

With stars in my eyes

LOS ANGELES — Arrive Dec. 16, 14:40 ... no sun, cool ... cranky at car rental after long flight ... large black lady cools me out by advising (with a saucy wink), "Man, you save your adrenalin for when you really need it ..."

16:32 Motor up to Hollywood. Stop for light health snack at a Fatburger. Mood improves.

17:20 Check into Chateau Marmot on Sunset Blvd. Great old relic of wicked Hollywood in the roaring '20s ... Here, John Belushi, the most famous Albanian in 600 years, speedballed off to the next world courtesy of Canada's own rocket specialist, Kathy Smith ... Julio Iglesias is rumored to be somewhere upstairs ... glorious actress bounces down the dim halls in sneakers ... I'm in the spacious Douglas Fairbanks Sr. suite.

19:10 Pick up copy of *Variety* ... chat with two Italian actresses ... wait in my suite for MGM to ring up and offer contract I can't refuse ... no calls.

20:00 Out on Sunset. Sleek black limo eases up to curb. My pals Bob and Mary Beth sipping mineral water, to my deep dismay ... off to new in-eatery, Citrus. Great meal except I can't taste anything because of Canadian flu. 22:11 In love with Moroccan temptress who fails to notice me.

22:34 Arrive at Nickey Blair's on Sunset, favorite Hollywood hotspot and starlet-mart. 22:36 In love with golden apparition in terrifyingly high heels and a tiny leather skirt who manages somehow to wiggle out of a limo accompanied by gold-medallioned producer.

22:41 Strike up conversation with nymph ... my efforts to communicate produce same effect as if I'd been speaking Turkestani or early Babylonian ... suddenly feel old, overweight and in the wrong biz ... Now, if I were only head of Trans-Mogul International Films ...

23:17 Stumble back to Marmot, jet lagged and flued out ... probably the only person there ever to go to bed with the *Economist*.

Dec. 17. Light shopping ... back to bed with flu. 12:15 Motor to Malibu to take lunch with TV-producer friend ... tell her about my just-started book on Mideast military matters. "Eric, dear," she says pityingly, "forget the bombs and tanks ... put in a male and female lead, romance, sex,

Punch



"The artichoke comes with a vinaigrette sauce and instructions on what to do with it."

ERIC MARGOLIS



adventure ... think of the movie rights!"

19:30 Dinner with relatives ... no starlets ... stuck talking to something named Cayenne who's either a New Age herbalist or a martial arts teacher. Thankfully to bed.

Dec 18. 11:30 In love with exquisite playwright who ditches me for her Gestalt class. 13:40 Grumpy. Motor down to Palos Verdes to sound of Led Zep and David Bowie.

16:10 Party by the ocean in multi-zillion cliffside mansion ... setting sun glints off my champagne ... there's enough money at this bash to buy Belgium and still have enough change left over to clothe Barbara Amiel. 16:38 In love with Rhonda, tawny-maned Amazon scriptwriter ... Hostess tells me to keep eyes up ... Mr. Rhonda grumpy.

17:50 Motor back to LA. My pal and I stop at a small club to observe local folkloric dancing ... so do many fascinated Japanese gentlemen ... What's so interesting about 18-year old girls with nothing on but red shoes? ... 18:04 In love with Shanna ... 18:16 In love with Tania ... 18:26 In love with Misty.

22:12 At Hollywood club dance party hosted by noted but time-worn actress who cares about my loneliness ... She produces the steamy, raven-haired Ricette from Cairo who rolls her "r"s and wants to know when we're leaving for New York and murmurs that she only has a white mink because it goes with her beige 450 SL ... and maybe when we're in New York perhaps a little light shopping? Out of love.

22:34 In love with Spandex-wrapped dancer doing naughty bop ... 22:41 In love with incredibly tall creature with Prince Valiant haircut and Conan-style leathers ... 23:27 Dragged off to Palos Verdes to shoot pool, can you imagine?

Dec. 19. Spend all day with computer genius Dr. Hall playing thrilling new naval war game, Action in North Atlantic. My pal Bob near apoplexy as his battlecruiser *Scharnhorst* torpedoed ... my *Bismarck* sunk out from under me by Brits.

18:40 Motor back to LA for grownup party ... dinner with my friend the countess, a brilliant and mysterious woman of many parts ... chat with friend who owns much of California and his peppery sky-diving, skin-diving wife from Poland ... talk long about Russian art with former curator of Leningrad's sublime Hermitage Museum ... PLO is trying to call the countess from Tunis but can't seem to get through.

Dec. 20. Deported back to Canada ... make note to take lunch with *Sun's* George Anthony and see if he wants to swap his Hollywood column for my overseas beat ... why write about Shiites when you can go to Nickey Blair's? P.S. — Remind my agent, famous Gary Chowen, to call MGM ...