

SALMONELLA MEN  
ON PLANET PORNO

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AND OTHER STORIES

YASUTAKA TSUTSUI

*Translated by Andrew Driver*



ALMA BOOKS

ALMA BOOKS LTD  
London House  
243–253 Lower Mortlake Road  
Richmond  
Surrey TW9 2LL  
United Kingdom  
www.almabooks.com

*Salmonella Men on Planet Porno and Other Stories* first published by Alma Books Limited in 2006

This new edition printed in 2008  
PORUNO WAKUSEI NO SARUMONERA NINGEN

and twelve other stories by Yasutaka Tsutsui

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Original Japanese edition of *Poruno Wakusei No Sarumonera Ningen* published by Shinchosha, Co., Ltd in 1979

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Printed in England by CPI Cox & Wyman, Reading, Berkshire

Cover Illustration: Øivind Hovland

ISBN: 978-1-84688-068-1

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank the following persons for appearing in the title story or allowing their works to be cited in it: Toshitaka Hidaka (zoologist), Akira Miyawaki (botanist), Yasushi Kurihara (ecologist), Kazuki Miyashita (ecologist), Makoto Numata (biologist), Kenzaburo Oe (novelist), Fujio Ishihara (SF writer), Yo Sano (mystery writer), Konrad Lorenz (animal behaviourist) and Edmond Hamilton (SF writer).

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SALMONELLA MEN  
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## The Dabba Dabba Tree

My father came up from the country carrying a curiously shaped bonsai tree.

“This here’s a Dabba Dabba Tree,” he announced, showing it to me and my wife. “It’s a special kind of cedar, see.”

“My, what an odd-looking thing,” said my wife, examining it with a look of puzzlement.

The tree was about eight inches tall. It was thicker at the base but tapered off towards the top, where the foliage was more sparse. Standing upright, the trunk formed a perfect cone.

“Yes, and what an odd name,” I added, watching my father’s expression. Perhaps it would shed some light on his reason for bringing the tree.

“Well, it’s not just the name that’s odd,” he said, narrowing his eyes. “If you put this Dabba Dabba Tree in your bedroom at night, you’ll have fruity dreams till morning comes!”

“Gosh! I wonder what he means,” said my wife.

I whispered in her ear. “Erotic dreams, of course.”

“Oh!” she exclaimed, blushing.

My father gave her a lewd look and continued. “You’ve been married five years but still ain’t had kids. That’s why I brought you the tree. Put it in your bedroom tonight – you’re sure to have some cracking dreams. Go on, have it! It’s no good for an old codger like me! Kekekekekeh!” he chuckled like some weird bird, before setting off back to the country.

That night, we took the Dabba Dabba Tree into our bedroom and placed it at the foot of our double bed. Yes, we were still using a double bed even after five years of marriage. Well, our bedroom was rather small. There wasn’t enough room for two beds.

“Goodnight, then.”

“Yes, goodnight.”

We dived under the sheets, excitedly turned our backs on each other, and concentrated on getting to sleep. At times like this, you want to be the first to drop off. Otherwise, the sound of your partner’s breathing gets on your nerves and keeps you awake. So much the worse if you know she’s having an erotic dream. And worse still if she starts talking in her sleep.

Luckily, I nodded off immediately.

And I started dreaming. I dreamt I was in my bedroom, sleeping in my double bed with my wife.

“Yes! A dream!”

I sat up. My wife was slumbering peacefully next to me, completely naked. She can’t sleep any other way. I turned my head in puzzlement.

“Great. What’s erotic about that?!”

If I made love to her after all this time, there wouldn’t be anything erotic about it at all. It would just be dull old reality – whether she was naked or not.

“Well, if this is an erotic dream, I’d better do something erotic!”

I got out of bed and put my shirt and trousers on. Then I slipped on some sandals and went outside. To find a woman worthy of sharing my erotic dream, I’d have to go to the nightlife district. I walked along a dark side-road, then turned into a major thoroughfare. The street shone as bright as day, thanks to the bars and restaurants on either side. There were people everywhere.

“Where are all the tasty women then?” I grumbled. I was feeling rather tired after walking two or three blocks. Having an erotic dream clearly demanded a certain amount of perseverance. I would spot a woman who looked promising from a distance but who, on closer inspection, turned out to be a wrinkled old hag. Or a tall, slender girl with a great figure would be walking

in front of me. I’d hurry to catch her up, only to find that she was a complete dog to look at. I’m not usually picky about my women. But now that I was having this erotic dream, it would have been pointless to go for someone I didn’t fancy. I walked on.

