

My Books:

Being a reminiscence of youth



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There are certain books that you read in youth that stay with you for the rest of your life. They may say something profound, they may give a hint as to how you would like to live your life, they may take you away from your life at a time when you need it.

They may just make you laugh. These are some of the books that helped make me what I am today. Don't blame them.

Been Down So Long

Back in the day
there were underground novels
passed from hand to hand
in dingy coffee shops

Back in the day
there were student rooms
with milk crate racks of vinyl
and cement block shelves
with novels
that we all knew

A common reference
a shared pool of ideas
something to discuss
after an hour
of sweat in bed

~~

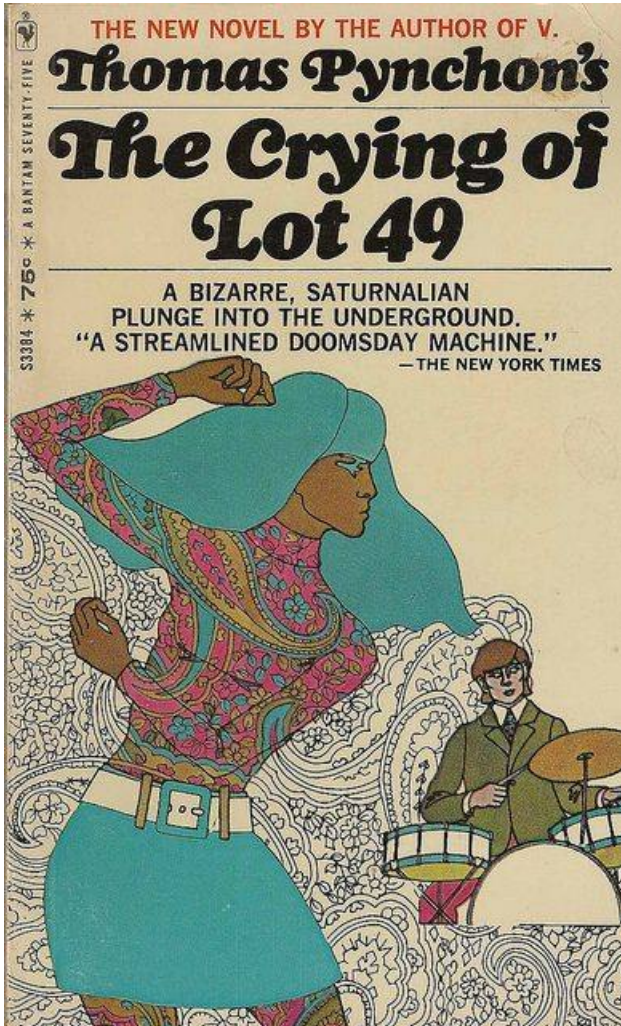
DELL • 0514 • 75C

THE MADLY CAREENING NOVEL OF TODAY'S
TURNED-ON, HUNG-UP YOUTH... "KNOWING...
SAVAGE... ASSURED... AUDACIOUS... FILLED
WITH VITALITY"
--LOS ANGELES TIMES

been
down
so
long
it
looks
like
up
to
me

richard
fariña





The Crying of Lot 49

Pynchon dropped a bomb
on a coprophylic General
in a book
we used to prop up broken chairs

But it was that post horn
in the crying of lot 49
that prepared us for facebook
that explained the meaning
of memes, the use
of quizzes

That explained his country
and its glorious leader
The distraction
that serves for policy
in so many political parties

We read all about it
back when that post horn
was not a train horn
two inches from our face

~~

Cat and Mouse

Some books you read
because you should
some
because you should not

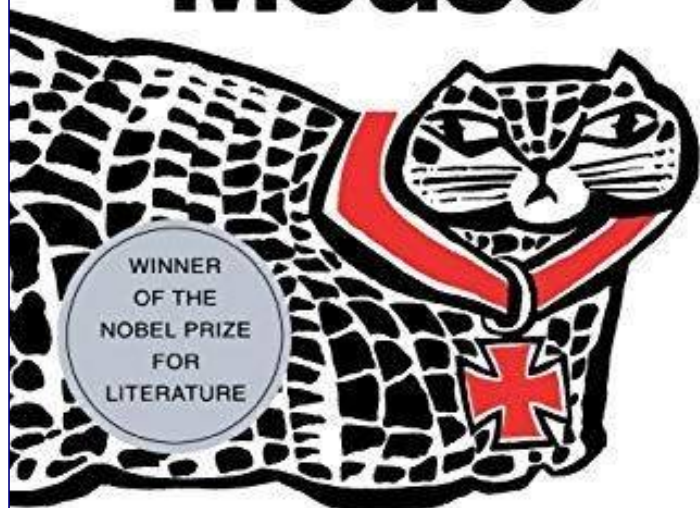
We had the time
This was not what we did
because we had to
because we owed a book report

These we read
because we needed a break
because we wanted some down time
We had no social media (poor us)

We read the books
and we passed them along
when we were done
“You really have to read this
it will put your head on backwards”
~~

Günter Grass

Cat and Mouse



WINNER
OF THE
NOBEL PRIZE
FOR
LITERATURE

"Every bit as uproarious as *The Tin Drum*" —*Saturday Review*

"A brilliantly realized story" —*New York Times*

Siddhartha

Occasionally
you find a book
that is worth reading again
forty years later

Sometimes it stands up
sometimes it disappoints
but once in a while
you find yourself
somewhere else

This is not the place
I thought it was,
this story is not about
who I thought it was about

~~

9780140439321
SIDDHARTHA

HIS MOST FAMOUS NOVEL

SIDDHARTHA

HERMANN HESSE



Morgan!

