London mums, and grandmothers, mingling quite happily with the more exotic clientele. In fact sometimes the atmosphere that's generated there is so good that the pub seems to be more like a really good club. There's no segregation, no unpleasantness, it's all just fun and that's the way we hope it will stay.

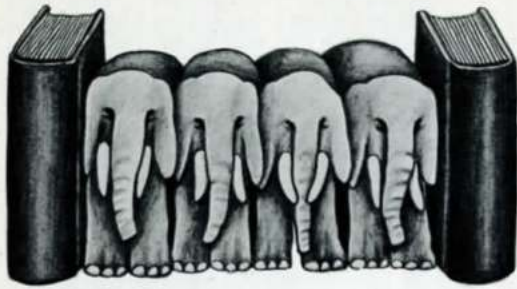
The Dorian Club (440b Kings Road, Chelsea, at the junction with Limmison Street, 01-352 4010) has been going for some time.

Recently, however, it seems to have caught on in a big way with a young and pretty set and it really does get very crowded on a Friday and Saturday night.

The premises are small, maybe we should say intimate, with dance floor and bar area – soft drinks and coffee only though. The atmosphere is informal, again, as with the Union, there's no pretension and if you're down in your oldest and most battered Levi's no one will sneer.

Membership is only £1 a year, admission is 4/- for members' and 6/- for guests, and the club is open on Fridays and Saturdays only (Fridays 11 – 3, Saturdays 11 – 4).

The Marquee, the famous jazz club in Wardour Street, has been tarted up and revamped, has some good groups on Saturdays, and can be safely recommended as it has a slight (though it could grow) gay membership. We've heard good reports on **The Masquerade** (off Earls Court Road, at Earls Court Square) but haven't yet had time to visit. Maybe word on that for our next issue.



books

In a recent interview in *Transatlantic Review* Colin Spencer described his new novel **Lovers in War** (Anthony Blond, 42s) as being, "A mammoth attempt to dig out the elements of destruction in a love relationship."

This sounds ambitious and this new novel, third in Spencer's *Generation* quartet is probably the most detailed and searching book he has written so far.

The first two volumes in this series looked at the life of the suburban Simpson family, in the first volume, *Anarchists in Love*, through Sundry's eyes, and in the second, *The Tyranny of Love*, through the eyes of her brother Matthew. The present novel moves the time sequence forward. The fascinating thing about the whole series is that, in these days of tremendous novel sequences (Anthony Powell, Simon Raven) no one but Spencer has attempted to write a detailed examination of suburban, rather than middle-class, morals and values. For this reason alone, if for no other, the books are pretty sure to survive. Each of them has delineated sharply the chaos and confusion of the lives of ordinary people.

Jane and Matthew's marriage doesn't work, it fails as did Sundry and Reg's before them. The most obvious reason for this failure, in both marriages, is the homo or bisexuality of the male partners. Jane and Matthew fight constantly, she undermining his already insecure masculinity and

driving him, inexorably, towards a further period of homosexuality. The scenes between these two are painfully real, the tiny tensions, the nagging jealousies and the feelings of guilt.

Sundry's relationship with her young publisher is as well drawn but just a little less engrossing; she has, over the three books, become a much less sympathetic character. Always notable in Colin Spencer's novels is his vibrant humour, his sense that sex is fun, and funny and, true to form, some of the sexual scenes in *Lovers in War* are wildly funny.

Lovers in War isn't a totally successful novel but by any standards it is a distinguished achievement. These days too many novels seem just brief, careless examinations of slender little situations. In this book Colin Spencer has had the courage to tackle head on a whole series of immensely difficult, deeply felt situations and write about them with the kind of strength and sheer guts which seem to frighten today's novelists. This is a long book, though not in the Harold Robbin's sense, and is an absolute must for anyone with any depth of feeling and interest in human relationships. Boutiques and pop stars haven't just been a boom in their own right. A flourishing literary industry has sprung up around them. Plenty of novels have appeared which add to the glamour and mystique and almost as many, like *Groupie* and Thom Keyes *All Night*

Stand, which have knocked. Simon Cooper's **The Rag Dolls** (Corgi, 6s) is a knocker. It hits out so much that great mountains of plaster fall away from the holy images of fashion and pop. To anyone who reads this book, neither will ever be the same again. Caroline and Rupert are young, dishy, married and known by the press and public alike as Mr and Mrs Fashion. They work for Lesbian tough Alex as chief designers in her Carnaby Street style clothing business and Alex has their private and public lives all tightly sewn up for them. They hardly dare make a move without consulting her first. Caroline has a brother, Julian, and he, according to the descriptions, is too beautiful for words—everyone falls for him at first glimpse, especially as he dresses in see-through suits and the like. Julian becomes involved with a top pop star, all leather, sweat and sex, and hangs himself up on the singer and his way of life. When, towards the end of the book, everyone trails off to America for fashion and pop promotions things take a nasty twist for almost everyone concerned—though it is for the reader to decide whether the book ends happily or not. *The Rag Dolls* is a bright, brash and lively book. It's easy to read, without being written for a simpleton and, to anyone with a little pre-knowledge about the scene, a great giggle, as it's fun putting real names to some of the characters. Books like this aren't classifiable as great literature but they are a

good read and, at all events, reach a wider market than the books everyone raves about.

Playpower (Jonathan Cape, 38s) is a long and rambling book by Richard Neville, the editor of *Oz*. It explores the whole nature of the international underground and, whilst doing so, manages to come out with a lot of common sense and gets a lot of things into their right perspective. Books on the Youth Revolution tend to be written by middle-aged dons, trying to work out something they're way too old to be part of. Even at twenty-five these days one is a bit *passé* and this is certainly shown up by this book.

Littered through the pages are references to fifteen year old chicks and younger—and these are the kids that have this particular thing going for them.

The three sections of the book which worked best, in my opinion, were those on pop, drugs and the underground press. Pop is the great god to the whole Youth Revolution; it is from pop that all life stems; it is from pop that much of the finance stems; it is from pop that inspiration and ideas comes. It is pop which leads. The chapters on drugs are sensible, well documented and, as is only to be expected, relevant to Mr Neville's own personal scene.

Playpower is exactly the kind of book one would expect to be written in great globs of purple psychedelic prose. What a relief that it isn't! Not that Mr Neville's prose style is

exactly orthodox. It's more like a good conversation—it's full of life and hops about.

