

new worlds

FIVE SHILLINGS

OR ONE DOLLAR



New fiction by BRIAN W. ALDISS: HARVEY JACOBS: MICHAEL MOORCOCK and others. DR. CHRISTOPHER EVANS' new experiment in computer psychology -- THE DREAMS OF THE COMPUTER. Plus Charles Platt on Keith Alborn; New Poems by Libby Houston and new graphics and photographs by Malcolm Dean & Gabi Nasemann; R. Glynn Jones on Revolutionary Art; Bob Marsden on new ideas in psychology etc



This portrait of the artist
as a young man was taken in 1904, the year
in which he set a novel which Virginia Woolf called
'the scratching of pimples on the bootboy at Claridges'.

Ernest Hemingway called it 'a most goddam
wonderful book'. From 1919 to 1969 it has fought its way
past legal action and blind prejudice to something like universal
acceptance as the greatest novel of the twentieth century. It is the book
which every other novelist would like to have written and which,
in one Dublin day's compass, presents an imperishable
monument to the human condition.

It has just become a Penguin Book at 10s.

It is **Ulysses** by **James Joyce**.

new worlds

Number 190

Contents

- 2 **Lead In**
- 4 **Brian W. Aldiss:** The Moment of Eclipse
- 13 **Harvey Jacobs:** The Negotiators
- 19 **Charles Platt:** The Responsive Environment
- 24 **Michael Moorcock:** A Cure for Cancer (3)
- 42 **Libby Houston:** New Poems
- 45 **Marek Obtulowicz:** The Hurt
- 53 **Dr Christopher Evans:** The Dreams of the Computer
- 56 **R. Glynn Jones:** Back in the U.S.S.R.
- 58 **M. John Harrison:** Twilight Crucifixion of the Beastly Black Sheep
- 59 **Bob Marsden:** Notes on the Management of a Spoiled Identity
- 61 **James Cawthorn:** From Alice with Malice
- 62 **John Clute:** Against the Juggernaut
- 63 **Charles Platt:** The Nondescript Heroes

Cover by Gabi Nasemann

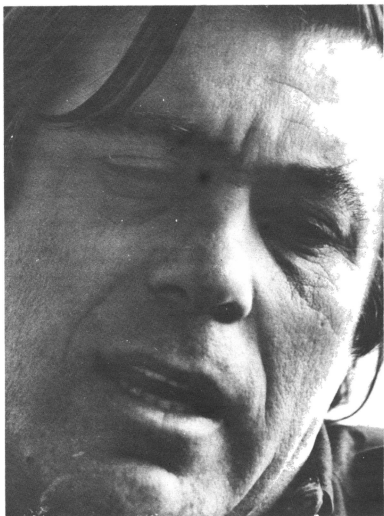
Illustrations by Gabi Nasemann (5, 7, 9, 10, 18, 45, 49), Malcolm Dean (14, 27, 30, 36, 42, 42), Michael Moorcock (31).

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NEW WORLDS is © May 1969, published monthly by New Worlds Publishing at **271 Portobello Road, London, W.11**, with the assistance of the Arts Council of Great Britain. Distributed by Moore Harness Ltd., 11 Lever Street, London, E.C.1. Manuscripts should be typewritten, double spaced with wide margins on white, quarto paper and **will not be returned** unless accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope of suitable size. No responsibility is accepted for loss or damage to manuscripts or artwork.

Subscriptions: 60/- (10 dollars) for twelve issues.



Chris Evans: 'No fudges'

HARVEY JACOBS' LATEST story, *The Negotiators*, appears in *NEW WORLDS* this issue and his fourth story for the magazine (others include *Disturbance of the Peace*, 183 and *Epilogue for an Office Picnic*, 186). The present story, in a somewhat altered version, appeared in a recent issue of *ESQUIRE*, to which Harvey Jacobs earlier contributed, *Death of a Bystander* (which we can strongly recommend). A New Yorker working for ABC International Television, Mr Jacobs has contributed to *THE REALIST*, *THE MAGAZINE OF FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION* and *MADAMOISELLE* and is making an excellent reputation as one of America's very finest short story writers. His collection, *The Egg of the Glak*, is due to be published late this year by Harper & Row.

The inspiration for **Brian Aldiss's** latest story, *The Moment of Eclipse*, comes, he says, from Thomas Hardy's *Poem At a Lunar Eclipse* which was published in Hardy's *Poems of the Past and the Present* (1902):

Thy shadow, Earth, from Pole to
Central Sea,
Now steals along upon the Moon's
meek shine
In even monochrome and curving line
Of imperturbable serenity.

How shall I link such sun-cast
symmetry
With the torn troubled form I know
as thine,
That profile, placid as a brow divine,
With continents of moid and misery?

And can immense Mortality but
throw
So small a shade, and Heaven's high
human scheme
Be hemmed within the coasts yon
arc implies?

Is such the stellar gauge of earthly
show,
Nation at war with nation, brains that
teem,
Heroes, and women fairer than the
skies?

Mr Aldiss believes that Hardy's poem outshines his own story, but we find them marvellously complementary.

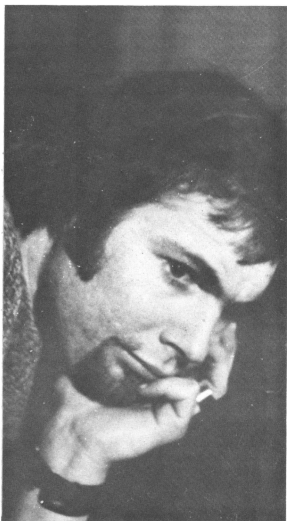
Libby Houston is a much admired poet who rarely seems to publish enough. Indeed, were it not that Malcolm Dean, one of our regular illustrators, is her husband, we should probably not have had the opportunity of seeing the group of poems you'll find in this issue. Born in London in 1941 she now lives in London with her husband and her son Sam. Her first book of poems, *A Stained Glass Show*, was published by Allison & Busby in 1967. The same publisher will bring out a second collection (including these poems) next year. She has appeared in *Love Love Love* (Corgi 1967) and was twice on the John Peel Radio 1 show in 1968 (her first appearance was on *Children's Hour* 1950). She also "climbs mountains and walks indefatigably in any given direction".

