

Noir vs. Noir

by Bill Yarrow

You're sitting in a darkened theatre with Gothic ceilings and one exit watching the latest Alan Ladd film with William Bendix and Veronica Lake. Next to you eating popcorn is a woman from Romania named Anna. She is smiling but at all the wrong scenes. You put your arm around her and smile yourself. Yesterday's plastic surgery has been a complete success. The fingertip skin grafts feel the best they ever have. Bendix, a narrative madness in his eyes, is suffering from a war wound. He holds both sides of his head and bellows, "Turn off that monkey music!" The movie's good, but you don't like being in the dark. You motion to Anna to go, a shade brutally perhaps, and drag her down the aisle. In the lobby, empty but for the concessionaire, she says wait, she has to relieve herself. "Hurry it up," you mutter and pass the time staring at your face in the mirrored walls. It's not your face and that suits you just fine. "Where is she?" you wonder. At that moment she returns. "What took you?" you rasp and begin walking. "Hey, wait," she calls, running up to your side. She's pressed up against you as you push open the glass door and walk out. Something smells funny in the night. It's your future, but no one will be able to convince you of that.