Then a girl stepped out of a streetside café. She was dressed in a dark-brown suit and looked like a college student. Wearing little make-up besides her lipstick, she had pale skin, large eyes and a pretty face.

“YES!!!” I exclaimed, blocking her way.

“Can I help you?” she asked, looking me up and down.

“Well, actually...” I replied falteringly, wondering how to explain. “Actually, I’ve got this Dabba Dabba Tree, you see, and...”

“Oh no. Not you as well!” she giggled. Then her expression changed to a frown. “You’re the fourth one tonight. You’re going to say you’re having an erotic dream because of this ‘Dabba Dabba Tree’, and you want to have sex with me. Right?”

“What? You mean there are others?” I replied, somewhat surprised. But after all, it *was* just a dream. Who cared? “I mean, er, that’s right. I really want to have sex with you.”

“In your dreams!” she said with an ironic smile, shaking her head. “I’ve said the same to all of them. This might be a dream for you, but for me, it’s reality! And anyway, I’m still a virgin. I refuse to lose my virginity just to fulfil someone else’s dream!”

What was she on about? Well, it didn’t matter. It was just a dream.

“Those other three must have been weak-willed. Spineless. And maybe they didn’t want you enough anyway,” I said. “But I won’t give up so easily, d’you hear? This may well be reality for you, but for me it’s just a dream. So I don’t care what happens! And anyway, I fancy you. I fancy you like mad, so I’m going to make love to you. And if you say no, I’ll just have to force myself on you, right here and now.”

“What, here in the street?”

“That’s right. I don’t care who sees us, or where we are. I’m going to pounce on you, and rip that tasteful, well-tailored dark-brown suit off your body, a-a-and then, and then I’m going to pull off your bra, and – and—”

“All right, keep your hair on! Look, you’re slobbering!”

“Oh.” I quickly wiped my mouth with the back of my hand. “And then, and then, I’m going to pull down your panties—”

“Er – I’m wearing tights.”

“I’m going to pull down your panties together with your tights, then I’m going to grab hold of you, throw you onto the pavement and ravish your body by force. Well, you say you’re a virgin, and that’s a bit unfortunate for you. But hey, it’s a dream, it doesn’t matter! I’ll ravish you, and then—”

“The police might see us.”

“I don’t care. If they come to arrest me, I’ll just shout out at the top of my voice. Then I’ll wake up. Mind you... This is reality for you, isn’t it. Your clothes will be in a mess and you’ll be stark naked. You can’t go home like that. What’ll you do?”

“I don’t know. What do you think?”

“Why don’t we find a hotel? I don’t really want to rape you here. If the police came, they’d only spoil it.”

She hesitated for a moment, observing me with a sideways look. “All right,” she answered eventually, with some reluctance. “I’ll go with you. After all, it seems I only exist inside your dream. I can’t just ignore you, can I.”

So we turned off into a side road and wandered around the back streets looking for a discreet hotel. There were none to be found.

“Where are they all?!”

I was getting irritated. If we didn’t do it quickly, I might wake up.

“We might find one if we went away from town,” she said. “There’s a hotel right next to my college.”

We went up a hill and at last found a hotel. We entered the lobby and stood at the reception desk. A middle-aged woman with thinning hair came out. “I’m afraid we’re full,” she said. “But if you’d like to wait five or ten minutes, there’s sure to be a vacancy.”

I couldn’t be bothered to walk around looking for another hotel, so we went into the little waiting room next to the lobby. There, we sat on a sofa waiting for a vacancy. We were alone.

“Are you married?” the girl asked me.

“Yes.”

“Really? And what’s your wife doing now?”

“Sleeping next to me in our bedroom.”

“You mean you’re having a dream like this while your wife’s sleeping next to you? What sort of a husband are you?!”

“And how do I know what she’s dreaming about?!”

As I said that, another couple came into the hotel. I could hear the receptionist repeating the same words in the lobby.

“I’m afraid we’re full. But if you’d like to wait five or ten minutes, there’s sure to be a vacancy.”

As the couple came into the waiting room, I let out a cry. When they saw me, they stopped in their tracks. The woman was my wife. Her partner was our neighbour, Mr Miyamoto.

“Well, well!” said Miyamoto obsequiously.