Ideas pop up, sink and then reappear a few pages on. Nothing is staid at all. It's all slightly aggressive and very personal. After all it is a sort of autobiography, and is immensely readable. The author has utilised various differing sets of source material and some of the sections are just long quotes from the newspapers. It is well researched, well put together, written to be read, and possibly the best thing yet to have appeared about the Underground and Youth Attitudes.

Ronald Firbank wrote a brief series of novels in the years up until his death in 1926. He was comparatively wealthy, eccentric, dilettante, shy, neurotic and homosexual. Sandy Wilson used his books as the basis for his dotty *Valmouth* musical. And in recent years he has been more and more recognised as a minor master of the English language.

It was inevitable that we'd start to get puffy biographies of him, and the first of what threatens to be a deluge has just appeared. **Ronald Firbank: A Biography** by Miriam J Benkovitz (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 63s) is a very dull book and makes its subject seem an utter bore. Miss Benkovitz compiled, a few years back, the Firbank bibliography. Obviously she should stick to lists and research, for this is what this book smacks heavily

of. It would have been more appropriate to have written of Firbank in an incense filled room, with lilies and decadence. Miss Benkovitz seems to have done the job in a bank vault. Her writing is cold, and a trifle nervous. She makes little of the books, less of his life, and nothing at all of his homosexuality which seems, rather, to have terrified her. A great pity that this book should have been so dismal. Now we shall have to wait and see what hatchet lady Brigid Brophy has done to Firbank in her forthcoming book on him.
Peter Burton.



theatre



In the last decade Edward Albee's reputation as a dramatist of great quality, perception and imagination has grown enormously. In my opinion *A Delicate Balance* is one of the great ten plays of our century, in its depth of discerning illumination into the wrath and humour of personal relationships and its ability to explore a whole new psychological territory which no dramatist has before. *Tiny Alice* (Aldwych) was written immediately after *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* and was a failure when it was performed six years ago on Broadway with Irene Worth and Sir John Gielgud in the cast. From all accounts of people who have seen both productions, the one now running in London, directed by Robin Phillips, is far more stylistically polished and powerful. However, for me the play is still a failure. One realizes that Albee is attempting something entirely different from his previous work, but I have an inherent revulsion from metaphysics in the theatre. Such mental contortions should be kept for an essay or a philosophical treatise, and much of the evening sounded only pompous and banal. The richest woman in the world, Miss Alice, gives unimaginably large sums of money to various charitable institutions; the one we are concerned with is the Roman Catholic Church, which is rather like giving away a Rubens to Paul Getty. However, Mr Albee needs the Roman Catholic Church, so we're stuck with it. Brother Julian, who is the secretary to the Cardinal, visits Miss Alice's



Geraldine McEwan in "The White Devil"

castle, ostensibly to arrange the legalities of the charitable gift, but is mercilessly teased and eventually seduced by Miss Alice. The castle has in its library an exact replica of itself, which in defiance of all natural laws burns in psychological empathy when part of the castle burns. There is much melodramatic gasping and bewilderment when this happens. It is not unlike that Charles Addam's drawing with the man in the barber shop reflected in the mirror in front of him, which is reflected in the mirror behind him, which goes on ad infinitum; but at least in the Addam's drawing the last reflection was a hairy gorilla. There is no kernel of revelation in this play. The dramatic moments it ought to have become only bathetic, when they are in a context of convoluted symbolism and incredible unreality. In the seduction scene, at the end of Act II, Irene Worth circles the stage in a diaphanous see-through black negligée, flings it open downstage, and David Warner falls on his knees in

front of her. Miss Worth screams the one word 'Alice', which made me whisper to my companion: 'Well, I never heard it called that before'. When one is such a fervent admirer of a dramatist's work, it is sad not to be able to believe in it or even to be caught up for one minute in the singular world that he has tried to ensnare us in; and though it is directed with bravura, no amount of precise direction can cover up the longueurs of boredom as the God-symbols are churned out. Whether it is the spiritual demands upon Brother Julian, played with a gawky and flat-footed hop-step-and-jump by David Warner, or the wealth and sensuality of Miss Alice, or the secular tyrannies of the Roman Catholic Church, they are all finally uninteresting, because the characters have no life or vigour, and are not seen, as in Albee's other plays, with microscopic attention to the trivia of human perversities. Since the play was first put on, critics and public have been arguing fiercely about the

meaning of it. Mr Albee quite rightly tells no one, but then I doubt very much that he could. It implies much, but in the end nothing of importance and nothing that we weren't aware of already; and surely this is the final criterion for any work of art: that it should show us brilliantly and convincingly a world that we were only vaguely aware of before, and now have understood more deeply. If Albee is saying that the gods we sacrifice to in the end destroy and consume us (not a very original concept) it is boring to have the play plotted like an Agatha Christie thriller with red herrings and loose ends abounding, in a high-flown rhetorical language which only now and again has wit and beauty, most of it in the first scene in the encounter between the Cardinal and Miss Alice's lawyer, who, it is implied, had enjoyed bugging each other at school. After the cunnilingus of Act II, I had a vain hope that they might get together again in

Act III, but the play ends on the most ineffectual of all clichés: Brother Julian laid out in crucifixion position. The play is further hampered by the autocracy of an author who will not allow one word to be cut or a stage direction altered. A play for the intellectually insecure who enjoy their art to be both pompous and pretentious, and God knows there's enough of them about. Except for the smarty-boots inclusion of sexual kinkiness, and the sympathetic treatment of a middle-aged homosexual affair, the four John Mortimer one-act plays at the New Theatre under the title **Come As You Are** could have appeared in the West End any time in the last fifteen years and been the success they will undoubtedly be now. A far cry from Albee, and none the worse for it; they set out to be splendid middle-class entertainment, and for most of the evening succeed. Allan Tagg has designed an ingenious set that swivels round like a