Our science editor's current contribution to *NEW WORLDS* is best described in his own words:

"The latest computer languages are



Libby Houston: New book soon



Marek Obdulowicz: *The Hurt* (p. 45)

rather excitingly close to English, as the examples of the TELCOMP language in *Dreams of the Computer* illustrate. I have simply offered up a completely unedited printout from a computer terminal in my own laboratory. The peculiar circumstances of this printout however are that I have viciously set out to confuse the computer by loading programme after programme without going through the necessary clearance process which I have proposed is comparable to the dream process in human beings (NEW WORLDS 173, July 1967). The gradual deterioration of the computer's performance is striking and occasionally rather terrifying. Note the curious interjections from time to time when snatches from old programmes burst in on the on-going programme. I have called these 'dreams', but strictly speaking they are hallucinations—i.e. dreams which come into experience when the individual (man or computer) is awake. One of the last programmes loaded on is a guessing

game in which the computer tried to guess what animal I was thinking of. So confused had it become that a weird outpouring of questions followed rapidly on the heels of a schizophrenic-like bundle of muddled guesses. Read the whole thing through two or three times and the deteriorating logic of the poor wretched creature becomes more obvious.

"Incidentally, there are no fudges here, no editing whatsoever. This is the exact printout that my secretary, Jackie Wilson, and I produced. We have some other examples, of course, but this is probably the best. Anyone wondering what happened to the computer afterwards may feel relieved to know that we put it out of its misery, typing the magic words DELETE ALL into it. It took two and three quarter minutes to clear all the junk away, which by computer standards is a really long dream."

The present piece will help clarify some of the questions asked by readers who read our earlier *How Dr*

Christopher Evans Landed on the Moon by J. G. Ballard (NW 187).

Next month, among other things, the last part of Michael Moorcock's *A Cure for Cancer* and, almost certainly, a new story from Pamela Zoline. ■

JOHN G.
CHAPMAN

Please send your new address to Charles Platt c/o NEW WORLDS where you will hear something to your advantage...

BEAUTIFUL WOMEN WITH corrupt natures—they have always been my life's target. There must be bleakness as well as loveliness in their gaze: only then can I expect the mingled moment.

The mingled moment—it holds both terror and beauty. Those two qualities, I am aware, lie for most people poles apart. For me, they are, or can become, one! When they do, when they coincide, ah . . . then joy takes me! And in Christiania I saw many such instants promised.

provoke in me years of pain and pursuit was not her wish. Her wish, indeed, was at all times the very opposite.

We met for the first time at a dull party being held at the Danish Embassy in one of the minor East European capitals. My face was known to her and, at her request, a mutual friend brought her over to meet me.

She was introduced as a poet—her second volume of poetry was just published in Vienna. My taste for poetry exhibiting attitudes of romantic agony was what attracted

THE MOMENT OF ECLIPSE

BY

BRIAN W. ALDISS

But the one special instant of which I have to tell, when pain and rapture intertwined like two hermaphrodites, overwhelmed me not when I was embracing any lascivious darling but when—after long pursuit!—I paused on the very threshold of the room where she awaited me: paused and saw . . . that spectre. . . .

You might say that a worm had entered into me. You might say that there I spoke metaphorically, and that the worm perverting my sight and taste had crept into my viscera in childhood, had infected all my adult life. So it may be. But who escapes the maggot? Who is not infected? Who dares call himself healthy? Who knows happiness except by assuaging his illness or submitting to his fever?

This woman's name was Christiania. That she was to

her to me in the first place; of course she was familiar with my work.

Although we began by addressing each other in German, I soon discovered what I had suspected from something in her looks and mannerisms, that Christiania was also Danish. We started to talk of our native land.

Should I attempt to describe what she looked like? Christiania was a tall woman with a slightly full figure; her face was perhaps a little too flat for great beauty, giving her, from certain angles, a look of stupidity denied by her conversation. At that time, she had more gleaming dark hair than the fashion of the season approved. It was her aura that attracted me, a sort of desolation in her smile which is, I fancy, a Scandinavian inheritance. The Norwegian painter



Edvard Munch painted a naked madonna once, haunted, suffering, erotic, pallid, generous of flesh, with death about her mouth; in Christiania, that madonna opened her eyes and breathed!

We found ourselves talking eagerly of a certain *camera obscura* that still exists in the Aalborghus, in Jutland. We discovered that we had both been there as children, had both been fascinated to see a panorama of the town of Aalborg laid out flat on a table through the medium of a small hole in the roof. She told me that that optical toy had inspired her to write her first poem; I told her that it had directed my interest to cameras, and thus to filming.

But we were scarcely allowed time to talk before we were separated by her husband. Which is not to say that with look and gesture we had not already inadvertently signalled to each other, delicately but unmistakably.

Inquiring about her after the party, I was told that she was an infanticide currently undergoing a course of mental treatment which combined elements of Eastern and Western thought. Later, much of this information proved to be false; but, at the time, it served to heighten the desires that our brief meeting had woken in me.

Something fatally intuitive inside me knew that at her hands, though I might find suffering, I would touch: the two-faced ecstasy I sought.

At this period, I was in a position to pursue Christiania further; my latest film, "Magnitudes", was completed, although I had still some editing to do before it was shown at a certain film festival.

It chanced also that I was then free of my second wife, that svelt-mannered Parsi lady, ill-omened star alike of my first film and my life, whose vast promised array of talents was too quickly revealed as little more than a glib tongue and an over-sufficient knowledge of tropical medicine. In that very month, our case had been settled and Sushila had retreated to Bombay, leaving me to my natural pursuits.

So I planned to cultivate my erotic garden again: and Christiania should be the first to flower in those well-tended beds.

Specialised longings crystallise the perceptions along the axes concerned: I had needed only a moment in Christiania's presence to understand that she would not scruple to be unfaithful to her husband under certain circumstances, and that I myself might provide such a circumstance; for those veiled grey eyes told me that she also had an almost intuitive grasp of her own and men's desires, and that involvement with me was far from being beyond her contemplation.

