

# Oh, it's you

by *P E T Conroy*

Bertolt Ernist was 270 pounds of strength – every muscle of this recently retired professional super-heavyweight boxer flexed, sweat oozing from every pore of his body. The sun beat down on the roof of this former boxer's greenhouse, in the quiet suburbs of Hamburg. The rare flora and trees towered above Bertolt's 6 foot 11 inches, as he watered and lovingly brushed the petals of a particularly prized flower – a rare (for even orchids) Ghost Orchid. He had purchased the orchid recently from a less than reputable dealer for several thousand euros. The flower was difficult to cultivate in captivity, with fewer than a handful of botanists finding success, it was likely this one would die, Bertolt's great fear, but even to savour its distinctive beauty in his botanical greenhouse, were enough for him. As he turned to survey the beauty of his surroundings, he came face to face with an acquaintance from his former life.

*“Oh, it's you”*

The acquaintance pulled silently a *Reczny Automat Commandos* (a single-handed sub-machine gun developed, during the sixties for the Polish military) from their jacket. This model was hand painted as though Konchalovsky, himself, had delicately brushed flowers upon the gun – blood red roses; vibrant violet peonies; and fragile lilacs. Ejecting a storm of bullets. Cutting the stem of the ghost orchid. The bullets sliced through the body of Bertolt, and a single tear dripped from his left eye, mixing with the blood that exploded as a projectile pierced his eyeball a micro-second later.