Maples' roulette table, and though most of the evening's jokes are sexual, the English class structure is neatly satirized. Three of the plays are little more than revue sketches. The first starts like a parody of Mike Nichols and Elaine May's dentistry parody of *Brief Encounter*, then with a touch of Genet becomes a sexual encounter between a man who has to believe he is Sir Walter Raleigh with the woman as Queen Elizabeth. Glynis Johns gurgles distractedly until discovered by the husband, who once they are alone continues to play the game with more panache than before. The third play takes us to Gloucester Road, where the *ménage à trois* live off past glorious memories of the War, and are momentarily interrupted by their new lodger, a stray from the production of *Hair* who exudes peace, pot and complacency. No writer has yet created a hippy who has any validity at all, and the confrontation is only mildly amusing because they are all caricatures. The last play of the evening, about a middle-aged starlet who has been imprisoned for twenty years in a Marble Arch service flat by her respectably married, rich lover, who is chairman of a film company and who lives below, gives Glynis Johns a range of comic opportunities: she petulantly bitches on about the world of international stardom she missed by being plucked from Stewart Granger's Cavalier arms by the man she now discovers has had a heart attack in her bathroom. How she gets rid of the body and how the body revives, between the interruptions of an Australian reporter, played by Pauline Collins with an accent Rolf Harris would be proud of, and the bribing of the flat's porter, played by Joss Ackland looking amiably demented, is the Feydeau climax of the evening. But by far the best play is the second one, which is set at Christmas time in a pub in Bermondsey, where a dishy

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Cockney scrubber—another splendid cameo by Pauline Collins—is having an affair with the husband. She is quite unaware that he has been having a liaison for the past eighteen years with an upper-class homosexual, played with nervous ardour by Denham Elliot, who spends every Christmas with the family practising carols on the upright. Glynis Johns, as the wife, giving a performance of suburban restraint, reveals to the friend that she has known all about the affair and asks for help in getting rid of the girl. The resultant scene is both touching and funny, as this play, unlike the others, creates a real world with real characters, driven by impulses they don't understand and can't quite cope with. It was a pity that Allan Davis, the director, went for crude laughs throughout the evening, effectively steam-rolling the more comedic nuances of Mortimer's lines.

It's a 2'6" Above the Ground World, (Wyndham's Theatre), ought perhaps to be six foot under, or at least locked inside a television set, where its skimpy dialogue and its contrived situations would be more at home. Without Prunella Scales, with her air of dismayed disenchantment, it would be a very thin evening indeed. There is a wildly funny satirical play about the pill still to be written, but please could we have the Pope in the next one?

Some years ago, Donald Howarth wrote a play, *All Good Children*, the first of a trilogy. No one took much notice of it then, but the second play, *Lily of Little India*, with Jill Bennett and Ian McKellen, got good notices and moved from Hampstead into the West End. The last play, **Three Months Gone**, is now at the Royal Court. Strangely enough the plays have little relation to each other except the characters' names. Alvin in *Lily* is far stronger than he seems to be in the last play; the same is true of the central

character, Anna Bowers, whose nervous strength is now depleted. We are asked to believe that she has had sex once with Alvin, which has miraculously made her pregnant in the best Victorian tradition, and that she neither wants it again with Alvin, nor with anyone else for that matter, but is content to go into long fantasies about her sailor brother; she passionately kissed him in the first play, and this incestuous thread is enlarged on in the last. Alvin also has fantasies about the sailor, in one of which the sailor tries to seduce him, but are we expected to believe that Alvin is a sublimated queer or that the brother actually is? As the brother never appears in reality, we never know, and sublimated queers in their fantasies generally go the whole hog and enjoy what they don't allow themselves to in reality. So for me the psychologies of the characters never for one minute hang together; but what the author does do superbly well is to create a distinct world of his own in a sensitive fidgeting way. Detail upon detail is built up, full of loneliness and suspicion, that could aptly be called Howarthian. Jill Bennett plays Anna for the second time with her particular brand of chip-on-the-shoulder pique, harbouring her tiny integrity against the outside world. But the acting honours go to Diana Dors, playing Alvin's raucous and coarse Ma with stagey relish. There is a nice little music-hall-routine dance that she does with Miss Bennet, which like a similar moment in *Look Back in Anger* and *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* breaks the tension and releases the laughter. I for one could have had more moments like this one. It was directed by Ronald Eyre with his usual subtle control.

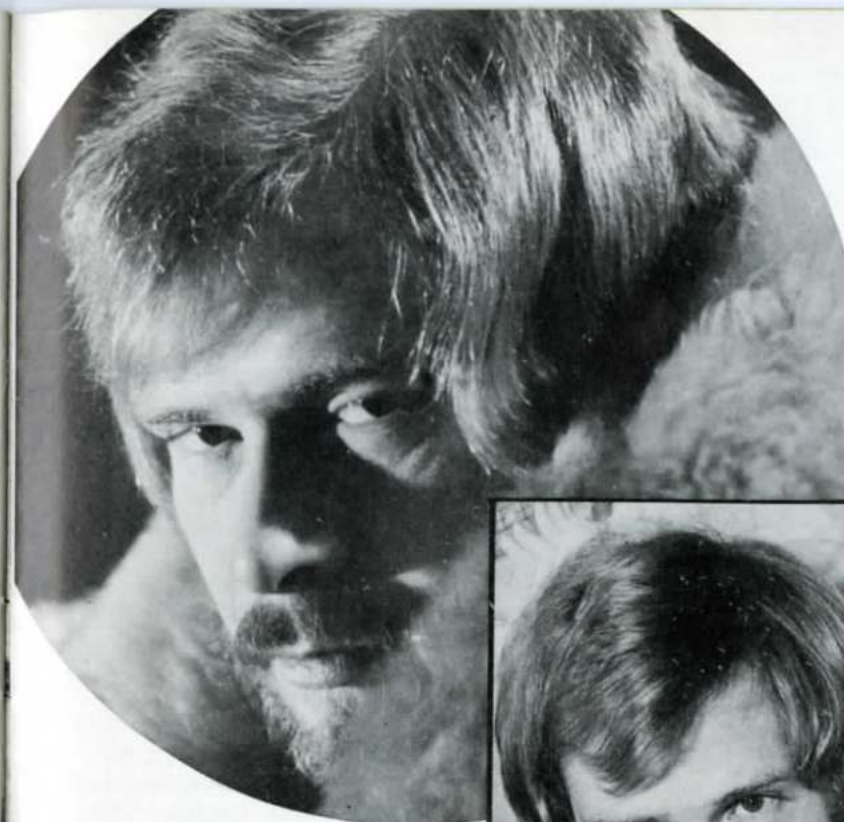
Colin Spencer



Derek Godfrey in the National Theatre's "The White Devil".

Frank Dunlop's brilliant production of "The White Devil" (National Theatre, Old Vic) continues in repertoire and should not be missed on any account. This, like Trevor Nunn's *The Revenger's Tragedy*, is one of the finest pieces of horror and outrage to have been seen in London for a very long time. *The White Devil* is stunning designed by Piero Gherardhi; he's worked a lot with Fellini, and it looks breath-taking. Geraldine McEwan, Derek Godfrey and Edward Woodward, in the three main roles, give performances that are completely chilling in their evil and not at all without relevance to life today.

