

Pulp

"Inside Susan"

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Susan catches the bus into town at ten-thirty a.m.
She sits on the back seat.
She looks at the man in front's head and thinks
how his fat wrinkled neck is like a large carrot sticking
out
from the collar of his shirt.
She adds up the numbers on her bus ticket to see if
they make twenty-one,
but they don't. Maybe she shouldn't bother going to
school at all, then.
Her friends will be in the yard with their arms folded on
their chests,
shielding their breasts to try and make them look
bigger,
whilst the boys will be too busy playing football to
notice.
The bus is waiting on the High Street when suddenly it
begins to rain
torrentially and it sounds like someone has emptied
about a million packets of dried peas on top of the roof
of the bus.
"What if it just keeps raining," she thinks to herself,
"and it was just like being in an aquarium except it was
all the shoppers
and office-workers that were floating passed the
window instead of fish?"
She's still thinking about this when the bus goes
passed Caroline Lee's house
where there was a party last week.
There were some German exchange students there
who were very mature;
they all ended up jumping out of the bedroom window.
One of them tried to get her to kiss him on the stairs,
so she kicked him.
Later she was sick because she drunk too much cider.
Caroline was drunk as well;
she was pretending she was married to a tall boy in
glasses,

and she had to wear a polo-neck for three days
afterwards
to cover up the love-bite on her neck.

By now the bus is going passed the market.
Outside is a man who spends all day forcing felt-tip
pens into people's hands
and then trying to make them pay for them.
She used to work in the pet shop,
but she got sacked for talking to boys when she was
supposed to be working.
She wasn't too bothered though, she hated the smell of
the rabbits anyway.
"Maybe this bus won't stop," she thinks,
"and I'll stay on it until I'm old enough to go into pubs
on my own.
Or it could drive me to a town where people with black
hair drink
Special Brew and I can make lots
of money by charging fat old men five pounds a time
to look up my skirt.
Oh, they'll be queuing up to take me out to dinner...
" I suppose you think she's just a silly girl with stupid
ideas,
but I remember her in those days.
They talk about people with a fire within and all that
stuff,
well, she had that alright.
It's just that no-one dared to jump into her fire;
they would have been consumed. Instead,
they put her in a corner and let her heat up the room,
warming their hands and backsides in front of her,
and then slagging her off around town.
No-one ever really got inside Susan, and,
and, she always ended up getting off the bus at the
terminus
and then walking home.

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