My mother and I
went to a movie
a comedy we were told

And it was
We laughed
the audience laughed
and then
my mother stopped
and bit by bit
the rest of us stopped

And my mother leaned to me
and said
this isn't funny

~~



Zardo

Just before
I left for University
my sister walked in
and said to me
Take me back to this movie

Or was it I
who watched
and said "come with me"

Sean Connery
in a tankini
a hundred years
before such a thing

Charlotte Rampling
Oh, Charlotte Rampling
Oh
And a flying head
~~

L'AN 2293 L'ECLATEMENT DU FUTUR



UN FILM DE JOHN BOORMAN

ZARDOZ

20th CENTURY FOX présente

SEAN CONNERY dans ZARDOZ JOHN BOORMAN
avec CHARLOTTE RAMPLING • SARA KESTELMAN et JOHN ALDERTON

Conçu par DE LUXE - PANATHISSON Distribué par

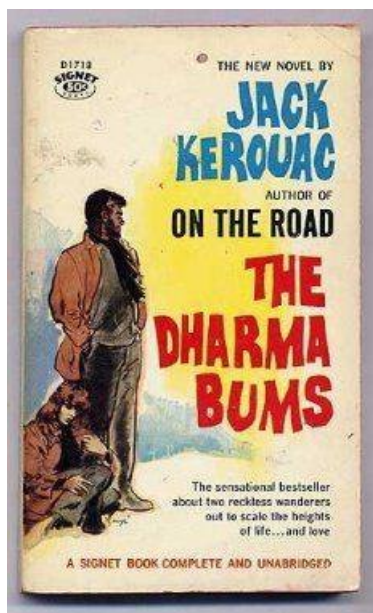
The Dharma Bums

Oh how we wanted to be Kerouac
driving across country
stoned and juiced
With a quart of whisky
and a woman in the back seat

My university days
were full of longing
for those stories

I really hated
to tell the guys
That was high school life
in the country

~~



The Rebel

Camus or Sartre
That was the argument
endless hours
in the coffee shop

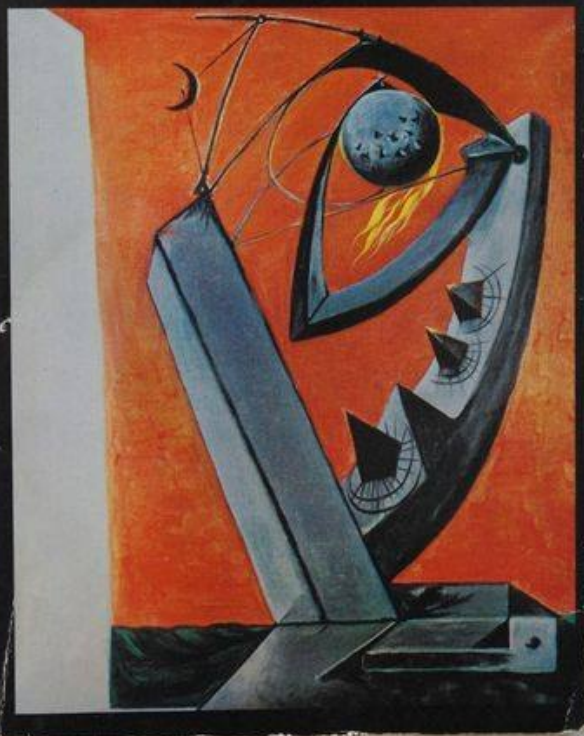
Sartre the upper crust
or Camus the half breed
It went on for years

~~



Penguin Modern Classics

Albert Camus
The Rebel



The Lord of the Rings

Bored of the Rings

or

One more

“Did you know”

she said

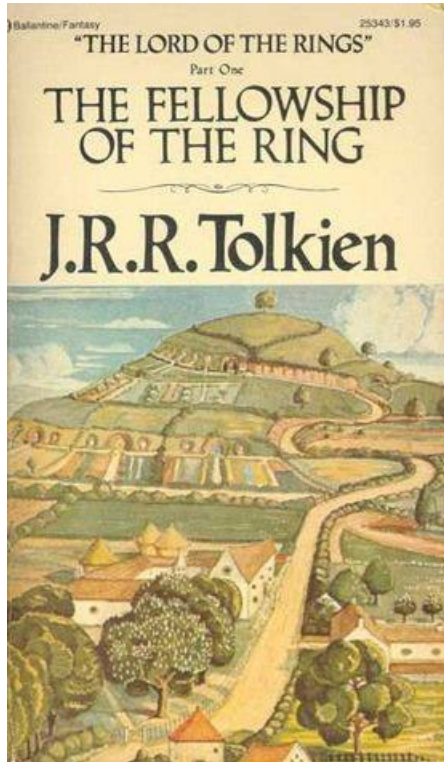
“Did you know

that there are books

based on the movies?

There's three of them!”

~~



Pilgrim at Tinker Creek

Some books
give you an image
that never leaves you

I would carry this book
in my backpack
and walk up to strangers
Just to read them
the passage
of the water bug
eating the frog

“Would you like to hear it?”