P.B.



Long John Baldry



poppers

Well am I glad to be back up North! I go down to London and I thought I had a date with a *real* Man until I found out Big Ben was a clock. Still—on with my goodies. Two records you must hear—the first one "I Want You Back" by the Jackson Five. Diana Ross of the Supremes discovered the boys singing their little hearts out, little being the right word as their ages start at ten and finish at eighteen. They certainly have a great future. The second record is on the Major Minor label called "Erotica" by Rita. I am sure Rita in the record must reach a climax about four times; she puts "je—temm" to shame.

Valentino England's answer to Liberace has a new slant on music, for as he plays his classical piano with his £7,000 jacket on he has a belly dancer performing—that's right, performing on his piano. I don't think we've heard the last of the blood bath that took place on December 6th in America when the Rolling Stones performed at one of their concerts. I still think it was a mistake to hire the Hells Angels to keep order especially as they paid them with as much beer as they could drink. Do you realise that John Lennon spent £30,000 on peace posters last year? Perhaps I am unkind but I really think its about time we had a rest from having Buddy Holly, who died in 1959, rammed down our throats—haven't they made enough money out of him yet?

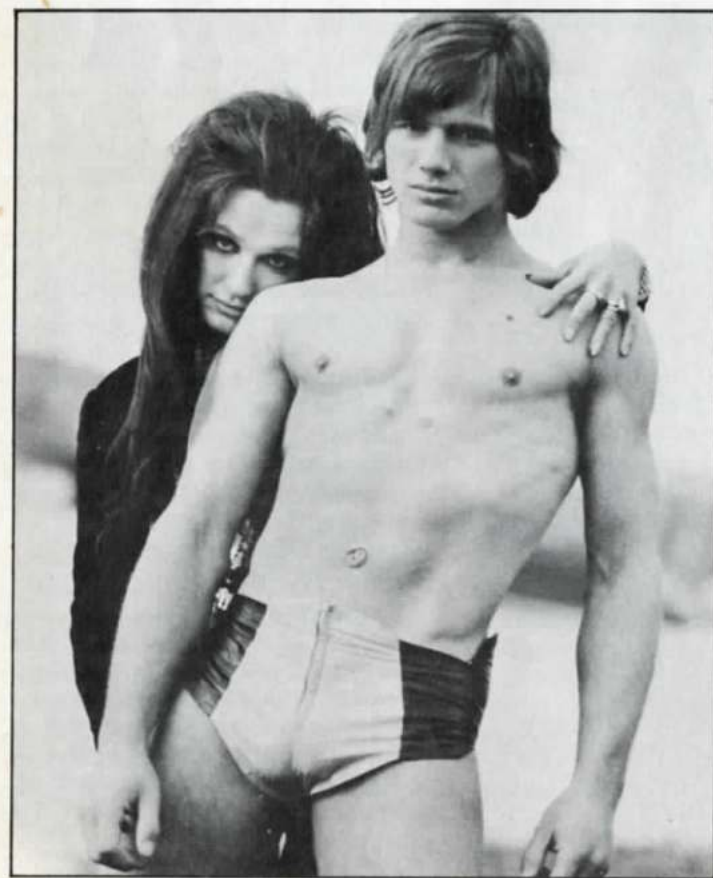
My last paragraph is rather special as its all about Long John Baldry. John's got a problem so he decided to ask *Jeremy's* help. Do you like him with or without his beard? You will notice two super photographs which have been taken by a brilliant photographer to help you solve this problem. John's backing group at present are the Almond Marzipan, with a couple of 'dolly' members in it. One in particular, the flute player, while backing John does a complete act on his own unknown to John. LJB really does put his heart and soul into every note he sings. Everybody has little habits John has one particular habit—he falls asleep all the time on people; whether he be on the telephone or just sitting talking, you can guarantee he will nod off; (rumour has it he even fell asleep when dear, dear, dear Peter Wyngarde was talking—alas and alack). LJB is releasing 'Mexico' again and may I wish him every success with it; he really does have a unique talent and when the right manager comes along, Baldry, you'll be the greatest! I must dash as I'm going to the hair dressers.

Count Bosie

SPOT THE GIRL

Written and photographed by Mike McGrath

You have to be very lucky nowadays if, when you dial 674 0733, you find it's not busy. For Ian Davy who manages Pussy, the most eye catching new female impersonator in the business, has found that since the recent night when Pussy entertained Prince Charles at a charity ball, everybody has wanted to book his act. The boy behind the Pussy make-up is cheeky and cheerful 22 year old Alan Amsby who was formerly a wig fitter. Three years ago he formed a drag act with a friend. They called themselves Pussy and Bo. Pussy went solo a few months ago and is now overpowered with work. Regularly he plays pubs and clubs in the London area including the Cricketers in Battersea Park Road, the Black Cap, Camden Town High Street,



the Royal Oak in Glenthorne Road, Hammersmith, and the Old Crown, Kingston Market. It's best to ring them to check the nights. During our sessions for this spread I asked him if there were any problems in working in drag. "None I can't handle," he chuckled. "But one night when Ian had flu and couldn't drive me to a job I got a taxi there in drag. To begin with the driver started saying he'd like to see more of me and while I was thinking it was too complicated to explain I was a fellow the car started belching smoke from the bonnet and broke down."