So it was without hesitation that I wrote to her and described how, for my next film, I intended to pursue the train of thought begun in "Magnitudes" and hoped to produce a drama of a rather revolutionary kind to be based on a sonnet of the English poet Thomas Hardy entitled "At a Lunar Eclipse". I added that I hoped her poetic abilities might be of assistance in assembling a script, and asked if she would honour me with a meeting.

There were other currents in my life just then. In particular, I was in negotiation through my agents with the Prime Minister of a West African republic who wished to entice me out to make a film of his country. Although I

nourished an inclination to visit this strange part of the world where, it always seemed to me, there lurked in the very atmosphere a menace compounded of grandeur and sordidness which might be much to my taste, I was attempting to evade the Prime Minister's offer, generous though it was, because I suspected that he needed a conservative documentary director rather than an innovator, and was more concerned with the clamour of my reputation than its nature. However, he would not be shaken off, and I was avoiding a cultural attaché of his as eagerly as I was trying to ensnare—or be ensnared by—Christiania.

In eluding this gigantic and genial black man, I was thrown into the company of an acquaintance of mine at the university, a professor of Byzantine Art, whom I had known for many years. It was in his study, in the low quiet university buildings with windows gazing from the walls like deep-set eyes, that I was introduced to a young scholar called Petar. He stood at one of the deep windows in the study, looking intently into the cobbled street, an untidy young man in unorthodox clothes.

I asked him what he watched. He indicated an old newspaper-seller moving slowly along the gutter outside, dragging and being dragged by a dog on a lead.

"We are surrounded by history, monsieur! This building was erected by the Habsburgs; and that old man whom you see in the gutter believes himself to be a Habsburg."

"Perhaps the belief makes the gutter easier to walk."

"I'd say harder!" For the first time he looked at me. In those pale eyes I saw an aged thing, although at the start I had been impressed by his extreme youth. "My mother believes—well, that doesn't matter. In this gloomy city, we are all surrounded by the shadows of the past. There are shutters at all our windows."

I had heard such rhetoric from students before. You find later they are reading Schiller for the first time.

My host and I fell into a discussion concerning the Hardy sonnet; in the middle of it, the youth had to take his leave of us; to visit his tutor, he said.

"A frail spirit, that, and a tormented one," commented my host. "Whether he will survive his course here without losing his mental stability, who can say. Personally, I shall be thankful when his mother, that odious woman, leaves the city; her effect on him is merely malevolent."

"Malevolent in what respect?"

"It is whispered that when Petar was thirteen years old—of course, I don't say there's any truth in the vile rumour—when he was slightly injured in a road accident, his mother lay beside him—nothing unnatural in that—but the tale goes that unnatural things followed between them. Probably all nonsense, but certainly he ran away from home. His poor father, who is a public figure—these nasty tales always centre round public figures—"

Feeling my pulse rate beginning to mount, I enquired the family name, which I believe I had not been given till then. Yes! The pallid youth who felt himself surrounded by the shadows of the past was her son, Christiania's son! Naturally, this evil legend made her only the more attractive in my eyes.

At that time I said nothing, and we continued the

discussion of the English sonnet which I was increasingly inspired to film. I had read it several years before in an Hungarian translation and it had immediately impressed me.

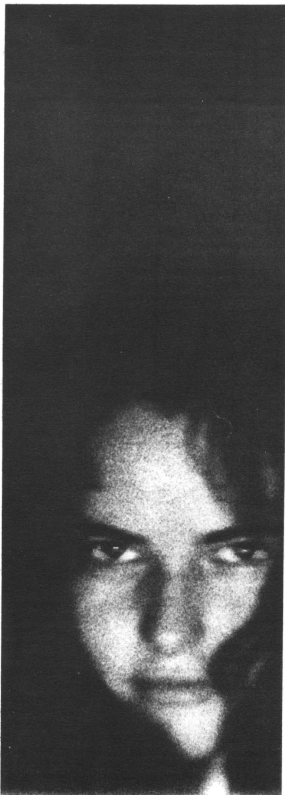
To synthesise a poem is absurd; but the content of this sonnet was to me as profound as its grave and dignified style. Briefly, the poet watches the curved shadow of Earth steal over the moon's surface; he sees that mild profile and is at a loss to link it with the continents full of trouble which he knows the shadow represents; he wonders how the whole vast scene of human affairs can come to throw so small a shade; and he asks himself if this is not the true gauge, by any outside standard of measurement, of all man's hopes and desires? So truly did this correspond with my own life-long self-questionings, so nobly was it cast, that the sonnet had come to represent one of the most precious things I knew; for this reason I wished to destroy it and reassemble it into a series of visual images that would convey precisely the same shade of beauty and terror allied as did the poem.

My host, however, claimed that the sequence of visual images I had sketched to him as being capable of conveying this mysterious sense fell too easily into the category of science-fiction, and that what I required was a more conservative approach—conservative and yet more penetrating, something more inward than outward: perhaps a more classical form for my romantic despair. His assertions angered me. They angered me, and this I realised even at the time, because there was the force of truth in what he said; the trappings should not be a distraction from but an illumination of the meaning. So we talked for a long time, mainly of the philosophical problems involved in representing one set of objects by another—which is the task of all art, the displacement without which we have no placement. When I left the university, it was wearily. I felt a sense of despair at the sight of dark falling and another day completed with my life incomplete.

Halfway down the hill, where a shrine to the virgin stands within the street wall, Petar's old news-vendor loitered, his shabby dog at his feet. I bought a paper from him, experiencing a tremor at the thought of how his image, glimpsed from the deep-set eye of the university, had been intertwined in my cogitations with the image of that perverted madonna whose greeds, so hesitatingly whispered behind her long back, reached out even to colour the imaginings of dry pedants like my friend in his learned cell!

And, as if random sequences of events were narrative in the mind of some super-being, as if we were no more than parasites in the head of a power to which Thomas Hardy himself might have yielded credulity, when I reached my hotel, the vendor's newspaper folded unopened under my arm, it was to find, in the rack of the ill-lit foyer, luminous, forbidding, crying aloud, silent, a letter from Christiania awaiting me. I knew it was from her! We had our connection!

