

# STARLIKE

by Edith Lyre

And so then we had to go to our next stop, a class where they collect semen from a bull. And they brought the biggest bulls with flies on them that you could ever imagine. They had this poor little animal — he had his head stuck in a thing — and the guy said, ‘This is a steer, and when he was young, other male steers would jump on him, he’s just one of these strange animals that give off the wrong hormones.’ And so as soon as they saw that happening they pulled him out and segregated him, and now he’s being used in this experiment to get fucked by a big bull. And there was a big bull sitting there, waiting.

Christopher ran out of film and he was going nuts, he wanted to get the big cock out. So they get the bull over and let him mount the steer and he gives out some juice but they don’t want *that* juice. His cock is like a two-foot pencil. It’s pointed. So the guy said, ‘Wait, I have to get the artificial vagina.’ So he ran in and got the glove and everything, and then the bull mounted again and he ejaculated really fast and the whole

thing was over. Then we went into the office and watched while the guy took the sperm out of the artificial vagina.

All of us slept on the way to the airport for some reason except Chris, he said he was going to spend the night in Denver and go to the baths. Watching the bull must have got him really hot.

— Andy Warhol, Diaries 566-7

Everybody's read House of Leaves. Everybody knows, to go deeper, we go left, and at the absolute depth of all the leftness, there gnaws the child of Pasiphaë. Starlike Asterion. Everybody. Before he built the labyrinth, Daedalus blueprinted and boarded a fur-suit for the queen, quadrupedal and maple-backed and bolted tight with uncured cow-skin, with a rear flap for the express purpose of sexual entrance. The myths do not recall whether he stopped to think well King Minos doesn't judge my weekends I hope he and Pasiphaë have fun or whether, in the wilderness of frenzy (Poseidon's punishment for Minos' misaction), the queen sauntered right through the factory-gate, like,

Daedalus I wanna fuck this actual sub-sentient animal any ideas how? But a maze-maker is a nature of trickster and some ingenious guilt can be presumed. Problem and solution— All begins with the master craftsman. Everybody knows the symbolic relation between the Cretan maze and the adult mind, but think a) about what the Greeks installed to the centre of their psychocultural maze and b) about the artful duality of drawing ten-thousand circles around your object of repression as if to brag about, or celebrate, the depth of its burial, for all that — contradictorily — this really, in actuality, only flags and emphasises and, with astonishing sincerity, depicts that repressed object as a *deliberate* and in fact *unrepressed* archetype. First, think the minotaur as *matriarchal-primordial*. Second, rethink the minotaur as *logos*. I.E. *forced exception*. What gets buried? Alongside the bathwaters of bestiality and cannibalism, what else gets buried?

Infidelity's high on the list. Withheld sacrifice — as Poseidon's command was that Minos should slaughter the bull — is as well. Nature, too, comes up, but disingenuously: e.g., per Alighieri, '*l'infamia di Creti era distesa/ che fu concetta ne la falsa vacca*' (12.12-13); or, 'The infamy of Crete was stretched along/ Who was conceived in the fake cow,' the 'fake cow' being Queen Pasiphaë in Daedalus' fur-suit. I call this disingenuous because it's clear the Greeks (if wilfully) misread Asterion as an outrage against nature — as later would Alighieri (the poet situated Asterion at the rim of a triple descent, a symbol uniting all three manners of violence, one of which was violence against nature) — whereas, to me, the action of Asterion as *all too* natural, 'horribly all too,' is pretty obvious. Christa Wolf reminds us that *the primordial* (read: inhuman (read: natural)) and *the feminine* weren't much demarcated back in these days.

Starlike Asterion arrives, pretty well, from Nothing. (He arrives through the inter-section of a woman and nature: two Nothings, two forces with no powers of creation, two forces of less-than-entropy.) He comes *ex nihilo* — that is to say, *from the Mothers*. Think Lovecraft's Azathoth, who both is beyond and is the centre-itself of the universe. Daedalus's floor-plan describes the Achaean cosmos, the circuitry of their ten-thousand-circle orbit around Pasiphaë's child. He snarls, chokes. When a nymph of iron, a *cyborg* she calls herself — E, nice to meet you — graces Asterion's shore (by wondrous ventures), the mazefolk deliver him to her custody and beg her, please, take him. She doesn't understand a word but she squeezes the monster's little hoof and says Pug you said? He's beautiful. Really I'm honoured by your trust.

What's he eat?