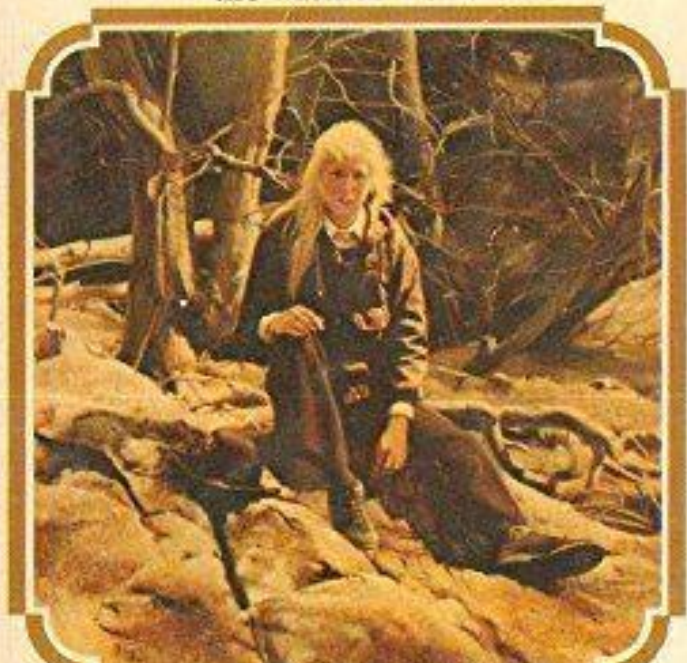
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Y5700 * \$1.95 * A BANTAM BOOK

"A magical book."*
"A book of wonder."*
"If you buy only
one book this year,
let this be it."*

—»«—
Annie Dillard
—»«—
**Pilgrim at
Tinker Creek**
—»«—

A mystical excursion into
the natural world




Fear and Trembling

I have to admit
that I would occasionally
buy a book for its cover
and an album
for its sleeve

I would try
I really would

Maybe that's why
I spent so much time
in the bar
Trying to pick someone up
Just to avoid
picking up that book
~~



PENGUIN  CLASSICS

SØREN KIERKEGAARD

From the

A Clockwork Orange

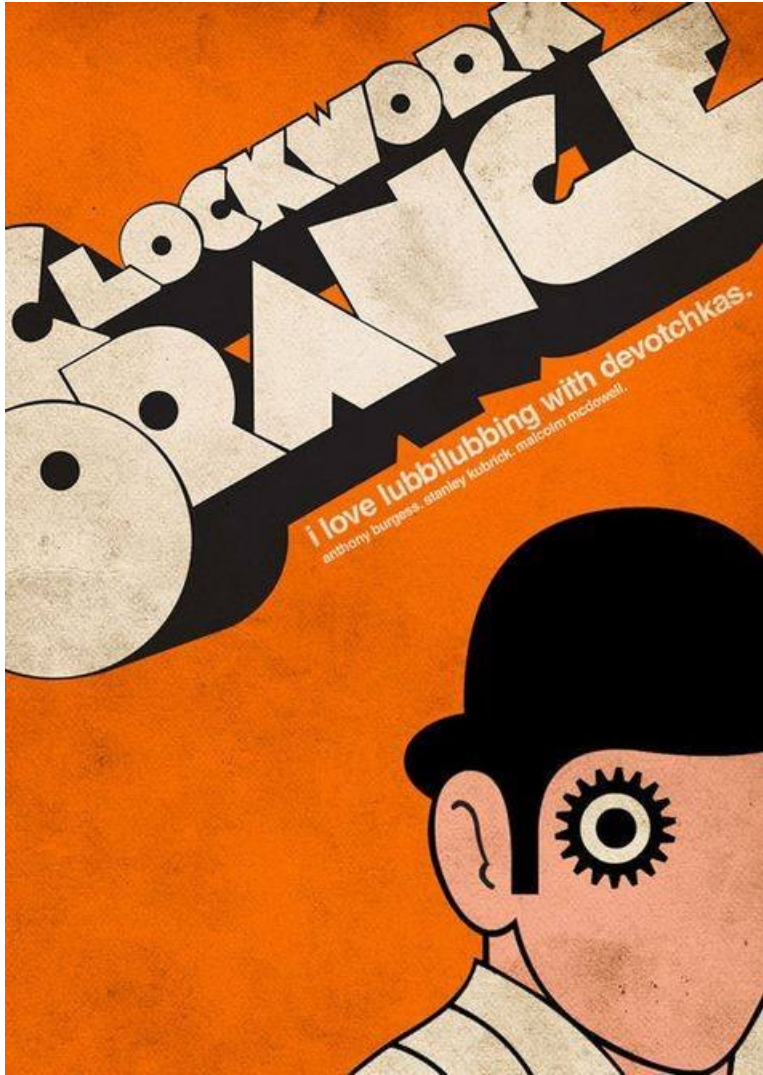
In grade 12
I was given the chance
to read in the library
for the year
and at the end
an essay

I read every dystopia
in that room
and what I learned
is that the future
changes
with the present

Hey! It was grade 12
it was half a century ago

And then I stopped
reading about the future
that might be
because somehow
I slipped into
the future that is

And it's worse
~~



Brave New World

Are we there yet?
Are we there yet
the little boys squeal
Do they all look like us?
Are they all smart like us?
Can we have our Soma now?

