

# Don't Eat Cheese Before Bed

*by* SEHalliday

The murder of Proudly Hoare was only half the most exciting thing to happen at The Daffodil Bar that summer, and it wasn't that the slaying itself was a considerable *coup de théâtre* (which it was), or that the ex-sanguinary effects weren't both colorful and projective (which they were)—it was just such a bloody marvel the whole thing might have been orchestrated by a Broadway impresario.

"Effin' hell," shouted Pickle (he was visiting London on vacation and believed he had taken to the vernacular) as Proudly's head thumped to the burnished brass-accented oak bar and rolled through a multicolored gaggle of parasol-sprouting cocktail glasses, scattering akimbo their umbrellature like a drunken stagehand lumbering through the set of *Mikado*.

The rest of Miss Hoare danced a jig, sporting and sprinkling, as Palula cried "Oh, Oh, Oh!" and applause thundered when the dog-headed concierge ran lightly away into the lobby of the Wentworth Hotel, machete-handed and a dripping head held high like an Olympic torch.

I drank the cocktails from the oak: Cosmopolitan, Screwdriver, Vesper Lynd and something with olives. Palula joined me to bob-the-olive in a deep puddle of gin but I couldn't get a bite on the smooth skin so I kissed Palula instead, biting the skin of her lower lip.

Her mouth was sugary wet and we sucked each other like teenagers as I squinted left (one eye is best in such situations) and saw that Proudly had found her head to join the Parasols in a rousing chorus of *Poor Wandering One*.

