

Dictations from Marionettes

They were identical.

Smith stared. "Is this your twin brother? I never knew –"

"No, no," said Braling quietly. "Bend close. Put your ear to Braling Two's chest."

Smith hesitated and then leaned forward to place his head against the uncomplaining ribs. Tick-tick-

"Oh no! It can't be!"

"It is."

"Let me listen again."

Tick-tick-tick-tick-tick-tick-tick-tick.

Smith staggered back and fluttered his eyelids, appalled. He reached out and touched the warm hands and the cheeks of the thing.

"Where'd you get him?"

"Isn't he excellently fashioned?" 85 words

/ðeɪ wər aɪ 'dentɪkəl/

/smɪθ steəd/ɪz ðɪs jə twɪn 'brʌðə /aɪ 'nevə nju: –

nəʊ nəʊ/ sɛd brɑ:lɪŋ 'kwaiətli. "bɛnd kləʊz. pʊt jər ɪə tə brɑ:lɪŋ tu:z tʃɛst/

/smɪθ 'hezɪteɪtɪd ən ðən li:nd 'fɔ:wəd tə pleɪs ɪz hɛd ə 'ɡɛnst ði:

ˌʌŋkəm 'pleɪnɪŋ rɪbz /tɪk tɪk/

/əʊ nəʊ/ ɪt kɑ:nt bi: /

/ɪt ɪz/

/lɛt mi 'lɪsən ə 'ɡɛn/

/tɪk-tɪk/

/smɪθ 'stæɡəd bæk ən 'flʌtəd ɪz 'aɪlɪd/ ə 'pɔ:ld/ hi ri:tʃt

aʊt ənd tʌtʃt ðə wɔ:m hændz ənd ðə tʃi:ks əv ðə θɪŋ/

/weə dʒu ɡɛt hɪm/

/'ɪznt hi 'ɛksələntli 'fæʃənd/

Smith thought that over a minute or two. “Will he walk around without sustenance for a month?” he finally asked.

“For six months if necessary. And he’s built to do everything—eat, sleep, perspire—everything, natural as natural is. You’ll take good care of my wife, won’t you, Braling Two?”

“Your wife is rather nice,” said Braling Two. “I’ve grown rather fond of her.”

Smith was beginning to tremble. “How long has Marionettes, Inc., been in business?”

“Secretly, for two years.” 81 words

/smiθ θɔ:t ðæt 'əʊvər ə 'mɪnɪt ɔ: tu: /

/wɪl hi wɔ:k ə 'raʊnd wɪ 'ðəʊt 'sʌstənəns fər ə mʌnθ/ hi 'faɪnəli ɑ:skt/

/fə sɪks mʌnθs ɪf 'nɛsəsəri / ən hi:z bɪlt tə du 'ɛvriθɪŋ

/i:t /sli:p /pə 'spɑɪər/ 'ɛvriθɪŋ/ 'næʃərəl əz 'næʃərəl ɪz/ ju:l teɪk ɡʊd keər əv maɪ waɪf/ wəʊnt ju: /brɑ:lɪŋ tu: /

/jɔ: waɪf s 'rɑ:ðə naɪs /sɛd brɑ:lɪŋ tu: / aɪv ɡrəʊn 'rɑ:ðə fɒnd əv hɜ:/

smiθ wəz bi'ɡɪnɪŋ tə 'trɛmbəl /həʊ lɒŋ həz ,mæriə 'nɛts ɪŋk bi:n ɪn 'bɪznɪs/

/'si:kretli/ fə tu: jɪəz/

---

“Could I—I mean, is there a possibility——” Smith took his friend’s elbow earnestly. “Can you tell me where I can get one, a robot, a marionette, for myself? You will give me the address, won’t you?”

Here you are.

Smith took the card and turned it round and round. “Thank you,” he said. “You don’t know what this means. Just a little respite. A night or so, once a month even. My wife loves me so much she can’t bear to have me gone an hour. 88 words

/kəd aɪ /aɪ mi:n/ ɪz ðeər ə ,pɒsə 'bɪləti/smiθ tʊk ɪz frɛndz 'ɛlbəʊ 'ɜ:nɪstli/

/kən ju tɛl mi weər aɪ kən ɡɛt wʌn/ ə 'rəʊbɒt /ə

,mæriə 'nɛt/ fə maɪ 'sɛlf/ ju wɪl ɡɪv mi ði ə 'drɛs/ wəʊnt ju: /

/hiə ju ɑ: /

/smiθ tʊk ðə kɑ:d ən tɜ:nd ɪt raʊnd ən raʊnd /θæŋk ju:/hi sɛd/

ju dəʊnt nəʊ wɒt ðɪs mi:nz/ dʒɛst ə 'lɪtəl 'rɛspɑɪt/ ə naɪt ɔ: səʊ/ wʌns ə mʌnθ 'i

:vn/ maɪ waɪf lʌvz mi səʊ mʌʃ/ jɪ kɑ:nt beə tə hæv mi ɡɒn ən aʊə/