Please Our Ford
Tell us what to do,
Tell us we're there
It's too long, this ride
I don't want to think any more

~~



Penguin Modern Classics

Brave New World

Aldous Huxley

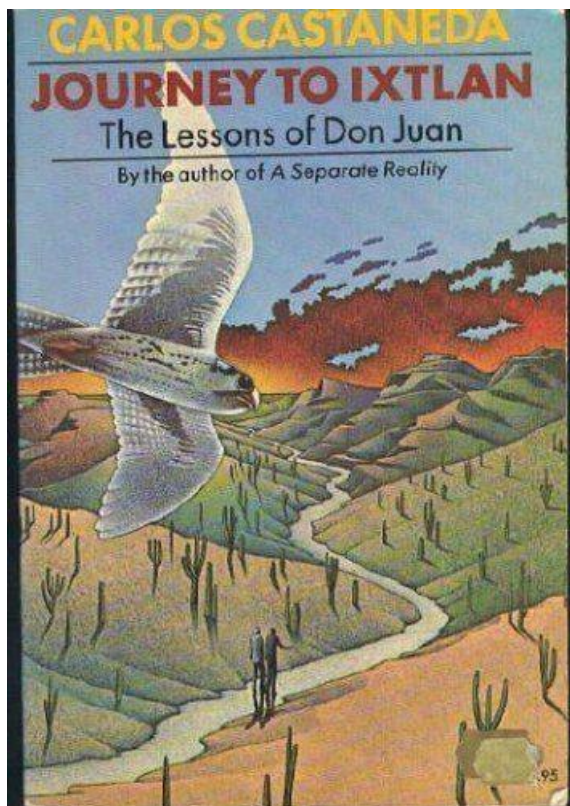
Journey to Ixtlan

I read some of Castaneda
Who didn't?
But I think I read
as much as I did
because of the looks
My Grandmother gave me

I kept it between the bed
and the wall
at her place

Turns out she was right
about the fellow
but that didn't matter
it was the look on her face

~~



1984

Why oh why
wasn't Big Brother
looking at me
from this front cover?

Why didn't I find
the copy that was
in the section
with the lurid
space monsters
from Venus

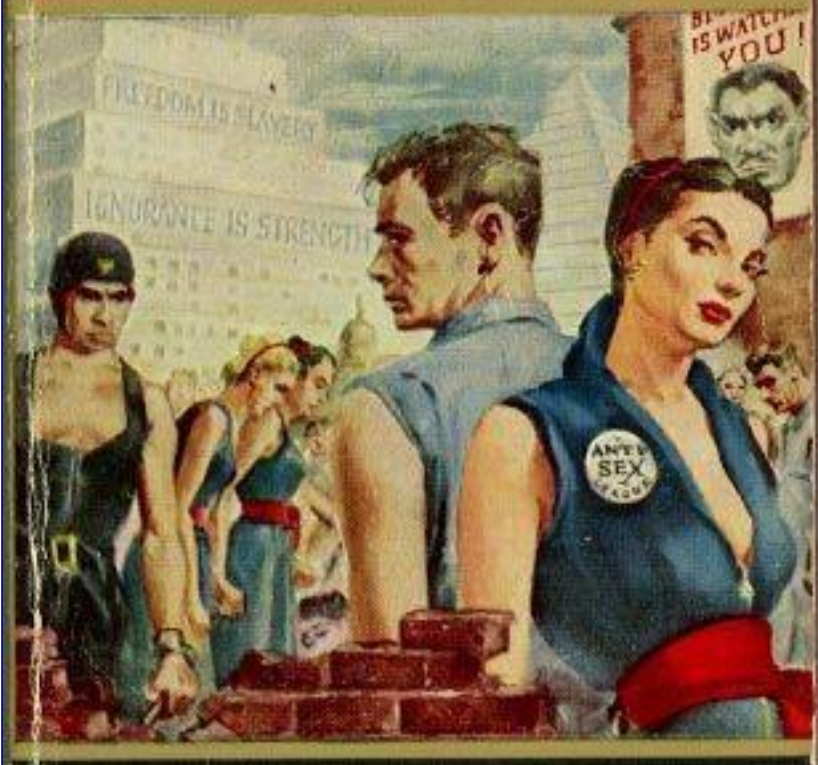
~~

5798
SIGHT
35¢
CLASS

A Startling View of Life in 1984
Forbidden Love Fear Betrayal

1984

A Novel by **GEORGE ORWELL**



Fear of Flying

Every once in a while
you have to read one
for the other side

Seems I bought this
in late high school
in a main street shop
in Port Stanley
Land of my Grandmother

I think I got a few looks
as I wandered down the streets
turning the pages
With not a zipper in sight