Dropping my newspaper into a nearby waste bin, I walked upstairs carrying the letter. My feet sank into the thick fur of the carpet, slowing my ascent, my heart beat



unmuffled. Was not this—so I demanded of myself afterwards!—one of those supreme moments of life, of pain and solace inseparable? For whatever was in the letter, it was such that, when revealed, like a fast-acting poison inserted into the bloodstream, would convulse me into a new mode of feeling and behaving.

I knew I would have to have Christiania, knew it even by the violence of my perturbation, greater than I had expected; and knew also that I was prey as well as predator. Wasn't that the meaning of life, the ultimate displacement? Isn't—as in the English sonnet—the great also the infinitely small, and the small also the infinitely great?

Well, once in my room, I locked the door, laid the envelope on a table and set myself down before it. I slit the envelope with a paper knife and withdrew her—her!—letter.

What she said was brief. She was much interested in my offer and the potential she read in it. Unfortunately, she was leaving Europe at the end of the week, the day after the morrow, since her husband was taking up an official post in Africa on behalf of his government. She regretted that our acquaintance would not deepen.

I folded the letter and put it down. Only then did I appreciate the writhe in the serpent's tail. Snatching up the letter again, I re-read it. She and her husband—yes!—were taking up residence in the capital city of that same republic with whose Prime Minister I had been long in negotiation. Only that morning had I written to his cultural attaché to announce finally that the making of such a film as he proposed was beyond my abilities and interests!

That night, I slept little. In the morning, when friends called upon me, I had my man tell them I was indisposed; and indisposed I was; indisposed to act; yet indisposed to let slip this opportunity. It was perversity, of course, to think of following this woman, this perverted madonna, to another continent; there were other women with whom the darker understandings would flow if I merely lifted the somewhat antique phone by my bedside. And it was perhaps perversity that allowed me to keep myself in indecision for so long.

But by afternoon I had decided. From a lunar distance, Europe and Africa were within the single glance of an eye; my fate was equally a small thing; I would follow her by the means so easily awaiting me.

Accordingly, I composed a letter to the genial black attaché, saying that I regretted my decision of yesterday, explaining how it had been instrumental in moving my mind in entirely the opposite direction, and announcing that I greatly wished to make the proposed film. I said I would be willing to leave for his native country with cameraman and secretary as soon as possible. I requested him to favour me with an early appointment. And I had this letter delivered by hand there and then.

There followed a delay which I weathered as best I could. The next two days I spent shut in the offices I had hired in a quiet part of the city, editing "Magnitudes". It would be a satisfactory enough film, but already I saw it merely—as is the way with creative artists—as pointing towards the next work. Images of Africa already began to steal upon my brain.

At the end of the second day, I broke my solitude and sought out a friend. I confided to him my anger that the attaché had not condescended to give me a reply when I was so keen to get away. He laughed.

"But your famous attaché has returned home in disgrace! He was found robbing the funds.—A lot of them are like that, I'm afraid!—Not used to authority! It was all over the evening papers a couple of days ago—quite a scandal! You'll have to write direct to your Prime Minister."

Now I saw that this was no ordinary affair. There were lines of magnetism directed towards the central attraction, just as Remy de Gourmont claims that the markings on the fur of certain luxurious female cats run inescapably towards their sexual quarters. Clearly, I must launch myself into this forceful pattern. This I did by writing hastily—hastily excusing myself from my friend's presence—to the distant statesman in the distant African city, towards which, on that very evening, my maligned lady was making her way.

Of the awful delays that followed, I shall not speak. The disgrace of the cultural attaché (and it was not he alone who had been disgraced) had had its repercussions in the far capital, and my name, becoming involved, was not sweetened thereby. Finally, however, I received the letter I awaited, inviting me to make the film in my own terms, and offering me full facilities. It was a letter that would have made a less perverse man extremely happy!

To make my arrangements to leave Europe, to brief my secretary, and settle certain business matters took me a week. In that time, the distinguished film festival was held, and "Magnitudes" enjoyed from the critics just such a reception as I had anticipated; that is to say, the fawners fawned and the sneerers sneered, and both parties read into it many qualities that were not there, ignoring those that were—one even saw it as a retelling of the myth of the wanderings of Adam and Eve after their expulsion from Eden! Truly, the eyes of critics, those prideful optics, see only what they wish to see!

All irritations were finally at an end. With an entourage of three, I climbed aboard a jet liner scheduled for Lagos.

It seemed then that the climactic moment of which I was in search could not be far distant, either in time or space. But the unforeseen interposed.

When I arrived at my destination, it was to discover the African capital in an unsettled state, with demonstrations and riots every day and curfews every night. My party was virtually confined to its hotel, and the politicians were far too involved to bother about a mere film-maker!

In such a city, none of the pursuits of man are capable of adequate fulfilment: except one. I well recall being in Trieste when that city was in a similar state of turmoil. I was then undergoing a painful and exquisite love affair with a woman almost twice my age—but my age then was half what it now is!—and the disruptions and dislocations of public life, the mysterious stoppages and equally mysterious pandemoniums that blew in like the *bora*, gave a delectable contrapuntal quality to the rhythms of private life, and to those unnerving caesuras which are inescapable in matters involving a beautiful married woman. So I made discreet inquiries through my own country's embassy for



the whereabouts of Christiania.

The republic was in process of breaking in half, into Christian South and Muslim North. Christiania's husband had been posted to the North and his wife had accompanied him. Because of the unrest, and the demolition of a strategic bridge, there was no chance of my following them for some while.

It may appear as anti-climax if I admit that I now forgot about Christiania, the whole reason for my being in that place and on that continent. Nevertheless, I did forget her; our desires, particularly the desires of creative artists, are peripatetic: they submerge themselves sometimes unexpectedly and we never know where they may appear again. My imp of the perverse descended. For me the demolished bridge was never rebuilt.

Once the Army decided to support the government (which it did as soon as two of its colonels were shot), the riots were quelled. Although the temper of the people was still fractious, some sort of order was restored. I was then escorted about the locality. And the full beauty and horror of the city—and of its desolated hinterland—was rapidly conveyed to me.

I had imagined nothing from West Africa. Nobody had told me of it. And this was precisely what attracted me now, as a director. I saw that here was fresh territory from which a raid on the inarticulate might well be made. The images of beauty-in-despair for which I thirsted were present, if in a foreign idiom. My task was one of translation, of displacement.