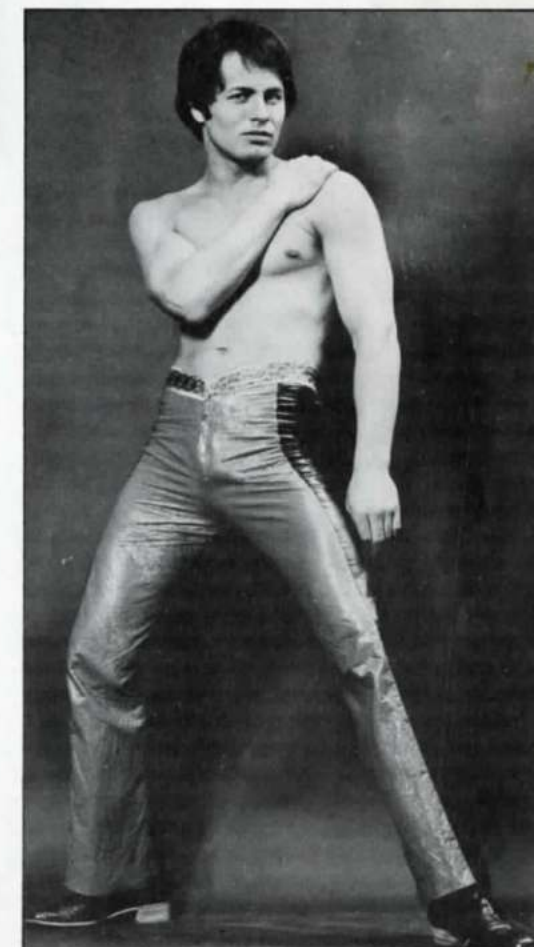
"We both got out and as I stood studying the engine in a silver lame dress with a mini skirt another car stopped with three guys in it who offered help. I asked them for a lift to the club which they gave me, but after they got through questions like did I have a boyfriend and was I married I decided to tell them I was a professional female impersonator. In circumstances like this though people think I'm joking and give me some very strange looks."



his rather pleasant foursome offer, for your consideration, some stunning new shirts and dresses by the originator of sooooo much, John Stephen; some rather sexy shirts by a new company called Anthony Rome whom you are going to be hearing a lot more of; and some v-e-r-y wearable slacks and shorts made of polyurethane coated cotton—the material with the leather look—designed by Alan Sievwright. Alan has been a brilliant theatrical designer for years now, but one of his few diversions into menswear was, the clothes for Cliff Richard in "The Young Ones". This is the first time his men's clothes have been photographed and become available, and we're rather pleased they are being shown first to Jeremy readers. They are so new that, as of yet, they are only available by mail. But that should keep them fairly exclusive for a while anyway!



Another young man who is getting plenty of second looks lately is Eric Juhasz, and glancing at the pictures of him here, you don't have to ask why. He grew up in Venezuela and has spent the last eighteen months here studying acting. He played a mute in the opera "Adina" at Oxford wearing the kind of scanty costume that drove a few bodies out of their minds, and even the *Sunday Times* commented on his sex appeal. He has appeared on a number of magazine covers in the States which have just brought him two TV offers.



Blonde Cindy Steeden just happens to be a marvellous model and one of the most loveable ladies around. She's in love with a Persian gentleman who is tall, dark and handsome—he's still got the best of the deal.

Michael Walsh is 18, does some kind of but on a building site and the queue to meet him on the right. Currently he's kind of keen on a Swedish lady who he met in a club last summer. But she's back in Sweden at the moment, so the cat's away...

Grath

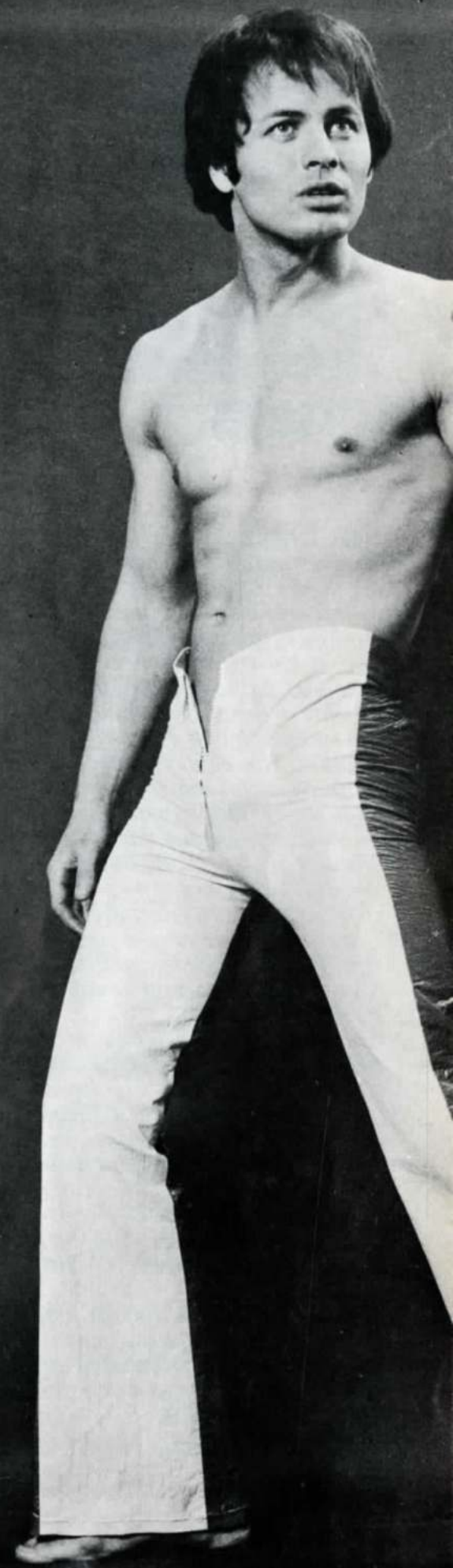
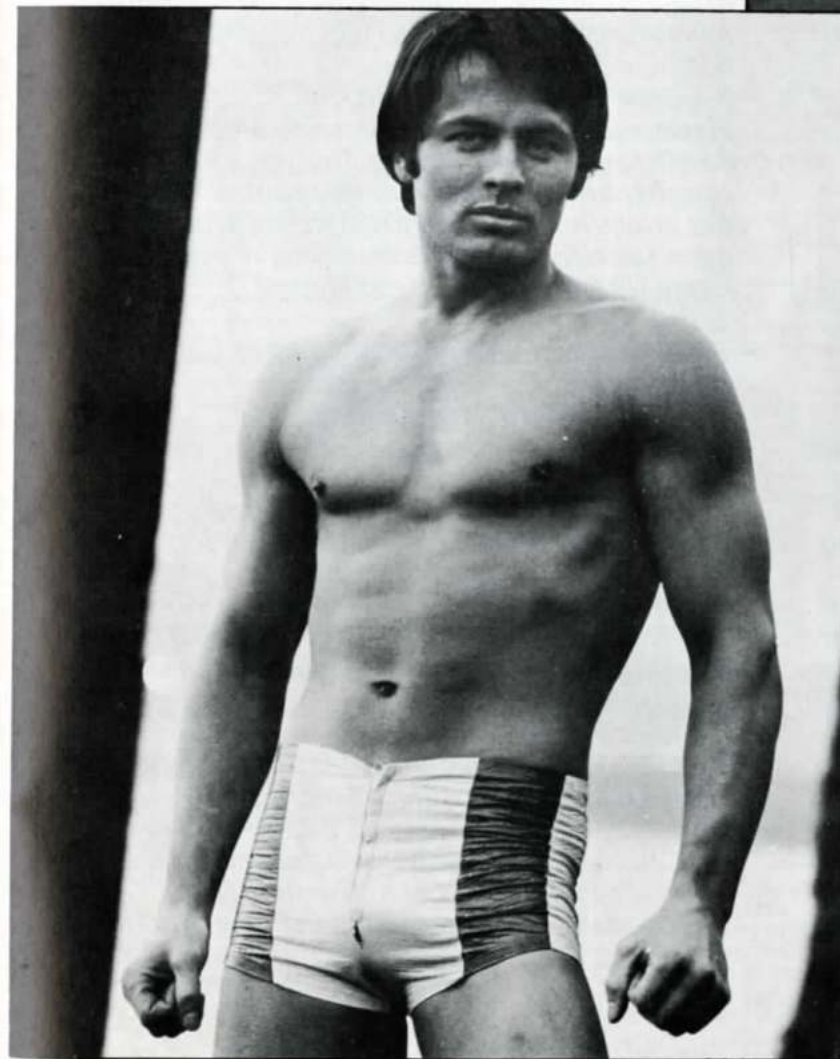
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letters

