

Literary page

Jealousy

by D.B. Wells

The sky was a flat-bottomed slab of grey clouds hanging so low you could almost touch it. The kind of sky that makes people feel edgy. I had stopped by Fat Eddy's Bar and Grill for a sandwich and a cup of coffee, but that was a lifetime ago. I had a different purpose in mind now. I was going to try to drink the bar dry.

I sipped my drink and listened to Eddy — even though his five foot four inch frame is on intimate terms with two hundred and fifty pounds of flesh no one dares to call him Fat — talking in a loud voice to an empty barstool. I lit a cigarette and watched the tip glow in the mirror behind the bar; tried to put together the jig-saw puzzle in my head, but some of the pieces were missing and too many didn't fit; chipped at an ice-cube stuck to the side of my glass; went back to listening to Eddy still lecturing the barstool and realized that in spite of everything, Cici was still in the bar.

Cici had swept into the room just as my sandwich arrived. She was excited, her cheeks flushed. Beads of perspiration gathered on her forehead and gave her pretty face the wanton look of a high-priced hooker. Her short black hair was formless and like the rough seas of a squall capped with tiny white-tipped spikes. Her black, knee-length dress looked like it had been sewed onto her hard, thin body; she absently fingered a strand of white pearls that hung between her small breasts. She didn't notice me as she headed through the empty bar to a dark booth near the back.

I watched her in the mirror. Watched her order a drink and flirt with Eddy; watched her fix her make-up; watched her light a cigarette and forget about it burning in the ashtray; watched her sip her drink as she watched Eddy walk back behind the bar.

Cici was old news to me, real old news, and I was sure her magic wouldn't work on me now. Then she stretched. Strained backwards, her arms flung back over her head. Erect nipples pushed against the smooth, black fabric of her dress; threatened to break free of the restraint. She reminded me of a delicate foot arching out of six-inch heels. I tried to remain unaffected, hardboiled. I was, for about thirty seconds.

Then I felt an old ache. A fog rolled in

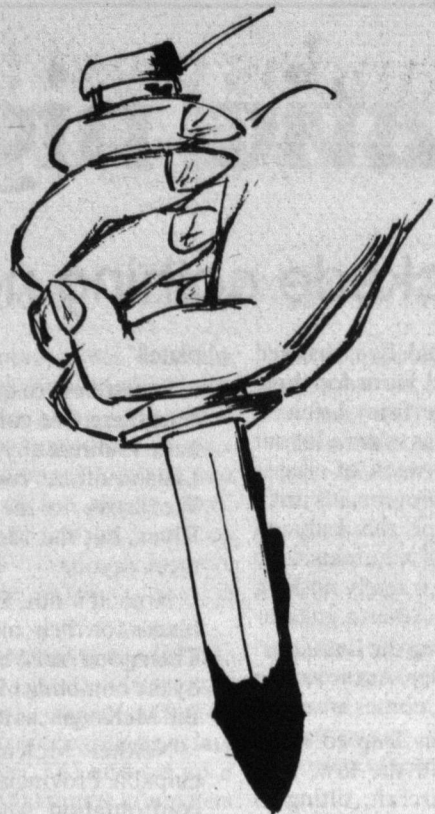
...she still had what it takes to make some men bark like dogs...

and locked out everything but Cici. I wanted to go to her, say something meaningful. I caught Eddy's eye instead and ordered a bourbon. "Make it a double," I said.

Then a man so oily you could slip him under a closed door came in through the back and glanced around the room with small, dark eyes as hard and sharp as the pointed end of a ten-penny nail. He had a nervous twitch that played at the corner of his mouth, spoiling the dapper effect of his pencil-thin moustache. He joined Cici; kissed her; slid into the booth across from her, back propped against the wall so he could see both doors.

Cici leaned across the table every once in a while and touched his cheeks. Her long nails left light red lines like the marks of initiation into a secret, select group. Marks that quickly disappeared.

I touched my own cheek; remembered what that touch, those marks meant; downed my drink in a gulp and ordered another one.