So immersed was I in my work, that all the affairs of my own country, and of Europe, and of the western world where my films were acclaimed or jeered, and of the whole globe but this little troubled patch (where, in truth, the preoccupations of all the rest were echoed) were entirely set aside. My sonnet was here; here, I would be able to

provide more than a dead gloss on Hardy's sonnet. The relativity of importance was here brought to new parameters!

As the political situation began to improve, so I began to move further afield, as if the relationship between the two events was direct. A reliable Ibo hunter was placed at my disposal.

Although man was my subject and I imagined myself not to be interested in wild life, the bush strangely moved me. I would rise at dawn, ignoring the torment of early-stirring flies, and watch the tremendous light flood back into the world, exulting to feel myself simultaneously the most and least important of creatures. And I would observe—and later film—how the inundating light moved not only flies but whole villages into action.

There was a vibrance in those dawns and those days! I still go cold to think of it.

Suppose—how shall we say it?—suppose that while I was in Africa making "Some Eclipses", one side of me was so fully engaged (a side never before exercised in open air and sunlight) that another aspect of myself slumbered? Having never met with any theory of character which satisfied me, I cannot couch the matter in any fashionable jargon. So let me say brutally: the black girls who laid their beauty open to me stored in their dark skins and unusual shapes and amazing tastes enough of the unknown to hold the need for deeper torments at bay. In those transitory alliances, I exorcised also the sari-clad ghost of my second wife.

I became temporarily almost a different person, an explorer of the psyche in a region where before me others of my kind had merely shot animals; and I was able to make a film that was free from my usual flights of perversity.

I know that I created a masterpiece. By the time "Some Eclipses" was a finished masterpiece, and I was back in Copenhagen arranging details of premiers, the regime that had given me so much assistance had collapsed; the Prime Minister had fled to Great Britain; and Muslim North had cut itself off from Christian South. And I was involved with another woman again, and back in my European self, a little older, a little more tired.

Not until two more years had spent themselves did I again cross the trail of my perverted madonna, Christiania. By then, the lines of the magnet seemed to have disappeared altogether: and, in truth, I was never to lie with her as I so deeply schemed to do: but magnetism goes underground and surfaces in strange places; the invisible suddenly becomes flesh before our eyes; and terror can chill us with more power than beauty knows.

My fortunes had now much improved—a fact not unconnected with the decline of my artistic powers. Conscious that I had for a while said what I needed to say, I was now filming coloured narratives, employing some of my old tricks in simpler form, and, in consequence, was regarded by a wide public as a daring master of effrontery. I lived my part, and was spending the summer sailing in my yacht, *The Fantastic Venus*, in the Mediterranean.

Drinking in a small French restaurant on a quayside, my party was diverted by the behaviour of a couple at the next table, a youth quarrelling with a woman, fairly obviously his paramour, and very much his senior. Nothing about this youth revived memories in me; but suddenly he grew tired of baiting his companion and marched over to me, introducing himself as Petar and reminding me of our one brief meeting, more than three years ago. He was drunk, and not charming. I saw he secretly disliked me.

We were more diverted when Petar's companion came over and introduced herself. She was an international film personality, a star, one might say, whose performances of recent years had been confined more to the bed than the screen. But she was piquant company, and provided a flow of scandal almost unseemly enough to be indistinguishable from wit.

She set her drunken boy firmly in the background. From him, I was able to elicit that his mother was staying nearby, at a noted hotel. In that corrupt town, it was easy to follow one's inclinations. I slipped away from the group, called a taxi, and was soon in the presence of an unchanged Christiania, breathing the air that she breathed. Heavy lids shielded my madonna's eyes. She looked at me with a fateful gaze that seemed to have shone on me through many years. She was an echo undoubtedly of something buried, something to resurrect and view as closely as possible.

"If you chased me to Africa, it seems somewhat banal to catch up with me in Cannes," she said.

"It is Cannes that is banal, not the event. The town is here for our convenience, but we have had to wait on the event."

She frowned down at the carpet, and then said, "I am not sure what event you have in mind. I have no events in mind. I am simply here with a friend for a few days before



we drive on to somewhere quieter. I find living without events suits me particularly well."

"Does your husband—"

"I have no husband. I was divorced some while ago—over two years ago. It was scandalous enough: I am surprised you did not hear."

"No, I didn't know. I must still have been in Africa. Africa is practically soundproof."

"Your devotion to that continent is very touching. I saw your film about it. I have seen it more than once, I may confess. It is an interesting piece of work—of art, perhaps one should say only—"

"What are your reservations?"

She said, "To me it was incomplete."

"I also am incomplete. I need you for completion, Christiania—you who have formed a spectral part of me for so long!" I spoke then, burning, and not at all as obliquely as I had intended.

She was before me, and again the whole pattern of life seemed to direct me towards her mysteries. But she was there with a friend, she protested. Well, he had just had to leave Cannes on a piece of vital business (I gathered he was a minister in a certain government, a man of importance), but he would be back on the morning plane.

So we came gradually round—now my hands were clasp her—to the idea that she might be entertained to dinner on *The Fantastic Venus*; and I was careful to mention that next to my cabin was an empty cabin, easily prepared for any female guest who might care to spend the night aboard before returning home well before any morning planes circled above the bay.

And so on, and so on.

There can be few men—women either—who have not experienced that particular mood of controlled ecstasy awakened by the promise of sexual fulfilment, before which obstacles are nothing and the logical objections to which we normally fall victim less than nothing. Our movements at such times are scarcely our own; we are, as we say, possessed: that we may later possess.

A curious feature of this possessed state is that afterwards we recall little of what happened in it. I recollect only driving fast through the crowded town and noticing that a small art theatre was showing "Some Eclipses". That fragile affair of light and shadow had lasted longer, held more vitality, than the republic about which it had centred! I remember thinking how I would like to humble the arrogant young Petar by making him see it—"one in the eye for him", I thought, amused by the English phrase, envious of what else his eyes might have beheld.

