

Good evening, and welcome to AMOR 18, the twentieth and final issue of The Amor de Cosmos People's Memorial exRevolutionary exSusanzine, aka formerly Formerly Bill Smith. (Audience, look up "penultimate"; #17 was only the second-last issue.) Amor was and is brought to you by Susan Wood, 2236 Allison Rd., Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1T6, Canada. This is Lion's Gate Press Publication #48; first stencil is being typed December 14, 1979. Electrostencils were by Victoria Vayne, and mimeo assistance will be by Eli Cohen, though he doesn't know this yet.

This is not the promised Fancy Gala Goodbye Issue I had planned. Nor was it begun on Hallowe'en. I will be returning artwork (and electrostencils) to artists after the Christmas mail rush, with my apologies (mostly to Joe Pearson.) On the other hand, it may be in the mail before the decade ends. ANNOUNCEMENT: I have not been answering my mail. (So what else is new?) Four people in the world owe me letters-- one of them has a letter in the mail, in fact, and two of them are publishers. At times, I feel as if I owe letters to four hundred people. I can't even say "If you've heard from me, you're my Mum" because a couple of weeks ago, my mother got worried when she missed her weekly letter, and called me to make sure I was alive. I've been wondering that, at times. You see, I've had mononucleosis, complicated by severe strep infections, ever since I got home from England on Aug. 31. I have been surviving only by coming home from school, sleeping, getting up and marking papers, sleeping, getting up and going to school.... I am slowly getting better, but am under orders to, basically, stay in bed over Christmas. Instead, I'm doing the last AMOR, instead of writing many, many letters to explain why I haven't been writing to you.

This issue is for Sid and Joan; for Peter; for Peter; for Jill, Simon and Peter; for Dave, Cath, Sara and Clare; for Ro and Darroll; for Cas and Skel; for Dave Rowe; for Chris and Malcolm; and for Ian Anderson of Canberra and the people of Skye, though they won't see it. Oops, and for Sheila, Den, Kevin and Alison, of course.

((I am listening to CBC-Radio national news. An election? This is ridiculous. I don't know about anyone else, but I'd rather live with gasoline at 26.4¢ a litre...))



"Professors' lives aren't all cash and holidays"-- headline in the Vancouver SUN.

((Hey, as the news has just reminded me, if I can scrape up 50 friends to sign nomination papers, and \$200 for a deposit, I can run as a Rhinoceros Party candidate.))

When we last left our heroine, she was typing AMOR 17 instead of packing to go to England. Bright and early on the morning of Friday, July 13, after having had about 4 hours' sleep, I drove out to the airport, checked in for my 9 pm flight, and headed home to do lastminute things. Phone rang. Andy Porter, longdistance from New York; Jack Williamson would like to reprint my "Women in SF" piece if I'd cut it, would I call him? Call Jack in New Mexico, agree to make cuts, make some changes in the piece, type everything out, rush to school, photocopy stuff, put in mail. Am glommed onto by head of Majors Committee. "Susan, Susan, when will you be back, we need people to do Majors advising in August, and Frank just quit to work in South Carolina, and everyone else is going away!" "Gee, sorry, Margaret," I said, "but I won't be back til August 31-- the Head knew that." "Come back earlier." "Hahahahahahahahah..." "Oh. You don't want to come back earlier. All right, I'll draft Labrie Ricou." I said goodbye to doug barbour, who was using my office and watering my plants for me, and left for home, quickly.... just in time to welcome five people arriving for the Folk Music Festival. The Wood Hotel goes ever on. Friends dropped by to say goodbye. I petted the cats. We all went off to dinner. Rick, Lynne, John, Eileen and Jerry went to the festival. I went to the airport; Eli dropped me off, and went to the festival. I boarded. And I discovered that my seatmates were a charming pair of very young children, travelling alone, and a bit upset by the whole thing ... tears, and tummy spasms later, I gave up on trying to sleep, and went upstairs to the 747 lounge with Tolkien and Drambuie, and the most amazing sunrise views over Greenland. Many, many hours later, as I waited an hour and a half in Gatwick for my bags (first on, last off) I realized I was tired.

This condition was to persist.

