

Jogging Down Lovers ' Lanes

Dog - walking down Heygate late one night , soon after pub closing time , we were very nearly run down by a car heading in haste up this well used no through road . Though I forbore to note the number , it did bring to mind some of the more interesting moments of my years of jogging along the byways of Bramham in the Seventies and Eighties. Quite aside from the goings - on for which the woods of Bramham Park were famous ; the regular antics of some well - known ladies with lorry drivers in the aptly named , nearest A1 lay-by ; and the daily visits of the Mr Whippy icecream van to one infamous Bramham home ; the local jogger could guarantee coming upon the occasional unexpected intimate encounter .

There was the raddled blonde in the hot - rod sports car who chose this same Heygate for her daily assignation , little suspecting the numbers of unimpeachable ladies who walked their dogs as she and her lunchtime lover took their exercise , seemingly all oblivious . Twelve noon was never quite the same again , once her energies or his inclinations had taken their natural course --- or they had found a less spectacular spot.

It was later in the day , soon after school was out , that another pair of cars would come together along Headley Lane , under the clump of trees where tarmac becomes grassy track . Here any jogger of delicate sensitivities would break into a sprint as he passed a swaying saloon , glad that the steamed up glass prevented graphic confirmation of his suspicions , but even more that neither he nor the athletic pair could catch more than a glimpse for future mutual embarrassment.

And it was along these lanes that I came to be the first to realise that the fortuitous meetings of one of my neighbours with his friend ' s wife was something rather more than accidental. It took a while to twig , but eventually the sight of one , the other , or both hanging

around each time I went out to jog made the penny drop . This naturally left me in a quandary , for his wife was a charming creature who seemed to deserve rather better . Nevertheless , like a true Englishman , I kept my own counsel , firmly hoping that I was wrong , or that truth would out but from another source , as indeed it did . What paroxysms of horror I shared with my family and friends as we discovered our neighbour 's disgraceful deceit , and the family moved on .

Heygate , it was , that became the scene of my most climactic jogging revelation . One evening in a Seventies Summer , I arrived in full flow at the top of Rhode 's Hill Lane , that tributary of Heygate where a sharp turn right to the rocks marks the little hill opposite New York Farm. This was a regular short blow --- uphill , turn round at the rocks , and coast down again . Putting in my spurt round the corner I was met full on with the sight of a pair coupling vigorously , taking up the whole width of the lane in camber - aided rapture . My mind had a split second . Should I hurdle the pair , taking the chance that their upthrust might catch me unawares with disastrous results ? Or would a quick turnaround prove a more sensitive , less embarrassing , move ? Choosing the latter , I left the pair to their al fresco recreation .

It was while recounting this episode , some years later , that I detected a slight frisson in my audience , when a middle aged lady , with just a second 's hesitation , delicately enquired after my knowledge of who might have been engaged . " Don 't worry , " I replied , " it was a long time ago , and the couple must by now be well past the first flush . "