Before my obsessional state, all impediments dissolved. My party was easily persuaded to savour the pleasures of an evening ashore; the crew, of course, was happy enough to escape. I sat at last alone in the centre of the yacht, my expectations spreading through it, listening appreciatively to every quiet movement. Music from other vessels in the harbour reached me, seeming to confirm my impregnable isolation.

I was watching as the sun melted across the sea, its vision hazed by cloud before it finally blinked out and the arts of

evening commenced. That sun was flinging, like a negative of itself, our shadow far out into space: an eternal blackness trailing after the globe, never vanquished, a blackness parasitic, claiming half of man's nature!

Even while these and other impressions of a not unpleasant kind filtered through my mind, sudden trembling overcame me. Curious unease seized my senses, an indescribable *frisson*. Clutching the arms of my chair, I had to fight to retain consciousness. The macabre sensation that undermined my being was—this phrase occurred to me at the time—that *I was being silently inhabited*, just as I at that moment silently inhabited the empty ship.

What a moment for ghosts! When my assignation was for the flesh!

Slightly recovering from the first wave of fear, I sat up. Distant music screeched across the slaty water to me. As I passed a hand over my bleared vision, I saw that my palm bore imprinted on it the pattern of the rattan chair arm. This reinforced my sense of being at once the host to a spectral presence and myself insubstantial, a creature of infinite and dislocated space rather than flesh.

That terrible and cursed malaise, so at variance with my mood preceding it! And even as I struggled to free myself from it, my predatorial quarry stepped aboard. The whole yacht subtly yielded to her step, and I heard her call my name.

With great effort, I shook off my eerie mood and moved to greet her. Although my hand was chill as I clutched her warm one, Christiania's imperious power beamed out at me. The heavy lids of Munch's voluptuous madonna opened to me and I saw in that glance that this impressive and notorious woman was also unfolded to my will.

"There is something Venetian about this meeting," she said, smiling. "I should have come in a domino!"

This trivial pleasantry attached itself to my extended sensibilities with great force. I imagined that it could be interpreted as meaning that she acted out a role; and all my hopes and fears leaped out to conjure just what sort of a role, whether of ultimate triumph or humiliation, I was destined to play in her fantasy!

We talked fervently, even gaily, as we went below and sat in the dim-lit bar in the stern to toast each other in a shallow drink. That she was anxious I could see, and aware that she had taken a fateful step in so compromising herself; but this anxiety seemed part of a deeper delight. By her leaning towards me, I could interpret where her inclinations lay; and so, by an easy gradation, I escorted her to the cabin next to mine.

But now, again, came that awful sense of being occupied by an alien force! This time there was pain in it and, as I switched on the wall-lights, a blinding spasm in my right eye, almost as though I had gazed on some forbidden scene.

I clutched at the wall. Christiania was making some sort of absurd condition upon fulfilment of which her favours would be bestowed; perhaps it was some nonsense about her son, Petar; at the same time, she was gesturing for me to come to her. I made some excuse—I was now certain that I was about to disintegrate!—I stammered a word about preparing myself in the next cabin—begged her to make herself comfortable for a moment, staggered away, shaking like an autumn leaf.

In my cabin—rather, in the bathroom, jetty lights reflected from the surface of the harbour waters projected a confused imprint of a porthole on the top of the door. Wishing for no other illumination, I crossed to the mirror to stare at myself and greet my haggard face with questioning.

What ailed me? What sudden illness, what haunting, had taken me—overtaken me—at such a joyful moment?

My face stared back at me. And then: *my sight was eclipsed from within*. . . .

Nothing can convey the terror of that experience! Something that moved, that moved across my vision as steadily and as irretrievably as the curved shadow in Hardy's sonnet. And, as I managed still to stare at my gold-haloed face in the mirror, I saw the shadow move in my eye, traverse my eyeball, glide slowly—so eternally slowly!—across the iris from north to south.

Exquisite physical and psychological pain were mine. Worse, I was pierced through by the dread of death—by what I imagined a new death: and I saw vividly, with an equally pain-laden inner eye, all my vivid pleasures, carnal and spiritual alike, and all my gifts, brought tumbling into that ultimate chill shadow of the grave.

There at that mirror, as if all my life I had been rooted there, I suffered alone and in terror, spasms coursing through my frame, so far from my normal senses that I could not hear even my own screams. And the terrible thing moved over my eyeball and conquered me!

For some while, I lay on the floor in a sort of swoon, unable either to faint or to move.

When at last I managed to rise, I found I had dragged myself into my cabin. Night was about me. Only phantoms of light, reflections of light, chased themselves across the ceiling and disappeared. Faintly, feebly, I switched on the electric light and once more examined the trespassed area of my sight. The terrible thing was transitory. There was only soreness where it had been, but no pain.

Equally, Christiania had left—fled, I learned later, at my first screams, imagining in guilty dread perhaps that her husband had hired an assassin to watch over her spoiled virtue!

So I too had to leave! The yacht I could not tolerate for a day more! But nothing was tolerable to me, not even my own body; for the sense of being inhabited was still in me. I felt myself a man outside society. Driven by an absolute desperation of soul, I went to a priest of that religion I had left many years ago; he could only offer me platitudes about bowing to God's will. I went to a man in Vienna whose profession was to cure sick minds; he could talk only of guilt-states.

Nothing was tolerable to me in all the places I knew. In a spasm of restlessness, I chartered a plane and flew to that African country where I had once been happy. Though the republic had broken up, existing now only in my film, the land still remained unaltered.

My old Ibo hunter was still living; I sought him out, offered him good pay, and we disappeared into the bush as we had previously done.

The thing that possessed me went too. Now we were becoming familiar, it and I. I had an occasional glimpse of it, though never again so terrifyingly as when it eclipsed my

right eye. It was peripatetic, going for long submerged excursions through my body, suddenly to emerge just under the skin, dark, shadowy, in my arm, or breast or leg or, once—and there again were terror and pain interlocked—in my penis.

I developed also strange tumours, which swelled up very rapidly to the size of a hen's egg, only to disappear in a couple of days. Sometimes these loathsome swellings brought fever, always pain. I was wasted, useless—and used.

These horrible manifestations I tried my best to keep hidden from everyone. But in a bout of fever, I revealed the swellings to my faithful hunter. He took me—I scarcely knowing where I went—to an American doctor who practised in a village nearby.