~~

#1 *NEW YORK TIMES* BESTSELLER

ERICA
JONG

*fear of
flying*

"Fearless and fresh."—John Updike

Catch-22

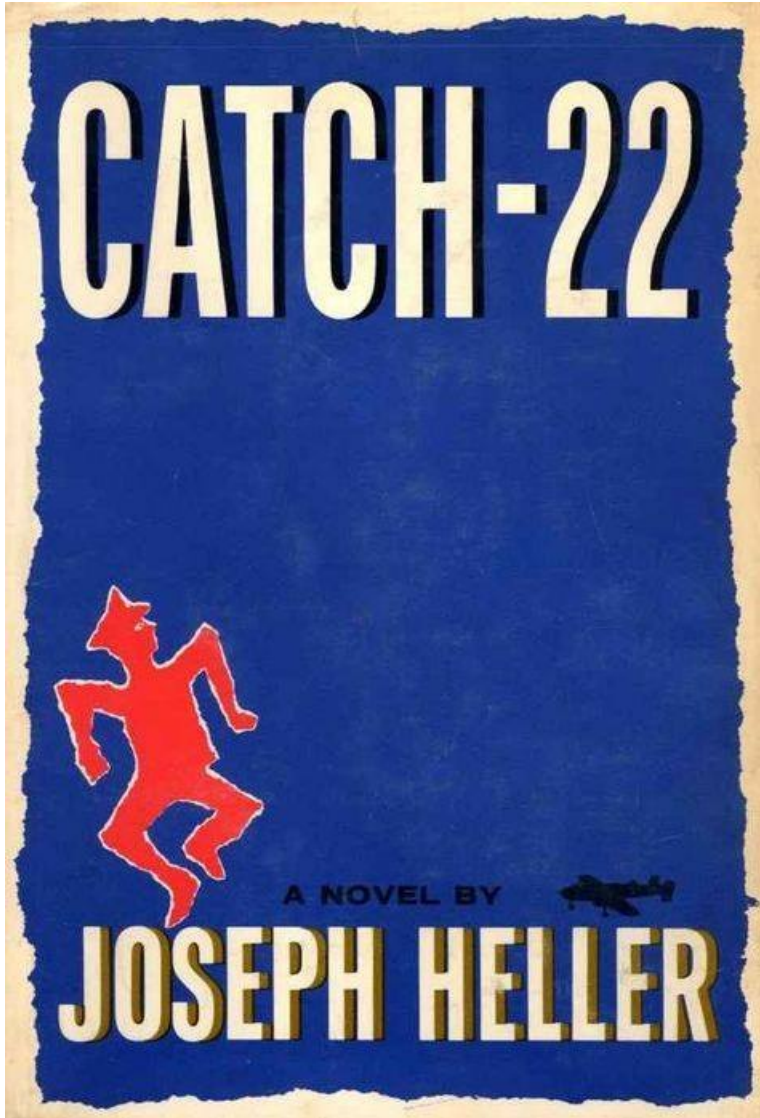
Before the warehouse bookstore
before the digital infinity
There was the local drug store
with a rack
that would spin around
and hold maybe a hundred books

A great library
in the middle ages

As a young boy
you would slowly spin the rack
looking for a comedy
something to make you laugh
You had enough for one book
and it had to last
so not too thin
not too light

The search could last
a whole afternoon
One rack

~~



Mother Night

An author
can be like a girlfriend
At first you want it all
everything he ever wrote
even the short stories

But later
each book seems a bit harder
to finish
each year
holds less anticipation
for that next book

And one day
you realize
you haven't called
~~

DELL • 19853 • 25

by the author of the #1 best-seller
JAILBIRD

Kurt Vonnegut, Mother Jr. Night



Hopscotch

Which chapter order
did you use
to read Hopscotch?
Straight through
or the suggested order?

What had this Argentinian done?
How many books are here
and how is it
that we can read it out of order?

What is life
but a series of glimpses?
Images that stick
in the mind
and somehow
come together

And now, just now
reading that book cover
I learn that Cortazar
wrote Blow-Up
Of course he did
~~

A SIGNET NOVEL • Q3329 • 95c

LIFE | LOVE | SEX

Hopscotch

By the author of **BLOW-UP**

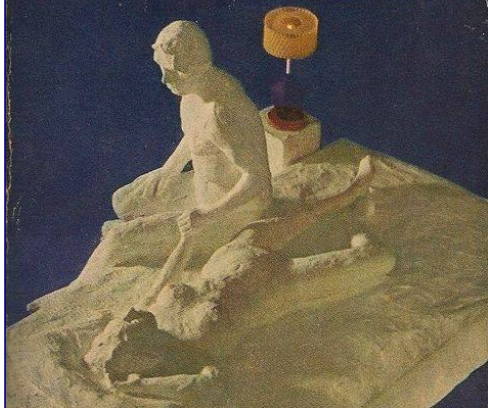
Julio Cortazar

"AN UNDERGROUND CLASSIC... ONE I WOULD TAKE TO
A DESERT ISLAND" —FORT WORTH TELEGRAM

"HOPSCOTCH ISN'T A NOVEL. IT'S A PANDORA'S BOX."
—CARLOS FUENTES

"LEAVES YOU LIMP" —BALTIMORE SUN

"A MASTERPIECE" —LONDON TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT



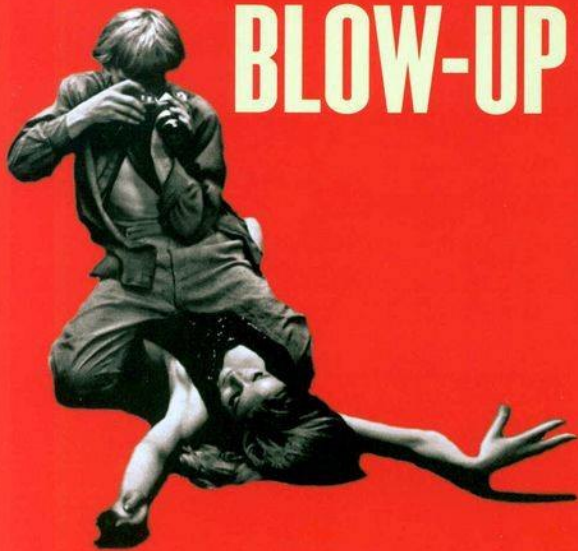
Blow Up

Who didn't want to be
David Hemmings
atop
Verushka in the studio
Verushka...
Verushka....

