

## The Cool Cat Club

James Russel renowned luvy, walked down Waldorf Street; resplendent in his chalk stripe suit. Neither dawdling nor loitering, he made his way towards his appointment at the voiceover studios in Dean Street.

As he passed the open bay-window of a threadbare Queen Anne house, a soft cockney voice called out. 'Ere darling, 'aint you 'im of off the silver screen?'

James turned on his smile and nodded.

The temptress, with legs that went up to her armpits was inviting him in, 'so as to get his autograph'. She led him under a sign that read 'Cool Cat Club' and through into a dark panelled sitting room. It was lit by a three-candle candelabra balanced on a ring-stained table. Two matelots sat on a chaise longue in the other corner of the room. Cigarette smoke, curled up their gold braided hats. Tied with a bow over their left ears, the HMS imprinted on their ribbons, glinted teasingly in the flickering light.

The hostess fished a bottle from a brown paper bag and threw the rum at one of the sailors, who deftly caught it.

'Please sign the bag. To Diane. Just Diane,' then she slow winked him. Eyes all a batter.

James fished his Montblanc from his breast pocket and inscribed the bag adding with a flourish, 'all my love.' He gently blew on the waxy paper to blot the ink.

Diane in raptures waved the paper bag at the sailors and then grabbed James by the double-lapels and stuck the biggest smacker, right on his lips.

Waving goodbye, James left the Cool Cat behind and made his way to the studios. He thought nothing of the encounter with the Soho Hostess, so regularly was he asked for his autograph. It had been worth it though, for a glimpse of those stockinged legs.

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Sat in the claustrophobic recording booth James waited for the light to turn red.

When it did, he punched the tag line out.

'Blue Stratos. For men.'

He repeated the tag line a half dozen times, plumbing the depths of his range. Remembering to project from the chest not the throat. He was there for half an hour, before the sound man giggled and gave him the thumbs up. 'In the bag.'

The Pillars of Hercules was just around the corner. Time to sooth his tonsils. All the Fleet Street regulars were in and propping up the bar was his best friend and fellow actor; Michael Cain.

As the booze flowed freely, autographs were signed liberally on beer mats. James regaled his recent signing for Diane, concluding with his trademark 'and how funny was that!'

Michael looked over quizzically. 'Not as funny as you think James. First, there's lipstick all over your face and second, you know about the Cool Cat Club's repute?'

'Nup?'

'Well James, funniest thing is you daft apeth. They're not Cool Cats at all. Your hostess with the moistest.' Michael giggled. 'Diane, that's her alter-ego. She's really, how do I tell you? A good time geezer.'