They sat on the sofa opposite us. Chubby Miyamoto looked down at the floor in embarrassment.

“Well, aren’t you having a good time!” my wife said sarcastically.

“Yes, and you too!” I replied. I was going to ask how long she’d been seeing Miyamoto. But it was just a dream. It would be pointless to ask.

“She’s pretty,” said my wife, indicating my partner with her chin.

“Is this your wife?!” the girl said, hurrying to her feet. “Pleased to meet you. I’m, er—”

“Don’t be stupid. You don’t have to say anything.” I tugged her back down by the edge of her skirt.

The receptionist came in. “We have a vacancy now,” she announced. “This way, please.”

“Well, excuse us,” I said to Miyamoto and my wife as we got up to go.

The receptionist led us to our room. As soon as she’d left, I jumped on the girl, yelling “Come on, then!”

“Don’t!” she shrieked. She evaded me and stood at the corner of the bed. “That woman will be back with the tea soon.”

“You seem to know a lot about it!”

She blushed.

“Anyway, I can’t wait for all that. Let her come in!”

The girl eluded me again.

As we continued our chasing game, the receptionist came in with the tea. “The bath water should be hot now, so please feel free. Good evening.” And with that she left the room.

“I want to have a bath,” said the girl.

“I can’t wait for that,” I moaned. “Can’t you have one later?”

“Certainly not! I’ve been perspiring with all that walking around. You should have one after me, too. Look at your face. It’s covered in sweat.”

“No! I can’t wait any longer!” I said, lunging at her.

She darted into the bathroom and closed the door behind her.

“All right, I’ll come in with you!” I called out as I banged on the door.

“No!” she shouted. “I’d be too embarrassed.”

There was nothing for it. I took off my clothes and sat on the edge of the bed, naked, waiting for her to reappear. I was getting more and more irritated. This dream seemed awfully close to reality. I even started to think it might *be* reality. So, as a test, I dug my fingernail into my right cheek. If this was a dream, it wouldn’t hurt.

It hurt.

It hurt so much that it woke me up. In my sleep, I’d dug my nail hard into my cheek.

“DAMN!!!”

My wife was still sleeping peacefully, contentedly next to me. In my rage, I jumped up and punched her on the arm.

“Ow! OW!! What are you doing?!” She sprang up, startled. “Just when I was getting to the good bit!”

“Huh! You think I’m going to let you have all the fun? I’m going to go back to sleep and have the time of my life!”

“You think you’re the only one? Watch me!”

We turned our backs on each other with huffs of indignation, and concentrated on getting back to sleep. Luckily, I dozed off in an instant. And I started to dream. I dreamt I was sleeping in our bed at home.

“Yesss!! A dream!”

I slipped out of the sheets. My wife was sleeping naked on the bed.

“Right! Let’s get back to that hotel!”

I hunted around the bed looking for my clothes. But my shirt and trousers were nowhere to be seen. Of course they weren’t. I’d taken them off in the hotel.

I quickly looked around for another pair of trousers. But I couldn’t even wait that long. And anyway, it was only a dream.

“All right! I’ll go as I am!”

I raced out of the house stark naked, with nothing on my feet.

I ran along the dark side road and came out onto the main street. As before, it was as bright as day and full of people. Passers-by opened their eyes wide when they saw me running through the street in my birth-day suit. A few women screamed.

“Oy, you! Stop!!”

Near the crossroads, a policeman came running after me. “Stop that man! He’s gone insane!”

There's always someone who gets in the way, even in a dream. A passer-by stuck out a leg and tripped me, sending me sprawling on the pavement. The policeman jumped on my back as I struggled hard to resist. "This is my dream!" I cried. "Why don't you just disappear!"

The policeman was desperately trying to handcuff me. "He's lost his mind! Help me apprehend him!" he shouted to the watching bystanders.

Four or five men stepped forwards and tried to hold me down. I was punched hard two or three times, but I hardly felt a thing. It was a dream, after all. Still, I couldn't waste any more time messing about like this. If I didn't get away soon, the girl might grow tired of waiting and leave the hotel. So, reluctantly, I decided to wake up again. Even as the policeman and bystanders were holding me down, I shouted at the top of my voice.

The sound of my voice woke me up.

"What now, for God's sake?! What are you shouting for? You've gone and woken me up again! And just when I was getting to the good bit!" My wife, also woken by the sound of my voice, flew at me in a fury.