Dear Jeremy,
I'm very grateful for what you are doing. A magazine that shows that sex doesn't exclude everything else for a gay any more than for a straight is not only good for us but for the public. However, a few criticisms: must the precious, camp tone preponderate so much. Of course this sort of humour must be present, but too much of it trivializes otherwise good content. There have been sensible, well written articles that my non-gay friends have been interested to read, but they have understandably been derisive of the large amount of silly poorly done semi-camp stuff. We don't always giggle and nudge ourselves to prove how we are enjoying this really a trifle risqué mode of living, if you see what I mean. Bring some of the last of the wine into it; our love can be noble and beautiful—too much camp cheapens it. Secondly I haven't liked one of your models yet, nor have any of my gay friends. Of course you have many tastes to cater for, and this request is to counteract a letter in the new issue asking for more hairy butch types. Please could we have some more innocent beauty 16-19 years (my own age group)? I'm not really interested in older hairier types. Or if that is illegal, at least something in between the VIRILE POUT on the one hand and the COY SMILE on the other? I'm very conscious that the magazine I hoped would show people my tastes and in a broad sense reflect my personality, often embarrasses me when others read it and think they are looking at my scene. Mind you, generally I like it. I suppose I'm just a romantic. Love and peace. Nigel.

Dear Jeremy,
In response to your request in Jeremy, No. 6 for more information about Brum—here are a few tips for travellers.

1. Clubs:

The Casino Club, Broad Street, City Centre—good discoteque, fair priced bar open till 3.00 a.m. and good youngish crowd. Membership for evening only.
Guy's Club, Jamevian Row, City Centre—luxury club, strictly members only but a good many show-biz types get in as guests. Good restaurant facilities but expensive. Open till 5.00 a.m.

Ridgeway Georgian, Soho Hill, Handsworth, 19—A good rowdy club but a bit rough for most gay people, though a lot of our tougher brethren frequent this spot. Cheap bar prices but expensive restaurant and 10s: admission for everyone including members. Open till everyone has gone home!

2. Pubs.

There are quite a number of "interesting" pubs but the best for a night out are:
"The Trocadero", New Street.
"The Torreador", Station Street.
"The Crown", Station Street.
"The Victoria Bar", John Bright Street.
"The Market Hotel" (Snug Bar), Station Street.
"The Shakespeare", Ethel Street.

3. Other Clubs.

The Ridgeway Club in Hurst Street, near to the Birmingham Theatre, is very good but not exclusively gay.

4. Other Places.

The Tow-Rope is a good cheap restaurant and coffee bar which is open all night and frequented by "interesting" people. Similarly the "Rendezvous" and the "Locarno". All three are close together in Broad Street. I hope these few notes will be of help and that you will publish them in your next issue. Cheerio.

Keith.
The Park, Nottingham.



hangups

Dear Hang-ups,
I am an art student. For some time now I have come to recognize that my sexual instincts are largely homosexual. Up to this time, due very largely to my own inhibitions (which would probably have remained the same whether hetro or homosexual) I have restrained from my natural impulses. I would like to make quite clear that this has in no way been a question of ethics. I believe homosexual relationships vary, like hetrosexual relationships, from the trite and superficial to the generous and the profound. But this intellectual 'Coming to terms with', which I think is an inevitable outcome of our largely intolerant society, has had no chance to develop into actuality. I long to meet someone, around my own age with whom I can have a full relationship. I am very lucky in that I am not basically a lonely person. I have many friends, mainly painters, both male and female, whose generosity in their friendship is something I really value. Yet I haven't found anyone with whom I can develop this platonic relationship into a physical one. I spent one ridiculous afternoon (I laughed at it myself though it was something that saddened me) wandering about Piccadilly. I knew from the start that I wasn't in the slightest bit interested in a casual (careless is a better word) relationship. I restrained though I hardly looked the part anyway. Yours, A.M.

Dear Andrew of S.E.12.

I could not agree with you more on the subject of our intolerant society though things are changing and have in fact changed considerably over the past few years. Many establishments catering for "Gay" clientele would have been continually raided or even closed whereas, nowadays, provided the proprietors conduct their premises with moderate decorum, apart from the occasional scrutiny, usually for absconders or drug peddlers, they are not unduly bothered. You are of course very lucky in that you are not basically a lonely person, have many friends, and also are able to a great degree to control your emotions. I have had many letters from people who are very lonely and unable to exert any self control with the result they have suffered unfortunate consequences. This is of course little consolation for you at the present time. There are clubs around which you could visit as indicated elsewhere in this edition of Jeremy. I do however strongly advise you to stay away from the Piccadilly scene.

Dear Hang-Ups,
I am nineteen and would probably class myself as a bisexual. I have a great girlfriend, who I have been going out with for eighteen months (she knows about my other scene and understands my feelings). However, although I have been with a few boys, I find it difficult to meet boys of my own age group. I don't want to go out on my own and pick people up or by picking them up as it's just not my scene. Surely there must be hundreds of boys all with 'homosexual tendencies', but not especially camp in nature, who all face the same problem. Can you tell me where I can go to meet people similar to me, or, if it's possible to be put in touch by writing. Yours faithfully, Nick, Bromley.