I had a marvellous, lovely seven weeks in London, Devon, various bits of the Midlands, Liverpool, Edinburgh, Skye and Harris, London, and even Brighton (when I was well enough to notice, that bit.) I have no intention of doing a Trip Report; Mum got one on the backs of two dozen or so postcards, but I don't have the energy to translate all that into a coherent narrative. I did have certain Overwhelming Impressions, though, and the chief of these was: I had not been in Britain, or seen my family there, for (is it possible?) fourteen years. And I feet right at home. Everyone, without exception, made me feel welcome, was extraordinarily kind, was superbly generous. As far as I can remember, the only unpleasant person I met (aside from a science fiction writer who shall be nameless, and who had consumed too much champagne; and a couple of British Publishing Persons who lumped me in with the Yankee Riffraff) was a NorthAmerican tourist-type who was Accosting people on Oxford Street. My family and friends made me strongly consider applying for Malcolm Edwards' job as head of the Science Fiction Foundation, if he ever decides to give it up-- despite Peter Nicholls' warnings that I'd have to teach polytechnic students. Everyone else, from the ticket collector who, in Waterloo Station, looked at my shiny-new British Rail pass and said "What a lovely smile! Safe journey, luv" to Mrs. MacFarlane on Skye who told us her life story as we helped with the washingup, made me feel at home.

"Yes," said Charlie Brown, who was also staying with Chris Atkinson and Malcolm Edwards before the convention. "I haven't been in London for twenty years, and I feel right at home. I've been taking the Tube all over, seeing publishers, and I haven't gotten lost." Nor had I, I agreed. Charlie and I then headed out to the local shops.... and promptly got lost.

On the other hand, I came home appreciating my salary, my merit pay increase, and

my decadent North American cosumer-society lifestyle. I still do not fully understand how people manage to live in Britain, much less continue to eat well, drink, smoke, drive cars and take holidays abroad. Buying a house is not something I can do here, not with the mortgage rate at 14 3/4%, even though I have managed to save \$12,000-plus for a downpayment. Maybe I'll let you keep your job, Mal....

I do not wish to hear any complaints about the British postal service, from anyone who has not had to deal with the Canadian one; and despite one really bad experience, I do not think British Rail deserves complaints about it, either. (A letter from London to Skye in one day? It takes three to get a letter across Vancouver...)

All the North Americans at Seacon were, I think, shocked by high hotel and restaurant prices in London and Brighton. Those I can understand, in the middle of the tourist season. But I wandered around shopping precincts, greengrocers, back streets in London and Liverpool, Manchester and Portree, just looking.... keeping my eyes and ears open and trying to get a feeling for how people lived. I came home appreciating how I live (which is not to say that I wouldn't love to be in Hammersmith this moment, but with a Canadian salary.)

ON TRAVELLING RATHER THAN BEING A TOURIST: This is a useful concept which John Berry passed on to me. I saw "tourist London" and certainly parts of "tourist Edinburgh". Like many travelling fans, though, I saw far more than (or more important things than) the Usual Sights. Tourists do not, by and large, get to see the insides of people's houses, or feel how people live their lives.

My auntie Joan and uncle Sid were waiting patiently at the airport for Wardair to disgorge my suitcase. My uncle Sid has a most margllous -- that typo was meant to be "marvellous" -- Cockney accent. "Cor" I thought, "I really do have relatives who say "Cor." My auntie is a lovely, warm lady of infinite generosity. They took Little Susan home, where she promptly fell asleep in the back garden over her tea. My aunt has lived in that house for over forty years -- this is somewhat staggering to a North American, of my generation especially. My Mum and grandad, of course, also lived there ... and most of the neighbours, I think, have been the same for forty years, too. I'd walk down the street, heading for Hammersmith Bridge and the Tube station ("That's the Thames! Wow.") and say hello to people in their gardens, or walking their dogs, who'd say "Hello! You must be Elsie's little girl! How's your Mum? She looks just like you!" The house is full of bits and pieces of my past, as well (presents I sent when I was ten, that sort of thing) and my uncle took great delight in pulling out pictures of Susan visiting at age 2, Susan and brother Bob, Susan visiting at age 16 in Girl Guide uniform (when she went to Hampton Court, slipped off, and was invited to tea with Lady Baden-Powell)... all interspersed with cousin Jill at various embarrassing ages, cousin Jill's son Simon au naturel and so on. My uncle Sid could do a good line in blackmail, I decided (but what cute kiddies they all were, in those photos! Did I really look like that at 16?) Odd to go for a walk--and realize Mum had gone the same way to school

Stamp's a bit creepy symbol of service?



