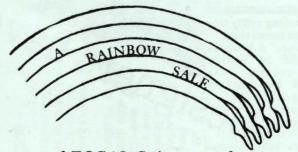




THAT SPICY ARTICLE IN TIME ON THE COMPUTER society, consumed late at night on an already satiated brain, gave one of our staff the following nightmare: 'Arriving at the shop one morning by the lane-side as usual, I was a bit put out that no one said hello. The workrooms seemed full, but I didn't pay much attention to their contents as I pressed through in search of a more human atmosphere. The front, however, was deserted. I wondered if I had made a horrible mistake, and come to work on a Sunday. But no, the place was humming with activity, scissors snipping and sewing machines racing madly. Then a familiar voice wished me good morning, which was a tremendous relief. The voice seemed to come from one of the try-on rooms. I began to hunt for my desk, which had vanished (as things are wont to do in our place). I wanted to work on an ad, and I may have said something to that effect. "That isn't necessary." said the voice. "Oh," I said doubtfully, "are sales that good?" "We changed things over the weekend," was the reply. "All our production is under contract now." I thought I'd better have a closer look at the back. I found no one there, although all the machines were working, cutting squares and triangles and stitching them together with great efficiency. The day's production already stood in three-foot stacks. Appalled, I enquired where were the elegant coats, the pretty dresses? "That's all finished," the voice told me with mild contempt. "Now we make dust covers for IBM." On an impulse, I looked into the try-on room. Again there was no one--unless you count a six-armed metal box on rollers, which blinked at me indignantly. I had interrupted it while trying on a new outfit. "There are never any problems with fit," said the voice smugly, from a grid on the wall. "But what about the people?" I asked in desperation. "What will they wear?" "People? Oh, you mean the unemployed," was the reply. 'If they're unhappy, they can leave the country.'



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