

Authors win with tightly-written stories



Courtesy of MacMillan Publishing
By William Rudolph
Staff Reviewer

Emmanuel Carrère's "The Mustache" Collier Fiction

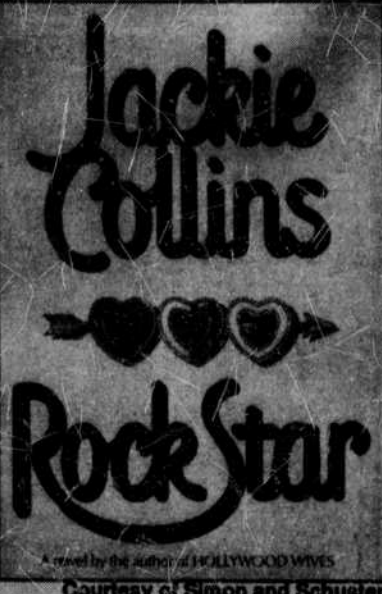
Imagine what it would be like to walk into a beauty salon after having had waist-length hair all your life and emerge with it trimmed to the shoulders. That might be strange enough, but there's more. Imagine that your spouse and friends didn't seem to notice the change and claimed you had never had long hair at all. From that innocuous start, Emmanuel Carrère's

"The Mustache" evolves into a twisting web of suspense. Carrère, the 1984 winner of France's coveted Prix Passion, doesn't rely on beings from beyond the grave or demonic '50s cruisers with minds of their own to scare the reader. Instead, he takes a quite ordinary situation and turns it into a snowballing nightmare that leaves the reader thoroughly chilled.

... identify is a fragile thing, and the simplest of actions — in this case, shaving off one's mustache — can shatter it.

"The Mustache" begins with the unnamed young Parisian architect hero of the novel deciding to shave off the mustache he's been cultivating for ten years. But his lark turns out to have a completely unexpected result. The hero imagines that his clean-shaven face will surprise his friends. Instead, the surprise is on him when his wife refuses to acknowledge that he ever had a mustache, let alone shaved one off.

See BOOKS on 10



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Staff Reviewer

Jackie Collins "Rock Star" Simon and Schuster

Nobody does it like Jackie Collins. After last year's disappointing "Hollywood Husbands," she's after your jugular vein and a No. 1 place on the bestseller lists with her latest, "Rock Star." This is Jackie Collins at her unmatched best. From the instant "Rock Star" opens, you're caught. Like suntan oil, the book starts out at a highly concentrated spot and then

sleekly spreads out to cover all bases. Not only do we get Collins' trademark kinky sex, glamorous places and witty characterizations of the stars, the hangers-on, the beautiful people at the top and the scud at the bottom, but Collins' pacing has never been tighter, carrying the action and reader along higher and higher until her usual climax of suspense, danger and trial by fire. And of course, Collins' tongue-in-cheek epilogue deals everything out very precisely and wittily.

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"Rock Star" follows the careers of three of the world's biggest rock stars: Kris Phoenix, an aging British rocker with an engaging devil-may-care attitude and bad-boy reputa-

tion; Bobby Mandella, a former teen idol who made it big as a crossover superstar until his greatness caught up with him in a tragic accident that left him blind; and Rafealla, a quintessential Collins heroine along the lines of Lucky Santangelo of "Chances" and Dallas from "Lovers and Gamblers." Rafealla, the daughter of a half-American/half-Ethiopian opera singer and French ballerina, has risen to the top with a distinctive mixture of hot Brazilian rhythms with cool jazz.

The three have assembled for a presidential primary fund-raising dinner on the palatial estate of the man who controls them all, Marcus Citroen, who is head of Blue Cadillac Records and one of the most powerful and evil men in the world. Each of them has reason to hate Citroen... but has one of them acted on that hate?

Collins effortlessly combines flashbacks with present-day scenes to propel the novel along at a furious pace. Fans of the kinky won't be disappointed in the character of Nova Citroen, Marcus' wife and ex-German call girl. As a matter of fact, no one can be disappointed with the novel. It may not be Dostoevsky, but "Rock Star" stands head and shoulders above the rest of popular fiction today like filet mignon compared to ground beef. And like a gourmet dining experience, Jackie Collins newest novel should be savored with pleasure.

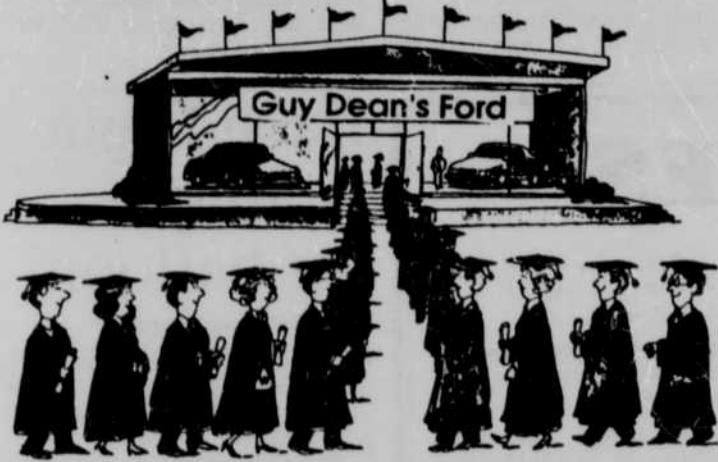
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