Who didn't want to be David
Terry or Brian in London
Creating the photos
that defined a century
~~

A FILM BY MICHELANGELO ANTONIONI

BLOW-UP



VANESSA REDGRAVE

DAVID HEMMINGS

SARAH MILES

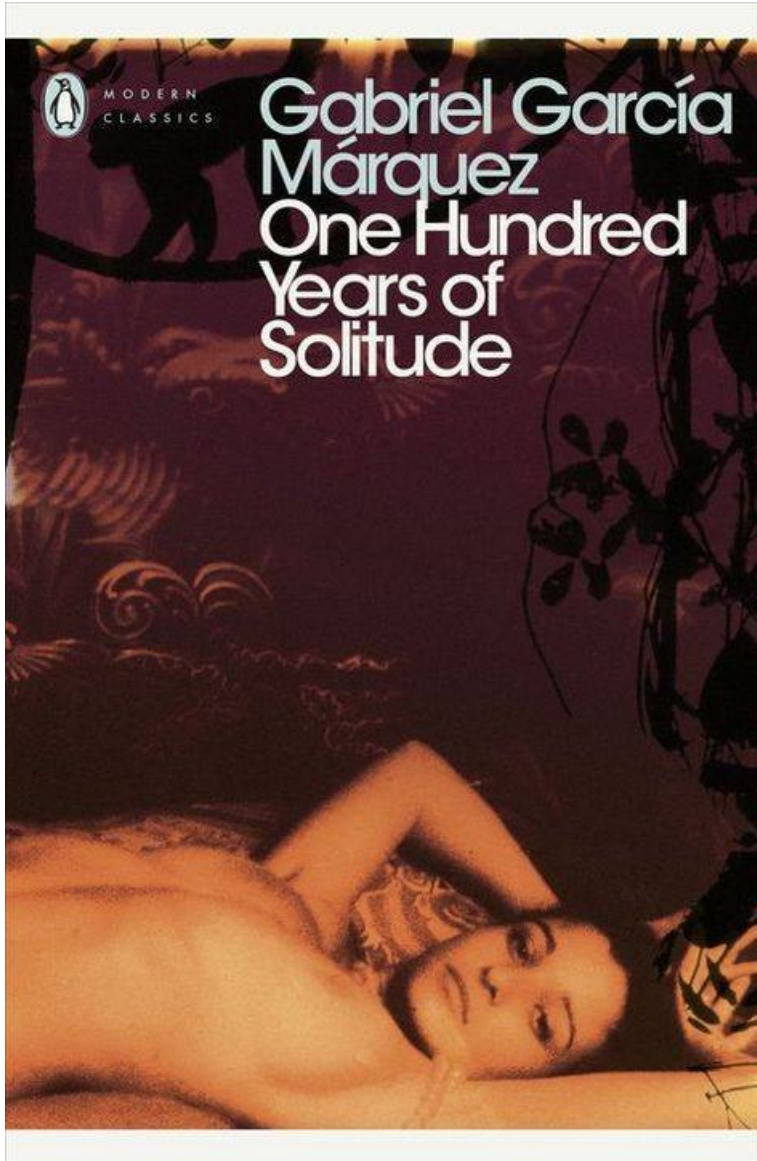
One Hundred Years of Solitude

Macondo Books

Some time
in my University career
over a decade
as a student
My book store opened
a hole in the wall
with a quirky stock
and quirky people
who could spend a Saturday
on their haunches
checking out the bottom shelves

I bought Marquez there
and read 100 years
Not for the cover
but because of my bookshop

~~



Stand on Zanzibar

Seven Billion People
all standing on Zanzibar
Is this what we wanted
so many years ago
when we asked Mexico
to find out how to feed us?

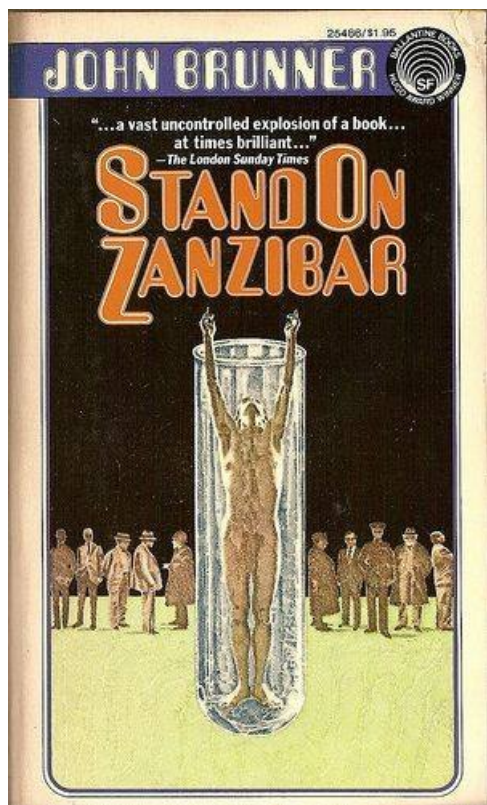
All three billion of us?

They did it, the Green Revolution
short wheat
Nitrogen fertilizer from oil
and we can feed seven billion

Can we feed the 9 billion
that are coming?

Where will they stand?