Through rain, hail, sleet and swamp our postal service crawls. Its dedication to dispatch is underlined

in the design of the new 17-cent postage stamp for first-class delivery which went on sale April 1.

Here is pictured, in hard-shelled splender, a handsome specimen of trionyx spinifera . . . a mud turtle ... a tortoise . . . posing as a pet rock at riverside. Postal authorities vehemently have denied that there will follow be a up "haremail" stamp when the next postal increase is announced.

many years before Concorde started splitting the sky at 9:05 pm. I think I really knew I was more than a tourist on that particular evening's walk. You see, my uncle Sid is devoted to his garden, and especially to his sweet peas, which keep refusing to grow. He debatws methods of sweet-pea growing with a passion. As we strolled through Barnes (me admiring the roses, and matching what I saw with what I remembered, over 14 years which seemed very short) we saw, over a hedge, a truly magnificent display of sweet peas, masses of red-pink-purple-lavender-white blossoms, scenting the air. "Cor!" said my uncle Sid, "Look at that! Doesn't it make you sick?" or words to that effect. The owner of the sweet peas was, as it happened, right behind us, a middle-aged man in a singlet and old trousers, lovinglypolishing his red vintage Austin beside the curb. One comment on mulching sweetpeas led to another, and soon we found hurselves in the back garden of accuncil house, duly expressing our praise of the flowers, admiring the glasshouse, and, in my case, marvelling at the green, green, grass (sorry, folks-- that's a family joke.)

I felt the same way when I took the Tube out to Ruislip (as in TROPTC OF RUISLIP, Britain's answer to THE SERIAL) into garden gnome country, to meet David Piper. ("You've actually met Dave Piper? What's he like?" awed Britfen would ask, in the following weeks. The Hermit of Ruislip emerged at Seacon and, as far as I could tell, wandered around all weekend with a Very Large Grin, meeting Tucker, and Carr, and Hughes, and all-and-sundry. Nice man, David Piper.)

Nice family, the Pipers. As I turned down Cranley Road enroute from the station, hastily checking the copy of AMOR on which I'd written the address, I caught sight of a fluttering sheet of paper on the door of #7. David had posted up a welcome notice, with a rocket ship, and "welcome Susan to our 'umble 'ome" on it-- and there were Cath, and Sara, and Clare (the latter two with good reports from the last day of school term) to welcome me. And welcome me they did; I felt I became an immediate cousin. We sat up late, with me telling Dave all about his Favorite Authors, and trying not to feel like a total namedropping idiot -- and watching the tenth anniversary of the Apollo launch on BBC. Strange to remember so clearly what I was doing, exactly ten years before: sitting in the Grants' basement with Richard Labonté, my room-mate Sally (whom I just missed seeing in Brighton) and her filends Susan and Susan from England (who were enthralled by the person-onthe-street glimpses of Middle America and watched for hours), all of us watching colour tv. How strange, ter to realize how that day ten years ago, with Ottawa Fandom (heelo, Rosemary; hello, Alicia) had led directly to this evening in the Pipers' home.... The next morning, we all went up to the High Street to buy a goldfish for Clare. "Coo, 'ow bloody boring for Susan, come all the way from Canada to buy a goldfish in Ruislip High Street" said Dave. I don't think he'll ever believe that that is exactly what I wanted to do... but it was.

I never did get back to Hampton Court, but I wouldn't have traded the sweet peas, the goldfish, the Morris dancers in the pub at Dawlish, the hike with Peter Roberts to find Berry Pomeroy Castle, the party at the Skeltons', the ferry across the Mersey with Ro and Darroll, or the time playing with Jill and Peter's Simon, for anything you could put on a picture postcard.