Dear Nick of Bromley,

Like you I am fortunate in having friends, male and female on both sides of the fence and indeed a few on the fence who periodically hop from one side to the other. In the distant past when I had problems I found my "understanding" friends extremely helpful. I was even more fortunate in having my own family doctor amongst them. We, and when I say we I mean not only my colleagues at Jeremy but our many friends too, sincerely wish we could offer something more helpful and understanding than the "Gay Guide" but at present our hands are tied and we cannot. There is an ever growing need, one which, like Topsy "just grows" for such discussion groups as you mention and I'm sure that were one able to organise this it would not readily be abused. The Albany Trust is of course a wonderful organisation but it can barely scratch the surface of what is a vastly mounting problem. I'm sure we shall eventually achieve something if only a temporary compromise so don't give up hope—we're not.

Dear Sir,

I am a homosexual—to put it bluntly. I'm not ashamed of being one, neither do I want a cure. I guess that I've been so ever since I was fifteen. I'm eighteen now, and I have only really made love to a bloke once in three years, although, even if I do say it myself, I'm a very advanced love-maker. As I say I've only made love once in the last three years. That's just the trouble. You see, I just cannot find a partner. Can you possibly tell me some of the places where I can meet people in my own age group? Please help me. Thanks, Ian, Luton.

Dear Ian of Luton,

I understand and appreciate fully the stress you are undergoing. The law of the land however is quite specific and although my colleagues and I feel that certain parts are archaic and need revision we must at least for the present comply with them. Your need for companionship is an urgent one but if I were to arrange this then I would leave the magazine and myself open to prosecution if not closure, and as the magazine must continue, I, regretfully, cannot arrange any introductions for you. There are of course numerous clubs where you can meet people and it could well be that you will find friendship there. There are parts of your letter which tend to indicate you need some medical advice and I suggest, as I have with other correspondents, that you speak to your own doctor about it. If you cannot bring yourself to do this then please write again and I will try to arrange for you to see a neutral doctor.

Dear Sir,

While in London for a weekend, I had an affair with another man at his flat who, in our course of sexual act, had put in my nose a smelling stuff of some kind. This produced a delicious sensation. Afterwards I felt safe and sober with no ill-effects. Is this drug considered harmless or dangerous (and, I suppose, illegal)? If dangerous what would the effects be? Yours truly, N.J.R., Bath.

Dear N.J.R. of Bath,

I'm pleased to see you abhor the use of drugs of any kind—that immediately rates you very highly in my book. The experience you recently underwent involves the use of what sounds like AMYL NITRATE which is usually prescribed for angina of the heart and has the effect of increasing the heart beat. It should not be used except on the advice of a medical practitioner.

Dear Sir,

I will briefly outline my problem. I am twenty-seven and have noticed that I have homosexual tendencies for some years. They did, however, lie dormant for about three years, but have recently taken over again. I have never told my doctor, or anyone else for that matter. Consequently I feel I am living a lie. I hasten to add that I have never had sexual relations with another man, as I have always felt guilty. I want to be rid of these feelings as I am a happily married man and never want my wife to suspect. Yours sincerely, P.G., Sloane Street.

Dear P.G. of Sloane Street,

Yours is not an isolated problem and over the course of the last few years I have known of many cases such as yours. Firstly, I think you do need to discuss this with someone and the most obvious person is your own doctor. However I can appreciate your possible reluctance to do this particularly if he attends your wife as well. If this is the case remember he did take the hypocritical oath and therefore would certainly not discuss it with your wife. You may of course by now have heard from the Albany Trust and they will probably put you in touch with a doctor or psychiatrist who will be able to help you. If you haven't heard then please let me know and I will put you in touch with one. I'm sorry for the delay in replying to your plea but I have just taken over this column and there is a tremendous backlog of mail to catch up on.

Keep your hair on! Send for a Jeremy Wig



Originally conceived as a disguise for baldness, the wig has now emerged as an important item of the modern man's wardrobe; no longer is it the last desperate attempt in retaining a youthful virile appearance – the exclusive preserve of middle age. Today the wig has a socially accepted status in dress. Its intended purpose is purely ornamental, being worn by young people rather to enhance, than "retain" their appearance.

This revolutionary attitude towards the wig is exemplified by **Julian and Michael of Dukes Hair Studio**. Surrounded by the luxury of the Dukes Hotel, Julian and his partner Michael, both of international repute as successful competition winners for men's hairstyling have created the **Jeremy Wig**.

Their attitude to wigs is based upon the French idea of shaping hair to suit the features. Julian's belief in shaping hair to accentuate the client's personality and features motivated the introduction of London's first hair studio. The Jeremy Wig was evolved by Julian as a means of enabling clients to relax socially while wearing long hair, whilst satisfying the conventions of those occupations demanding a shorter style. Yet wigs can also be created in a short style, to satisfy a customer whose hair is worn long! In the studio the versatility of the Jeremy

Wig is demonstrated. Whilst the razor cutting techniques employed by Julian and Michael are unique they make no distinction between shaping a wig or real hair. This fact is hardly surprising when one considers that the wigs are made from 100% human hair which is razor cut once only and shaped according to the client's wishes. It can then be washed at will without any danger to the actual shape of the wig. Such are the economical advantages of the Jeremy Wig. Nevertheless the variations of the Jeremy hair style were even more amazing and our photographs show both the smooth and the soft curly style. Whilst the Jeremy Hair Style is reminiscent of the Greek Goddess look, each wig is unique, being shaped purely from a consideration of the owner's features. It is because both variations are interchangeable that Julian and Michael are frequently called upon to re-style a wig for a special occasion. A convincing demonstration of the ease and speed with which a wig can be re-styled explains why Dukes Hair Studio is readily visited by its young patrons. Together with a full beauty treatment for men, including manicure, facial massage and cleansing, plus the availability of a complete range of their own cosmetics, Julian and Michael offer the fashion conscious man a worthwhile visit.

IF YOU LIVE IN LONDON WHY NOT CALL IN FOR AN APPOINTMENT:— DUKES HAIR STUDIO, DUKES HOTEL, 35 ST. JAMES PLACE, LONDON, S.W.1, OR TELEPHONE JULIO & MICHAEL 01-493 8600; OR WRITE JEREMY MAGAZINE, DEPT. WIGS, 45 CARNABY STREET, LONDON, W.1.