~~



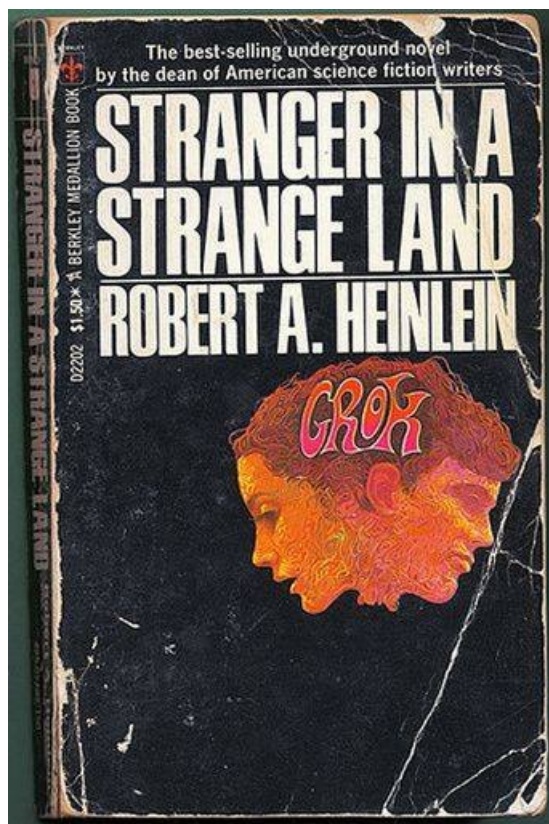
Stranger in a Strange Land

Some books,
no
some writers
do not survive you
growing up.

Ayn Rand springs
instantly to mind
but others exist

It is too easy to see
in their strings
in their threads
the source

Their childish whims
the future
~~

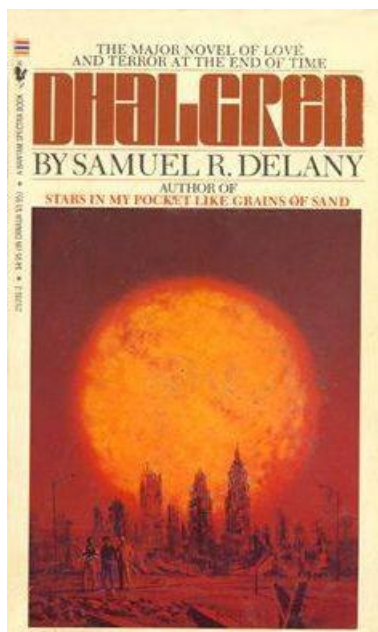


Dhalgren

Some books seem fine
full of ideas
worth reading

But some
stay in the mind
for a single image

The kid's Orchid
existed in my head
and on my hand,
(I can see it now),
long before I met
Wolverine
~~



Metamorphosis

From the looks
of the books
that I remember
It's a pretty good bet
that I bought most of them
second hand

Those book racks
in the Drug Store
often had seconds
mixed in with the new

Second hand to me
was usually ten years old
Probably antiques now
if I hadn't lent them all
or given them away

