

Robert Luhn

The Secret Wife of Halter Mitty

(Thurber's Hero Meets Bret Easton Ellis)

TapocketatapocketatapocketapocketakurplgchunGGGGGNNNNNNNGGGG!!!!!!

"Dammit Alice!" cried ace bedswerver Halter Mitty. "You're going to throw out my back with those coy maneuvers of yours, you saucy minx!" Mitty winked boyishly, then gave her a right cross. They both tumbled off the bed and onto the tacks that Mitty had set on the floor.

"AIYEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!!!!!!" bellowed Halter Mitty, master Sado-masseur. "That's the way I LIKE it!" They rolled across the razor-sharp points like two kids having the time of their lives. But fun was fun—Halter Mitty had work to do. Man's work.

"Alice—hand me that pile-driver!" With his hands firmly wrapped about the leatherette grips, Mitty's hips began banging behind every jolt of the Wankel 200-horsepower cantilever engine! Tapocketatapocketatapocketapocketapocketapocketapocketapocketa-thurpglNNNNNNNGGGGGGGGGG!!! "Dammit Alice—more power! I've got to have *more* power!" Mitty drove on, deeper and deeper, cutting away layer after layer of pretense and innuendo, the shards of his past, the shrapnel of his misgivings. The windmills of his mind flew past, poker hot and reeking like rancid meat.

Paydirt. The 5-inch-thick galvanized neutronium-steel plates shattered under the pounding of his throbbing tool to reveal a chamber. And there she was. No mortal deserved her, no god could have created her, no man could possess her. No man, that is, except Halter Mitty. He ripped off his durachrome jodhpurs and—

"Hey—hey Mac!" The anthropoid newsstand clerk tapped Mitty roughly on the shoulder. "You gonna buy those magazines or just sweat all over 'em?" "Um . . . yes, I will! Buy them, I mean. Thank you," murmured Mitty. "I'll take these copies of *Sunset*, *Home Mechanix*, and . . . um . . . *Playboy's* 'Girls of Caltrans' issue."

The clerk rang up the order. "Paper of plastic?" Mitty shot the dolt a withering glance. "Plastic, of course, my good man! You can't bind *anyone* with paper!"

Halter Mitty slung the bag over his shoulder and smartly sauntered out the door, the thrum of a drill press playing in the back of his mind. ■