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NOT for children and not for adults who don't already dote on Michelangelo Antonioni is his new picture, "Eclipse," which covers much the same ground as "L'Avventura" and "La Notte," and which seems, on that account, a familiar march through a hard-packed, infertile country. Though it's often the case that a first-rate artist has but a single preoccupation, and therefore but a single theme, he usually takes the trouble to disguise his theme behind a variety of subjects; with Antonioni, the preoccupation is more nearly an obsession, so he feels no need to provide us with surprises. To my mind, "L'Avventura" said brilliantly how its maker felt about the increasing, crushing thingedness of life and our consequent failure to establish any but temporary, disastrously incommunicative relations with each other. In "La Notte," Antonioni turned all three of his leading characters into automata—zombie-like embodiments of *noia*, or boredom, that even the most urgent bouts of lovemaking could do nothing to alleviate. Now we are invited to learn again that only objects have a secure place in life, and that a man and a woman no longer in their first youth cannot tell, after years of intimacy, whether they love each other, or whether an emotion that might be called love exists, which they have proved incapable of feeling. Eloquent as Mr. Antonioni's camera is—one envies the self-assurance of the objects in his landscapes as Whitman envied cows—the lecture grows tiresome; all the more so when the ravishing Monica Vitti, leaving her weepy middle-aged lover (Francisco Rabal) and falling in with Alain Delon, can't make up her mind whether she feels anything more for Delon than she did for Rabal. My irritation with the indecision of these two extremely attractive people in the face of their manifest destiny blinded me, I fear, to more creditable aspects of "Eclipse." In the Antonioni formulation, boy meets girl, boy meets same girl, boy meets girl again. What would Louis B. have said?

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