Same thing, usually
~~

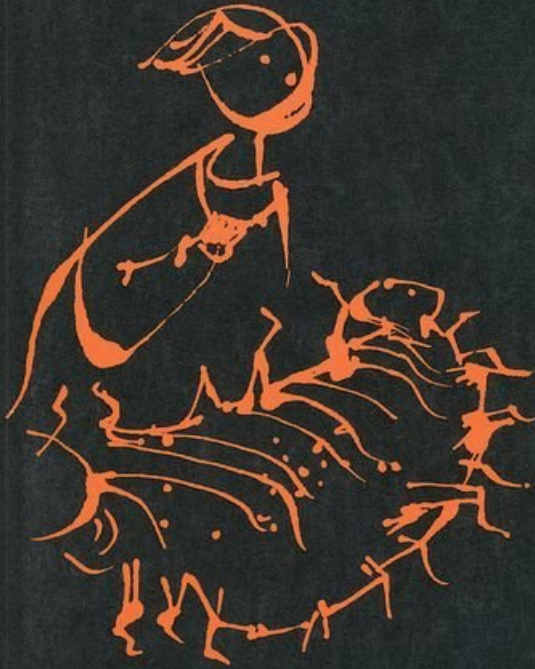


Penguin Modern Classics

3/6

Franz Kafka

Metamorphosis
and Other Stories



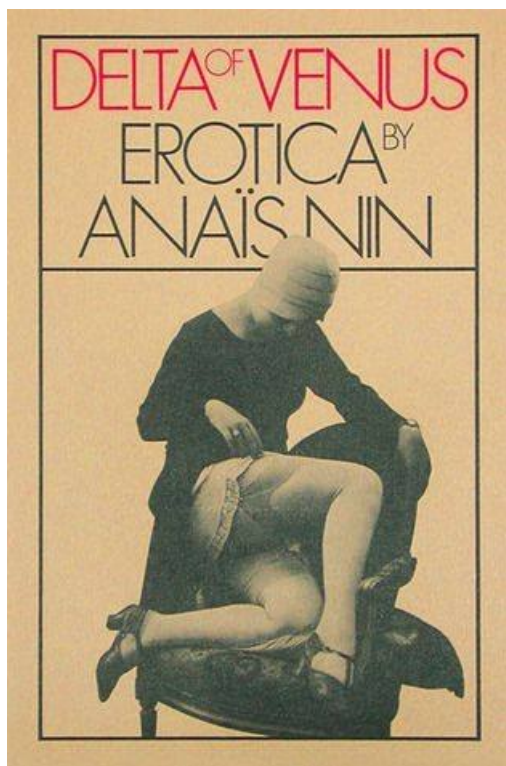
Delta of Venus

Some writers
catch your interest
far more than their books

Anais Nin and Henri Miller
were much more important
to me in the '70s

Today I feel her poetry
speaks more loudly to me
than her affairs

~~



Tom Swift and the Asteroid Pirates

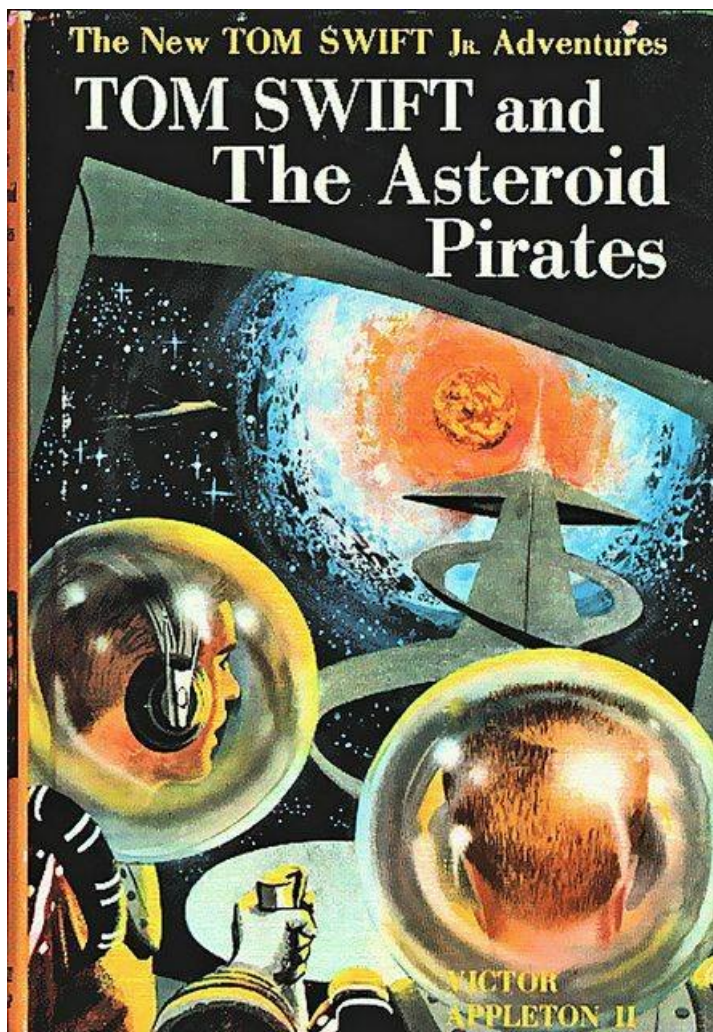
How do you get a kid reading
I hear that a lot
but I have no answer
Every kid I knew
read

Some were Hardy Boys
or Nancy Drew
but somehow
I ended up
with Tom Swift Jr.

I've still got a big collection
that I hoped to pass along
to my kids

There are better ways
to tell stories today
More interesting

So I've still got my collection
~~



Sombrero Fallout

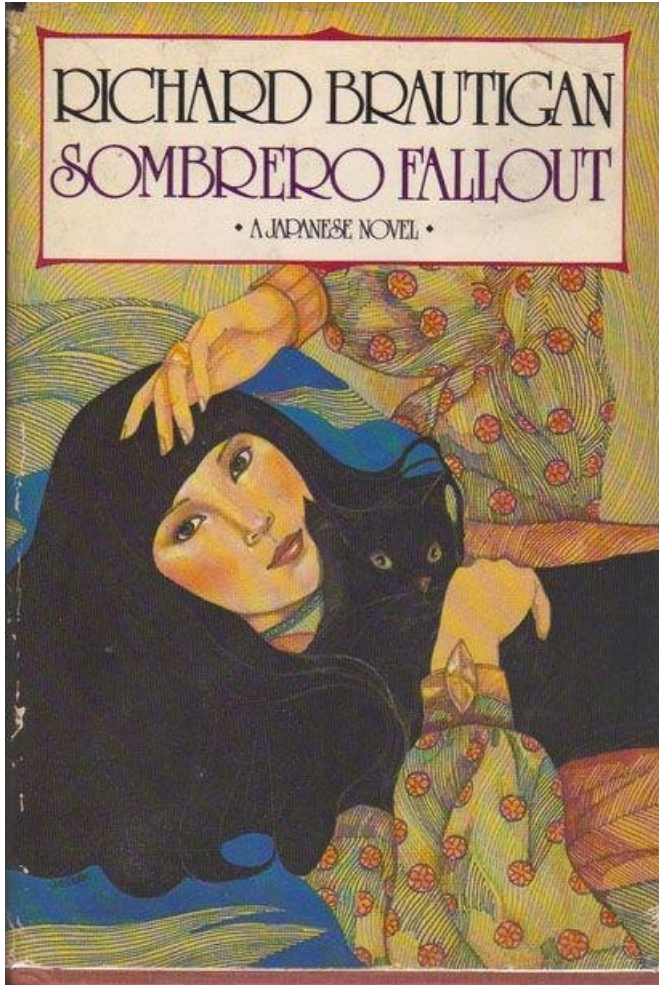
Occasionally
I would cough up the money
and buy a new book

Brautigan was one of the few
It's funny
how few of his books
I still own

"Oh you must read this"

Ah, I seem to remember
that girl in the bar
in Port Stanley
still owes me
some Margret Atwood

~~



The Book of Imaginary Beings

Look here
for just a moment
and then later
pick another place

Nothing makes a chore
like trying to read
the encyclopedia
end to end

We had three
and without trying
I read most

Don't try
just open the book
and begin reading
~~

DISCUS/AVON/QS19/11.45 

THE BOOK OF IMAGINARY BEINGS

The new work by "a giant of world literature." JOHN UPDIKE

Jorge Luis Borges

With Margarita Guerrero; revised, enlarged, and translated by
Norman Thomas di Giovanni in collaboration with the author



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