

ANOTHER MORON'S VIEW OF HOW THINGS ARE GOING (1992)

by Mark Gallagher

I was sitting on the front step with a bottle of Reschs and the Saturday paper. It was Wednesday afternoon but that didn't bother me. I'd given up applying for these jobs anyway. I knew someone else was going to get them.

Two girls came walking along my street. I'd met one of them at a party once so I said "G'day". They didn't hear me so I said "Hi", this time a bit louder. They still didn't hear.

I forced my sorry carcass to its feet and ambled inside to top up my glass. Along the way I stopped to check out something that was bothering me. There is an invention - a reflective sheet of glass we frame and hang on the wall. The ancient Celts made them from highly polished bronze and silver. They are everywhere and I can't bear to look at them or even mention their name so let's just say I found out what I'm about to tell you from an undisclosed source. So I says to me self, "Mum was right. Look at yourself, would ya'. You're a fuckin' dag. No wonder you can't keep a lady's interest for more than a couple of hours."

Looking down something horrible came to my attention - big brown boots. Big brown scuffed boots. One lace was broken so it only laced up half a boot, and the other one was a different colour.

Just to the north I found something equally grotesque - a pair of thick grey woollen socks. A little bit flash - imported and all. New Zealand must be the fashion hub of the world 'cause my boots were made there too. These socks were not quite a perfect match, but pretty close. One of them was covered in holes from the stuff that splatters when you're welding. Must be seven years now I've been wearing these socks around, I reflected as I scratched my chin.

As my eyes moved further upward I was increasingly disappointed. They fell upon a pair of green tracksuit pants - the kind you can still get at Venture for less than ten bucks. They had holes too, but only a few small ones. And you could just make out the different colours of thread used at times when the seams needed stitching. The elastic

had gone in the waist but I'd found that wrapping a thick belt around them generally kept them up. They had, after all, been hanging off my carcass for almost as long as the socks.

My T-shirt was no less disheartening. It wasn't too stained or dirty, surprisingly enough. But like the tracksuit pants it was faded and a little air-conditioned.

So I says to me self - "Self, you've got to get some new duds. Maybe a couple of outfits. Something real flash." I gathered my things and I went for a stroll into Jammo.

I didn't know what to expect but that was alright because I didn't know what I was looking for. Someone had told me Jason Donovan appeared here once for a promotional thing so I thought the fashion shops would have to be pretty swish. I imagined maybe I'd be shopping at something like Roger David or Grace Brothers or one of those places.

I must have missed the front entrance and come through a side door but lo-and-behold, there was the type of shop I was looking for right before my very eyes. I didn't catch the name of the place but as I walked in I thought how much it reminded me of a shop I'd been to in Sydney called Growlings or something.

I spent ages in there - at least ten minutes just trying things on. Just look at these fine garments, I thought, and the prices are unbelievable.

I took an armful of stuff over to the cash register. The lady recited my order as she punched it in:

"Three Bonds T-shirts... fifteen dollars.

One pair Rough Rider denim jeans... eighteen ninety-five.

Two pairs fleecy track pants... nineteen ninety.

Three flannelette shirts... twenty-five fifty.

One pair scuff-proof boots... twenty-nine ninety-five.

That'll be eighty-seven thirty-five thanks."

Crikey, I thought. These few little things cost that much? Stuff it, I'm on a mission to look good. The rent can wait.