"You think you're the only one who wants a good dream?!" I said. I got up, took a fresh shirt and trousers from the wardrobe, laid them down beside the bed and got back in. "This time I'll get it right. I'll show you!"

"Well, you're not the only one!"

Once again, we turned our backs in indignation and concentrated on getting back to sleep. Again, I dropped off immediately. And I started dreaming again.

"Yessss!!! A dream!"

I got up immediately and hurriedly pulled on the shirt and trousers I'd laid beside the bed. I'd left my sandals in the hotel, too, so I slipped some shoes onto my bare feet. Then I dashed out of the house. If I failed to make it with that pretty girl this time, it would be the end of the world. I ran through the main

street with my hair all over the place. I did knock down the odd passer-by, but this time I managed to keep running without being challenged. I turned off the main street onto the dark uphill road that led to the hotel. I raced up the road panting, my whole body covered in sweat. I caught sight of the hotel's purple neon sign. My knees were about to give way.

"Where have you been all this time?" said the girl as I rushed into the room. Dressed in a bathrobe, she was drinking a bottle of beer she'd taken from the fridge. She looked utterly fed up.

"Sorry about that. Come on, then. Let's get on the bed!"

As I went to embrace her, she turned her face away in disgust.

"No way! You're covered in sweat! Go and have a wash!"

All right. I took off my clothes and went into the bathroom.

When I came back out, she was on her second bottle of beer. I suddenly remembered that I didn't have any money. I wouldn't even be able to pay for the hotel room, let alone the beer.

*Who cares*, I thought. As soon as it was time to settle the bill, I'd just shout out loud. Then I'd wake up and get away without paying. The girl would be left behind, of course. She'd be taken away by the police on charges of not paying for drinks or accommodation. That would be a bit sad, but it couldn't be helped. If I told her about it, she'd only refuse me again. Anyway, she was bound to have some money of her own, even if she was only a student.

Alcohol had given her cheeks a rosy glow, and her eyes were beginning to look glazed. The front of her bathrobe had fallen open, revealing a glimpse of her plump white breasts.

"Come on then, let's get you on the bed. Heheh, heheh, heheheheh!"

I lifted the girl in my arms and laid her down on the bed, where I undressed her.

Her body felt much too realistic for this to be a dream. *If things feel this realistic, I should have had a beer too*, I thought. I'd been thirsty just now and really needed a drink. But I thought

it wouldn't taste any good, as it was just a dream. So I decided not to. Anyway, I couldn't get out of bed to have a beer now that I was in the middle of it. I started to get on with the action.

Then the doorbell rang.

The sound of it woke me up.

I was in bed, lying on top of my wife and making love to her.

"What? You??" I groaned. "The last person I wanted to be doing it with!!"

My wife had woken up at the same time. "The feeling's mutual!" she replied with immense displeasure.

The doorbell rang again. It was already morning. Sunlight flooded in through a gap in the curtains, illuminating the Dabba Dabba Tree at the foot of our bed. I'm self-employed, so I don't have to get up early.

"Who could that be? At this time of the morning?"

"Go and find out," said my wife.

"You go!"

"I haven't got anything on."

"Nor have I!"

"You can get dressed more quickly."

I got up, slipped on my shirt and trousers and went to open the front door.

Standing there in the porch was our neighbour, Mr Miyamoto.

"Mr Miyamoto!..." I was going to mention our meeting at the hotel, but I managed to stop myself in time. That was a dream, after all. "What is it? At this time of the morning?"

"Yes, I'm sorry to bother you so early. It's just that I've got this 'Dabba Dabba Tree', you see," he said. "It's a kind of bonsai tree, and if you put it in your bedroom at night—"

"Yes, yes, yes," I interrupted. "I know, I've got one myself."

"Then you'll know what I mean. As it happens, I'm in the middle of a dream right now. Me talking to you here is actually part of my dream. Now, I've been quite keen on your wife for some time,

you see. And I've always wanted to, you know, *have* her, if ever I had the chance. Well, thanks to my Dabba Dabba Tree, I can now fulfil my wish, even if it is only a dream. And that's why I've come over. So without further ado, is your wife at home?"

"She's still in bed, actually."

"So much the better!" he said, and tried to force his way in.

I barred his path in utter incredulity. "Now just you wait a minute! This may be a dream for you, but for me it's reality. I'm not going to let you barge in here and sully my wife's honour just to fulfil your dream!"