((I also did the touristy things: Tom Stoppard's <u>Night and Day</u> with Joan and Sid, watching Maggie Smith be elegant and witty in a gorgeous gem of a theatre; Stoppard's <u>Dogg's Hamlet and Cahoots Macbeth</u>, which did amazing things to my perceptions of language; the British Muse um, where I kept running into photos from history texts—"Good heavens, those are the real, live Elgin marbles, and <u>that's</u> the Sutton Hoo treasure, and...; the National Portrait Gallery, where I spent a wonderful afternoon out of the rain meeting faces of people I knew; Westminster Abbey, where our prayers were being asked, in July, for writers, editors and broadcasters, and where, purely by accident, I managed to stay for an Evensong service: the Abbey is so beautiful not even all the tourists taking forbidden flash pictures can spoil it (odd reactions: In the poet's corner, Auden wasn't there, before; and that alterboy... hey, it's a <u>woman alterboy!</u> Alterperson?); Guilford CAthedral, and

its trwasures-- modern, but still the work of a whole community; Liverpool's Catholic cathedral, the "Mersey Funnell with its gorgeous stained glass... Oh, I did the usual tourist things, and would ahppily have done them for another seven months.

Most of my touristing was in Scotland, though. For two weeks, I was patt of a UBC study group, ostensibly looking at "Scotland's heritage" as it affected Canada: a week in Edinburgh and environs, looking at examples of the various periods of historical architecture, going to classes on history in the morning and excursions in the afternoon; and a week on Skye and in the Hebrides. Edinburgh, which I remembered fondly (rain on grey stone... atmospheric rather than dreary!) is a most civilized small city. The core caters to tourists, of course; but there are no Macdonalds' hamburgers in Edinburgh! We had plenty of free time, and I found it very easy to explore and prowl and wander most of the mediavel and classical areas of the city. WE stayed in a student residence backing onto Holyrood Park, and most days, early or at sunset, I'd climb Arthur's Seat and look out over the city, across the Firth of Forth, or inland over the fields. So much of what we saw is a part of what I feel to be my history, too...

And then we piled into a coach, and set off for the Highlands. (I invented Heather Fandom, by Loch Katrine, scrambling up rocks, taking my scissors out, and clipping a piece of bell heather from a hidden clumbfor each member of the group.) We traded our University of Edinburgh historian for a University of Aberdeen geolist, a Northumbrian who'd spent 18 years coming to know, and to win the trust of, the popel of Skye. We spent a week talking with people who sang about the Clearances as if they happened yesterday, who stayed behind when my ancestors, some of them, left for Canada, who talked about Culloden as if it had been fought last week, who farmed crofts with seaweed for fertilizer -and had daughters away at university, sons off on the North Sea oil rigs. Skye is beautiful, "unspoiled" and --though the poeple are friendly-- a place closed to outsiders. I think we had doors opened to us, a little. (Thursday night, the pub in Portree. Ron the piper and photographer, Grace who teaches Canlit, and me, all Vancouver people in the UBC group; Jean the teacher from Aberdden, Annemarie the 26-year-old widow from Hamburg who teaches with Jean, and Ian the civil servant and beekeeper from Canberra, the latter three joining us via the University of Aberdeen: talking to local people. We are joined by a young man, a Canadian from Fredericton. He asks where we are from, how we met; we tell him about people showing us their houses and inviting us to church, about meeting teachers whose grandparents helped found the Land League, and shepherds who tell us village history. He isamazed, and envious. "I've been here three weeks. People are nice, but ... but I haven't been able to talk to anyone except other tourists. How did you get so lucky?" Friday night: a local hotel-keeper and historian (who's spent his on money preserving craft houses and furnishings), a friend of Geoff our geologist-leader (who can really show us how geology and ecology determine people's lives) organizes, for us, a traditional cieldh: songs, piping, dancing, stories, "and a few woorrrds from the meenister" who's there along with everyone else including the kitchen staff (we're in, of all things, a girl's school-- the staff are great, and the food is wonderful-- I dream of Mrs. MacLeod's scones) and Lindsay the bus driver.

"Yes," says Geoff, standing beside the intricately fitted, solid-standing stone walls, "these brochs were inhabited, oh, about 2,000 years ago. Now of course, the dun over there, that site's been inhabited for some 6,000 years..." The forest and the heather sweep off to the distant sea; the only sounds are sheep, and wind.

I could go on, but I can't describe it. That week was something like falling in love, and something like making living contact with a strange and distant human past that was also mine; and it was altogether magic.