Things went on like that until the front door flew open and gave Eddy a start. A woman with bleached-blond hair stood framed by the gray sky. And even though her body had spread out and filled in the curves, she still had what it takes to make some men bark like dogs. She wore a bright-red mini-skirt that showed off two knobby knees and a pair of lumpy thighs, and she tried to hide her pot belly with a wide belt like Elvis used to wear. Her white blouse was open and exposed more than enough of her enormous breasts to attract anyone's attention, and her once pretty face sagged under a heavy coat of make-up. Her blood-shot eyes darted quickly from side to side; met mine and I shuddered. Something dark, primeval radiated from her and alerted me like the sound of a rattlesnake coiled and ready to strike. Her fingers were curled into claws; her movements were stiff, jerky. The air around her crackled.

She started yelling when she saw the moustache, caught the twitch. She moved down the length of the bar, shouting louder the closer she got to the man.

The man sat forward; became perfectly still. The blood drained from his face, and his knuckles turned white as he gripped the table. The twitch in his face went out of control.

Cici reached over and touched his lips with a finger. She slid out of the booth and stood facing the woman; smiled and held out her hands like she was greeting an older sister she loved.

The yelling stopped. Eddy looked worried, a little confused about what to do. I turned around on my stool.

Cici said, "You shouldn't act like this, Mona. I'm not trying to take anything from you."

The woman stood just out of Cici's outstretched hands, looked at her smooth, young face and saw the smile in her eyes. She growled deep in the back of her throat and started searching through her purse, spilling things out onto the floor. She pulled out a knife and switched it open.

Cici's eyes lost their smile.

Eddy said, "Here, here..."

I started to move off the stool.

The woman said, "You cocksucking bitch" and lunged at Cici.

Cici wasn't quick enough and neither was I. The blade disappeared into her stomach and made a crunching sound. Cici gasped and her body went rigid.

The woman pulled up on the knife and Cici's eyes lost their shine. I was stuck in mid stride. And no one noticed the slow drizzle that started outside.

The woman pushed Cici backward, twisting the knife as it slid out. The man ran out the back door. Eddy screamed. I stepped towards the woman, not sure what I was going to do.

The woman came at me with the knife

Government Issue provides as much power as humanly possible

Government Issue
Ambassador Motor Inn
Wednesday, October 19

review by Ron Kuipers

As a group of some rather infamous Edmontonians put it, "The Quest For Fun Never Ends." And it was upon this quest that our ever-searching, ever-thirsting scribe took his notepad and pen. "What I need to see is something different, something startling, something to jolt me out of this university-induced complacency," he thought.

And it was this fervent desire that at long last led our intrepid investigator into the deepest caverns of Edmonton's underground. As he lingered among the leather jackets and long hair of that smoke-filled pool hall, he thought to himself, "Surely this is what everything all boils down to. Surely this is where the performer will finally connect with the listener." Could our bold scribe dare hope that he had found that ever-elusive place where the definitive "no frills, just chills" concert was finally being performed?

So what did the search uncover? Well for starters, this is not music for the faint of heart. But then who faint of heart would dare to follow this crazed madman on his unending quest? As the band ripped into such hardcore classics as "Vanity Fair" and "Mad at Myself", one wondered where what it was that this vibrant foursome was

plugged into. Was this much power humanly possible? Yet amidst all the audience disbelief, the band continued. It was non-stop solid perpetual music the whole time. Well, maybe that's exaggerating a little. They did stop to grab a breath before the encore. This meant that the possessed voice man, John Stabb, had to yell the intros to songs overtop the blast of the drums, the pounding of the bass, and the screeching of the guitar. Talk about value for your entertainment dollar.

Folks, it doesn't get any more live, powerful, or direct than it does in the underground! Playing for nearly an hour and a half, Government Issue proved that there is something different to be had in the way of entertainment in this town for those willing to look hard enough for it.



Paul Menzies

Grapes of Wrath...

played a packed Dinwoodie lounge Saturday night, but our reporter hasn't come back yet.

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SUB Theatre

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Speakers and Question Period

Free Admission

and I hit her in the mouth. It didn't make me feel any better but it kept her quiet until the police arrived.

Closing time was a dim memory and the

drizzle had become a steady rain. Eddy was polishing a spotless glass. I bought us both another drink; Eddy seemed happy to have something to do.