"No doubt about it!" said the doctor, after an almost cursory examination. "You have a loiasis infestation. It's a parasitic worm with a long incubation period—three or more years. But you weren't in Africa that long, were you?"

I explained that I had visited these parts before.

"It's an open-and-shut case, then! That's when you picked up the infection."

I could only stare at him. He belonged in a universe far from mine, where every fact has one and only one explanation.

"The loiasis vector is a blood-sucking fly," he said. "There are billions of them in this locality. They hit maximum activity at dawn and late afternoon. The larval loiasis enters the blood-stream when the fly bites you. Then there is a three-four year incubation period before the adult stage emerges. It's what you might call a tricky little system!"

"So I'm tenanted by a worm, you say!"

"You're acting as unwilling host to a now adult parasitic worm of peripatetic habit and a known preference for subcutaneous tissue. It's the cause of these tumours. They're a sort of allergic reaction."

"So I don't have what you might call a psychosomatic disorder?"

He laughed. "The worm is real right enough. What's more, it can live in your system up to fifteen years."

"Fifteen years! I'm to be haunted by this dreadful succubus for fifteen years!"

"Not a bit of it! We'll treat you with a drug called diethylcarbamazine and you'll soon be okay again."

That marvellous optimism—"soon be okay again!"—well, it was justified in his sense, although his marvellous drug had some unpleasant side effects. Of that I would never complain; all of life has unpleasant side effects. It may be—and this is a supposition I examine in the film I am at present making—that consciousness itself is just a side effect, a trick of the light, as it were, as we humans, in our ceaseless burrowings, accidentally surface now and again into a position and a moment where our presence can influence a wider network of sensations.

In my dark subterranean wanderings, I never again met the fatal Christiania (to whom my growing aversion was not strong enough to attract me further!); but her son, Petar, sports in the wealthier patches of Mediterranean sunshine still, surfacing to public consciousness now and again in magazine gossip columns. ■

Harvey | The Jacobs | Negotiators

In memory of Jeffrey Weinper who died in his 21st year "Somewhere near Hue", South Vietnam, on April 8, 1968

17 May

Finally after months of haggling we have chosen a mutually agreeable site. So I sit here in a grand arched room with waves of light and shadow washing this beach in morning tide.

It is a changeable season, *spring in Paris*. Last night, before sleep, I thought of other seasons in this female city. I am not young any more nor old. I have delicious memories but the memories still stir possibility. There is more urgency now to gather both rosebuds and thorns. I tend to snatch at life like a greedy grabber. But I grab nevertheless and there is sometimes pleasure.

Besides, I am full of honours now. No matter when my death should come, it would be anti-climactic. There is a peace in knowledge of that. A triumph. If I am like a nervous squirrel smelling the ice under soft spring weather still I have a bushy dignity. It was wise of my nation to choose me to negotiate the peace. My mirror image shows a man of solid sense and flickering warmth. A man who has married, had children and grandchildren. A man who knows joy and sorrow with nothing to gain—not really—from the war's end or continuation. I was a sensible choice and glad to serve. Li Chu is young, tense and fidgity. His nation is intent on selling an image of youth and tomorrows. They are trying to disprove the bromide of ancestor worship that haunts them and fills them with guilt. Poor Li Chu must fight a tendency to bow to me for my years alone. It is hard for him. And the place they agreed to! This room in Paris. It was a victory for our intelligence if it was anything but a happy accident. The room with its stained windows and



high ceilings and thick walls, with its changing light and even the sounds of the city, makes Li Chu squirm. He probably grew up in a hut. He feels the weight of our history here. He is squashed under the rump of sitting centuries remembering most probably that it was his people who invented firecrackers and gunpowder. There can't be too much comfort in that. Nor can he take comfort in memories of draped rooms smelling of opium and incense where ancient slit-eyed bhuddas sat talking of philosophy. That is not his vision of civilisation. No, he must rely on anger. Anger for inner nourishment and controlled rage for public consumption. He has a hard job. A muscle in his cheek twitches. It shakes his face. He worries that it will reveal his mind. I have him. Today I carry pictures of atrocities committed against women and children in a small northern village. He carries photos of a burned hospital and tape recordings of a captured pilot praying for forgiveness. They balance out.

As for the war, it goes on.

Fifty of ours were killed today and a hundred and twelve of theirs. We lost a helicopter. They lost a

suspension bridge.

We are ready to begin.

12 June

I ate snails. I have a stomach upset.

Li Chu is saying: "The tragic attack on Vin Von Tu is a clear example of imperialistic aggression feeding on its own entrails." His face is grey and sombre. He manifests fury as well as any professional actor. Each morning he opens with an invective and his face turns grey which is no small task for an Oriental. As for the attack on Vin Von Tu, it was not tragic but comic. Not comic in a music hall sense. Not at all. Comic in the cosmic sense with the mask of laughter leaning over the world and dripping saliva. Our planes and mortars attacked a village in error. The village was levelled. Hundreds died. Of the hundreds no more than ten per cent were of the enemy.

Error is always comic.

Li Chu continues: "Or was the accident an accident

indeed? We have reports that clearly show Vin Von Tu was about to openly declare secession from the so-called central regime. Is it inconceivable that the aggressor devils unleashed their fury in order to avoid political embarrassment?" In Li Chu's lexicon there is no room for accident either in the death of a president or the eradication of an innocent village. He must believe in the order of experience, of the intercommunication of events. His faith is religious and regressive. I think of a world without accident and recoil. He trembles at the thought of a world moved by random chance.

I bring up a bubble of gas and cover my mouth. The snails, the snails. I nod a kind of apology. Li Chu acknowledges with a nod of his own. Is it the tendency toward ancestor worship or is stomach gas considered apolitical? Perhaps that belch was a breakthrough. If so, it would mark the first.

I answer: "The attack in Vin Von Tu was indeed tragic and my government has expressed its regrets. It was an accident of war, not the first and unfortunately not the last. But let us remember that this war was caused by an invasion of alien troops across the sovereign borders of a neighbouring state. The accident caused the tragedy and agony of Vin Von Tu but it was the war—your war—that caused that accident." I clear my throat. There is a vile taste in my mouth. I continue: "It is strange to hear the Distinguished Representative speak of 'aggressor devils' and 'unleashed fury'. I want to show the Distinguished Representative, and the world, five minutes of film taken by combat photographers at Ku Lok Den after Mr Chu's peace-loving associates paid a visit to that village."