Magic does not last. British Rail in Canada said not to worry about sleeper reservations from the north to London; they neglected to tell me there was a through train from Inverness, OR that I should have booked a sleeper anyway since August is high tourist season. I did, in Edinburgh, book seats (after travelling to Devon at the beginning of school holidays surrounded by noisy kids with shrimp nets, very fat grannies, obese parents shrieking whilst eating crisps, all wanting the same seat I wanted.) Right. Portree to Kyle of Lochalsh, thence to Inverness; goodbye to Skye, and to the best of the friends I made in that group. Inverness to Edinburgh, watching the twighlight fade over the heather, feeling pleasantly sad, nibbling on biscuits and cider and planning to eat in Edinburgh. Edinburgh Waverley. Total chaos! I grab a sandwich at the buffet -- my first mistake, since I spend most of the night throwing up. I try to find "my" platform. An hour and a half later, the scheduled express pulls out, taking ONLY the sleeping cars, leaving 5,000 passengers nearly pushing each other onto the tracks. Panic. An hour or so later, a slow train arrives for us. I, at least, have a reserved seat: 8 people are booked into 6-person compartments, in what must be the oldest rolling stock in British Rail's yards. No heat; it is cold. No buffet car, and the water runs out in the inadequate washrooms. Very little light. The train is so full that people are sleeping in the spaces between cars, and huddled -- with small children -- on the floors of the luggage vans. I begin to understand what a refugee train must be like. We travel slowly. The people on the train are mostly tourists, of every nationality: there's a Japanese woman, three students from Milwaukee, and a honeymoon couple from Edmonton in my compartment. The Edmonton woman, beside me, has the world's most awful cold; she sniffles and coughs all night. Soon, I am following suit. We arrive at King's Cross about 3 hours later than the announced arrival time. I fight the milling hordes across the station, into the tube, along the Picadilly LIne to Manor House, fumble for a tuppence, and ring Chris. Blessed woman, she rescues me, and feeds me tea.

Charlie Brown, later that day, hands me a present. "Happy birthday; I thought this would match your personality" says Charlie, who teases me about my Protestant Work Ethic. In the box: a tiny, exquisite, silver... snail. It is prophetic.

The list of people with whom I had dinner engagements, in Brighton, which I broke, reads like a who's who of at least four countries and three continents. I would get up, go to some of the programme, go back to my £33-a-night room (without heat) and be ill and miserable, get up in the evening, find a party (generally a North American one-- thank goodness for the Stopas' party, I finally met Rob Jackson!), feel fine until the smoke got to me, go back to the Bedford, be ill, go to bed... I did get to see the Royal Pavilion, and re-meet very nice people (Alex Panshin, Mike Carlson, Cherry Wilder, Robin Johnson, John Foyster.) The lovely Aussies gave me a pretty award, the William Atheling Jr. Award for sf criticism, for the women-in-sf paper; I was surprised, and pleased. I got to cheer my little head off when Vonda got her Hugo. I got to meet Lisa Tuttle again, and go to Chris

Priest's Dead Dog party, at which Terry Carr (who was also staying with Chris and Mal) got 24-hour flu. (Chris was sick... Fritz Leiber, who was also there, got sick... Charlie wisely fled to a hotel... David Hartwell carried the Brighton Blight back to the entire NorthAmeriCon...)

Then I had to say goodbye to everyone, fly home (only $9\frac{1}{2}$ hours, not the 28 from Portree to London!) still digesting my Sticky Tea from Harrod's (I've never seen so many fancy cakes), open my mail, plunge back into the wonderful whirl of registering English majors... and I didn't get over my "cold" and "jet-lag," I lost my hearing temporarily... and here I am, $3\frac{1}{2}$ months later, with a virus hanging on, complicated by a strep infection that won't go away, just keeps moving around my body. Various antibiotics have given me various odd reactions; my weight fluctuates anywhere within ten poinds over any given 2-day period; and of course I haven't been exercising properly. My doctor has ordered me to sleep over Christmas. I've been working at half-speed, and feeling very like that snail.

But: classes are good. My students like me, it seems. (I have people taking their third class from me, or coming to my classes because a sister/brother recommended me.) I'm doing an honours class in contemporary Canlit-- nothing before 1960-- that's asking the same basic questions as I've been asking of fantasy and sf (what is this stuff and how do we talk about it? I'm going to have t-shirts made for that class that say: "What is Art?--English 492, UBC, 1979-80") The sf-fantasy class I proposed has been approved by the Arts faculty as a real, live, permanent and for-real class. As to tenure: nothing will be official for months, but I did get a merit pay increase, and (despite some very rough times, and thank you, people--you know who you are) I would say, with caution, that Things Look Good.