"But I really want to make love to her! Otherwise what's the point of having an erotic dream?"

As we stood there arguing, Miyamoto's wife came running up.

"Oh dear! I really am sorry for my husband's selfishness. I said you shouldn't go, didn't I?! Look how much trouble you're causing our neighbour!"

"I know what," Miyamoto said, turning to me. "You can have sex with my wife. Now that's got to be fair, hasn't it?"

"Oh!" gasped his wife. Her face immediately turned a shade of crimson. She looked up at me with fluttering eyes and started to contort her body suggestively. "I'm sure he wouldn't be interested in an ordinary woman like me."

I found it hard to agree, and looked her over. She was a slim, good-looking woman with an oval face and large eyes. Yes, now that I saw her in this light, she was actually quite attractive. I gulped.

"No, no, not at all," I eventually replied. "Quite the opposite, in fact. That is, if *you* don't mind..."

She wriggled in embarrassment. "Well! I never dreamt this would happen. I mean, I don't mind at all, if *you* don't mind..."

"Really? Well, in-in-in that case... um..." I turned to Miyamoto, to make sure it was all right by him. But he'd already slipped into the bedroom. "Right, OK, so let's get... um..."

“Right, yes, let’s, shall we? Haha! Who would have thought it? Ho ho ho!” Mrs Miyamoto started to take off her blue-and-white striped dress, revealing a dark blue bra and panties underneath.

I ripped off my shirt and trousers, put my arm around her shoulders and led her into the bedroom. Her whole body was quivering with excitement. Her husband and my wife were already at it on the double bed.

“Er, excuse me, could you move over a bit?”

“Yes, of course.”

Miyamoto shifted over to the edge of the bed while still making love to my wife. I flopped down on the other side with Mrs Miyamoto. We threw our arms around each other and started getting down to it.

The two women began to gasp and pant, each spurred on by the other. Then the doorbell rang.

“You go this time,” I said to my wife.

“No!” she replied through her panting, shaking her head vigorously. “You go, please!!”

I reluctantly prised myself from Mrs Miyamoto’s tight embrace, threw on my shirt and trousers, and went to open the front door. Standing there in the porch was the Lola Cosmetics salesgirl. Now, this woman was stunningly beautiful. I’d always had a secret lust for her.

“Er... Good morning! Is your wife at home?” she asked.

“Oh, it’s you! Heheheheh!” I replied slowly. I licked my lips and rolled my eyes over her voluptuous physique, compressed into a suit of pure white. “Yes. Of course she’s at home. Anyway, why don’t you come in!”

She gave me a dubious look and edged into the hallway, keeping her distance at all times, before closing the door behind her.

“By the way, have you ever heard of the Dabba Dabba Tree?” I asked, still staring lewdly at her body.

“No. What’s that?”

She really didn’t seem to know. Realizing that it would take a while to explain, I thought hard before telling her the whole story.

“In other words, this is all part of Mr Miyamoto’s erotic dream,” I added in conclusion. “We are nothing but characters in his dream. So how about it? If we’re merely characters in someone else’s erotic dream, we might as well do something erotic too. The least we could do is have it off and enjoy ourselves!”

She looked at me as if I were mad. “I never heard anything so ridiculous in all my life. This is someone else’s dream?! You must be out of your mind.”

“No, you don’t understand,” I said with a sigh. “I’m perfectly sane. But we’re in someone else’s dream. Could you please take your clothes off now, quickly.”

She opened her eyes wide. “What unbelievable depravity! You, a seemingly respectable householder – a-a-a respectable member of society—”

I’d had enough. So I just pounced on her. “If we don’t hurry, Miyamoto will wake up!” This salesgirl was younger and more beautiful than Mrs Miyamoto. She was bound to be a much better sex partner.

As I ripped off her suit, she resisted me with all her strength. “But for us, this is reality!” she cried as she tried to hold me off. “Our lives will continue, even after your Mr Miyamoto wakes up. Then what will you do about these marks on my body?”

“Yes, you’ve got a point. But there’s another way of looking at it. As soon as Miyamoto wakes up, we might simply cease to exist!”

She was wearing a dark-brown bra and panties. Her attempts to resist had made her perspire profusely, but when I pulled down her pants, she suddenly seemed drained of all energy. She flung herself onto me with a moan. “You complete bastard,” she said, and started to sob.