JEREMY APOLOGISES...

In our issue Vol. 1 No. 6, we reviewed a rehearsal of the Second Royal "Save/Rave" which was held at the London Palladium in aid of the Invalid Childrens Aid Association and produced by Mr. Fred Perry. In the course of the review it was stated that David Bowie "wisely dispensed with the pit orchestra", had a "hassle" with the management about his sound equipment, and was "justifiably upset" with having to make do with one microphone, the "management seemingly unable to produce a supplementary mike".

In fact this decision to use a solo guitar as opposed to the pit orchestra was made by agreement between Mr. Perry and the artist's Manager a week before the rehearsal; there was no argument about a second microphone; when Mr. Bowie

asked for one it was provided by the producer and Mr. Bowie was not upset and did not express any dissatisfaction with the arrangements that were made for the rehearsal. The review also referred to the "tatty presentation of the rest of the show" and the "stunningly bad parade of groups and soloists" performing. We accept that in view of the actual performance and standing of the artists concerned, and Mr. Perry's direction of the show, these statements, like those referred to above were both unjustified and unfair. We apologise to Mr. Perry for the embarrassment and distress caused him by the review and are happy to record that the show was a great success, as would be expected in view of Mr. Perry's reputation as a theatrical producer.



T&T

After the tragic loss of S.S. Titania, there were terrible scenes over our illegal entry into Cuba. However, friends in high places pulled all the right strings and Fidel Castro (who is a poppet in spite of his rather extreme views) laid on a farewell party. Off we sped to New York in one of his borrowed Boeings, clutching our packets of King Size (a personal gift from the revolutionary leader himself). Everyone was so kind in New York and we were

delighted to be asked to open the new Gay Power Station on Fire Island. But we were anxious to get back to London so, spurning the excesses of the Jumbo Jet, we boarded the Q.E.2 and steamed home. We returned to find ourselves engulfed in a social whirl. First there was the Ideal Homo Exhibition in Earl's Court organised by the *Daily Male*. We went to the Private View and were amazed at the ingenuity of the exhibitionists. Prices were remarkably low and even cheaper after 6 p.m. It was a sweet idea to have an idealised portrait of ourselves on the posters. Really dears, we do try to keep up with the avante-garde but the latest production at the Acton Engine Sheds was too much. The play, 'Virgin Queen', based on the idea that Good Queen Bess was really a man, had some amusing moments

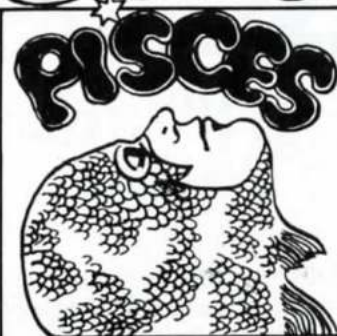
and threw a new light on the characters of Raleigh, Essex and others, but must we lose *all* our sacred cows? We were amongst the lucky few to attend Amy Hardy's eye-popping Summer Collection. In the past the models have complained about being made to shiver on such unseasonable places as the House of Lords' terrace and the Albert Memorial. This year the show was held in the hot house at Kew Gardens. We can now definitely announce that this Summer *no* parts will any longer be considered private. The accent is on natural lines with clothes as decoration rather than mere prudish covering. We particularly liked the new line in swimwear, consisting only of a belt and a waterproof, transparent pouch for cigarettes, address books and anything else you don't want to get wet.

STAR GAZE

BOB HOOK



AQUARIUS (21 Jan-19 Feb)
You have become too docile lately. Don't allow yourself to be sat upon. Feel free to come and go as you please and be your own master. You must take the initiative more often.



PISCES (20 Feb-20 Mar)
You are by nature a loner. The time has come for you to learn to pull together. Others will appreciate your willingness to lend a hand. You will have a stroke of luck at the end of the month.



ARIES (21 Mar-20 April)
People around you may all be rather down but you are coming up in the world. Now is the time to forge ahead in the smithy of life. Strike while the iron is hot and you may hit the jackpot.



TAURUS (21 April-21 May)
Your affairs are in a hopeless state. It's your own fault for taking too much on. In future you will just have to be more selective. Beware, lest even that which you have not been taken from you.



GEMINI (22 May-21 June)
You have a tendency to turn up your nose at those around you. Has it not occurred to you that the fault may lie with you? Stop sponging on others and put your own house in order first.



CANCER (21 June-22 July)
You are a dizzy one! Everything is in a muddle and you don't know what to do. Perhaps if you spent less time gaping open-mouthed around you, your outlook would be less cock-eyed.



LEO (23 July-23 Aug)
You have been stuffing yourself during the winter months. Stop it, silly. You don't want to look a fright in your Jeremy Fundies. There are lots of ways of burning up those extra calories.



VIRGO (24 Aug-23 Sept)
The Sun's influence has left you and you will feel very lethargic. As others burst forth with springtime energy you can only sit back and watch and wonder. Don't worry, the sap will soon rise.



LIBRA (24 Sept-23 Oct)
You may have to change your place of work. All this rush-hour travel is bad for you, groping your way through the crowds. Peak periods can only cause frustrations and a rise in blood pressure.



SCORPIO (24 Oct-23 Nov)
Everything is at sixes and sevens. Lucky you. Your takings are above average this month. You will have to go to great lengths to fit everything in. Be open with people and all will be possible.



SAGITTARIUS (24 Nov-21 Dec)
You meet the love of your life this month (as usual).



CAPRICORN (22 Dec-20 Jan)
Although you have a retiring disposition, you have something to offer. Surprise everyone by bringing it out when they least expect it. Why hide your light under a bushel?



PAUL: Where are you going for your holidays?

ALAN: I thought of going to that place in Cornwall where they have a bathing pool and sauna.

PAUL: Oh – you mean where Peter and David went and had their own little cottage with a private sun patio.

ALAN: That's right and Peter made that crazy pot.

PAUL: That was just an excuse to get into those faded blue jeans he adores.

ALAN: They are going back this August for a special fortnight on Opera – some ex marine drum major chatting on about Cosi Fan Tutti.

PAUL: Whew you can keep that! I'll settle for a Sauna in the studio after cold chicken supper.

ALAN: It seems they had a fabulous time! Why don't we book a garden cottage? Let's send off for a brochure now to Jeremy.

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