In my Spare Time, I went to Edmonton for NonCon, had a marvellous time, declared myself better, came home, and got sick again; the strep hit badly in October, again in November, and is still lingering. On the other hand, I went to the dentist today, and I didn't need any work done!

I took a photojournalism class, taught by a Greenpeace photographer (Dena, some of his stuff's in that book I sent you -- Rex Wyler) who's been covering the NATO arms demonstrations in Europe for Friends of the Earth -- a really interesting person, and interesting class, though I've decided I WILL have to set up a darkroom. (Sure.) Rex said Encouraging Things. I sold some photos of Al Purdy, Canadian poet, to a Toronto publisher. I wrote many thousand words, including a Gregg Press intro for Katherine MacLean's THE DIPLOIDS and 4,000 words on "The Fantasy Year in Review" for Terry Carr; I finished that the same day I heard from Terry that Berkley had just told him they weren't doing YEAR'S FINEST FANTASY after all. Grrrrrrrrr (someone else will....) I'm doing a quarterly 4,000-word column on sf/fantasy for Andy Porter's STARSHIP. I'm writing something for a certain ex-Winnipeg fan, if he ever really does get around to publishing I'm doing many thousand words for Everett Bleiler's book on modern sf writers, from Scribner's, and ... get this ... I was asked to do a 1,000 word guest review column on sf, for the Washington POST... for \$200.00! (Me, Woodward and Bernstein...) As Eli has just reminded me, I should be marking papers, or better yet, sleeping right now, instead of finishing AMOR. Well: those are some of the reasons I haven't written to you.

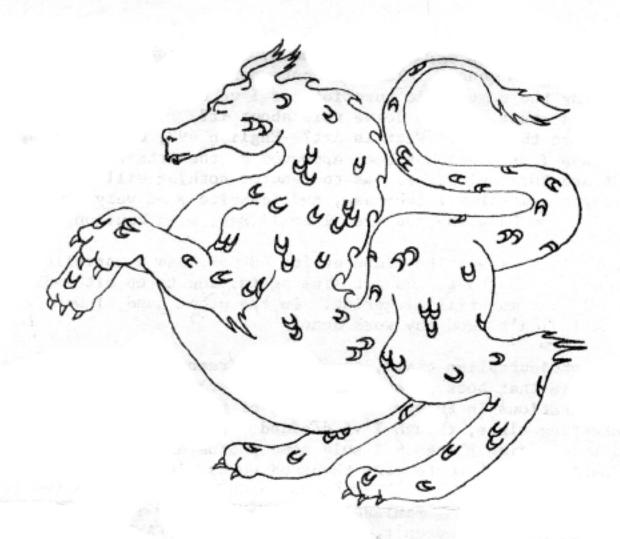
In 1980, I resolve to: start answering the mail; start swimming again, an activity I can only pursue between bouts of strep; continue doing yoga-- I just wish I could do something about my weight, mutter, mutter; stop having dental surgery; stop getting sick; stop falling in love with unsuitable persons; stop.... oh, never mind. It's been quite a year (and thank goodness it's over, almost...) I've been teaching, I realize, for a decade. Now there is a staggering realization...

For 1980, Eli is moving back to New York, where he has a marvellous new job, and all the real pizza he can eat; Harlequin, Samantha and I will miss him.

Tomorrow I am going to Seattle, for Paul Novitski's birthday. Next Friday I am going to San Francisco (to LOCUS HQ) ostensibly to read my brilliant paper on John Newlove at the Modenn Language A ssociation Conference (so UBC's paying my fare, as they did to Brighton; I am a Scholarly Person, remember.) I have bought a ridiculous, silly pair of party shoes with 4" heels, and a silver dress for the Carrs' party. I have changed my hairstyle again (no, Peter, it's no blonder) and am being fitted for contacts. I am looking forward to the 1980's. And right now, I'm going to bed.

Merry Christmas, friends. Happy new decade. Goodnight, and goodbye. love, Susan art by Bill Rotsler (p. 1) and Cathryn Miller, p. 8
--days later: This thing is <u>full</u> of typing errors. I find it nearly impossible to correct typos once I've removed the stencil from the typewriter. Bear with them, please? AND... I must've been tired. I forgot to mention that LANGUAGE OF THE NIGHT

is in its third hardcover printing and has just sold in Japan!



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