

Article title: COSMOS: A LIFE by Robert Luhn

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Description:

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COSMOS: A LIFE

by Robert Luhn

"We're all made of star stuff, you know."

Oh no. Not again.

"That egg you're frying right now" he paused, chortling amiably as he adjusted his imaginary throat mike, "Consider...the chicken is actually a descendent of the dinosaur, so the ancient mystery that has befuddled scientists for eons--'Which came first, the chicken or the egg?'--should really be 'Which came first, the stegosaurus or the egg?' Naturally this implies much for..."

I should have seen this coming. The cream-colored turtleneck perfectly curled over like a sea anemone. The corduroy coat with the elbow patches. Oh God. He's even died his hair black this time.

"..but what *is* the egg? Or the chicken, for that matter? And can we *really* separate the two? It depends on how you ask the question. For example..."

I should never have let him watch that damn TV show. Before I knew it, he was going on and on about quasars and buying penny loafers and...and...worrying about lighting angles for his imaginary camera crew. My God, it's *Sunset Boulevard* all over again and *I'm* William Holden.

"...the ancient astronomers of Ulan Bator found the answer long before western scientists: beeswax. Its 'granular' structure, not unlike that found in the core of neutron stars--where all starstuff comes from--is a perfect metaphor for..."

It's one thing for him to sit there like he's posing for a book sleeve. But *starstuff* is more than any wife can be expected to...

"...take the pattern of egg yolk on this plate. The whorls are reminiscent of the billyuns and billyuns of stars that formed into..."

Chloroform. That's the ticket. Chloroform. It's the only answer...

"...which is the 7th moon of Jupiter--or is it the 5th moon of Saturn? Well, the key point is...dear? You're not listening."

"Shut up!" I explain, "And eat your breakfast."

"But dear--what you fail to realize is that Kepler, a Danish astron..."

As he turns in his chair for a better camera angle, I reach into the kitchen drawer with a practiced motion.

In a flash I have the chloroform-soaked swab over his face. The amiable chattering turns to amiable mumbles, the sweek-sweek of his pants legs, once amiably crossing and uncrossing over and over again, stops. The gesticulating left hand stalls in mid-air, and finally, thankfully, drops with a welcome thud into his eggs.

The cosmos--or at least one tiny corner of it--will be quiet today.

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