The film is projected. It is like all atrocity films only this time, for this war, it is in color. The color makes a difference. The horror is more vivid. The private parts scattered around and the shattered heads of children and the open eyes and mouths of the dead and near-dead take on dimension in technicolour. If I was nauseous before I am more nauseous now. Even Li Chu is affected. He wipes his face in the semi-dark.

As for the war, it goes on.

Next week they will have a film to show. It will be less technically perfect but no less vivid. No snails in garlic sauce next week.

20 July

Those names are impossible. Hok Suk Hill fell to our side this afternoon. I am told that the hill is strategic and precious ground. It dominates an infiltration route. I will be able to tell the effect of this victory, if any, by the twitch in Li Chu's cheek at tomorrow's meeting. Hok Suk Hill. The names, the names. What a series of names we have had to digest since World War II. Names of pimples on the world globe.

It is steaming hot today. Jungle weather. The city is dripping. If the evening is cooler I am going to dine in the country. And I am going myself. I must have some time alone. A simple meal and some privacy. The prospect is splendid. I have informed the secret service. They will track me anyhow. I accept the fact that they know everything

and I do not fight them any more.

I accept them the way I accept the spaces between my toes. Everyone has his job to do.

As for the war, it goes on.

21 July

More riots at home last night and of course Li Chu is making the most of it. He is talking about the brutality of power. What else can power be when it asserts itself? He is full of clichés today. And he wears a new blue suit with a striped red tie. It gives him confidence. His voice is firm. No doubt, if he survives, he has a career ahead of him.

He is talking now about the protesters who claim the war is immoral. He claims they are gaining support. He is correct. He knows, I assume, that it is easier for people to decide that a war is immoral than to admit that we are not winning simply and cleanly, or even with filthy plodding. We are not winning and so the war is immoral. Losing an immoral war connotes heavenly intervention. It is a spiritual attitude. As if the nation were being spanked by providence for wrongdoing. For the mass it is a comforting cave. Is any war moral? Are some wars more moral than others? It seems so yet the idea is idiotic.

Li Chu is not being very philosophical. He drones on about police and marchers. What else can he do? The man—or boy—is not exactly an original thinker. He is a lineman, a tackle or guard. But he is good looking and convincing. The suit and tie are a vast improvement.

When he is finished with his lecture on morality and napalm I will read from the *Times* report of an assault by three hundred drugged soldiers on a remote outpost in the West. "Drug Crazed Hordes." Where did I read that eighty per cent of all troops in that seminal sewer take marijuana or dope?

The same issue of the *Times* that carried the story of the zombie attack had a story of the marijuana weed growing wild in New Jersey. Thousands of acres in the Jersey swamps spawned, the article said, from discarded sweepings from canary cages. It seems the bird food companies mixed the seeds with other grains so that the males would be turned-on. And the droppings and sweepings which went to garbage took heart, germinated and blossomed in the Jersey swamps. If Li Chu was really smart, he would be talking of drugged canaries in millions of cages in our land, not of morality. That is a tremendous story. Addict canaries. That kind of story can help bring an empire down. A captured officer told us that his men were force-fed the drugs before their charge. Seventy died. A hundred were wounded. Was it some kind of experiment or is the whole incident more mist from the oozing foliage? Li Chu's face betrays nothing of last night. He is *inscrutable* all right. Even his cheek is still.

God it is hot in this room for all the air-conditioning. And Li Chu goes on. Last night it was hard enough to get him to grunt as he shoved food into his face. He juts his jaw forward when he talks, a most annoying habit. He eats like that too with peasant manners. Buttercups. As a child I played a game. You tickled under the chin and said you were looking for buttercups. It is tempting to hide a feather

in my sleeve—a lush peacock feather smelling of over abundance and capitalist ego—and tickle Li Chu along his jugular vein. Coochie coo. He would keep talking.

Our meeting at the L'Horloge D'Or was the purest chance. L'Horloge was a restaurant I went to when I was a student here. No. It was during my forget Elizabeth Prinkle excursion. And Li Chu found the L'Horloge D'Or as a babyfat diplomat on his first assignment.

Oddly, we both came alone, that is, with the illusion of "alone" since we are constantly observed, recorded, photographed and dossierled. I saw him sitting across the room coping with a crawfish. And the devil ordered a bottle of wine. They like their pleasures. There is hope for the world in that.

If Li Chu saw me he made no sign. I offered the first gesture. I sent the waiter to his table with an invitation to join for coffee. He weighed that carefully. Hidden eyes were on both of us. But he must have reasoned that since the gesture was mine, he could comply. He came.

It was strange eating with him, watching him control his intake of *mousse chocolat*. The dessert he ordered surprised me. Eating it one could imagine him counting beats the way a new dancer counts to himself on the floor. Then he would spoon the sweet *mousse* and gulp it as if it were an oyster. I was amused. There is a distinct charm to the boy.

And I had never seen Li Chu take anything in. He was always spouting garbage or simply not listening. Always pouring out. But he took in the *mousse* like a magnet.

We talked about nothing. The food. The weather. I gambled and mentioned that I missed my family. Would a personal flesh-reference elicit any response? It did. Li Chu said he had an infant daughter with a name that sounded like one of those villages. That was all the chatter. Yet I left with a feeling that we would meet again.

Li Chu is done. I must gather my papers on the Drug-Crazed Hordes.

As for the war, it goes on.

28 July

I have accused them of escalation. A rocket attack devastated a passive hamlet outside the capital. My proof was excellently presented. Li Chu is ranting. He is claiming that the innocents were not innocent after all but secret agents every one. I suggested that perhaps the inhabitants were really plastic robots manufactured as decoys for his vicious killers. Color came to his flat face.

Frankly the vehemence of Li Chu's attack annoyed me considerably. I recognize that what happens between us after hours has no place in the meetings (to say the least) but there must be some element of carry-over even if it is on the most subtle human level. Can it be that he is over compensating? Maybe I was not wrong or egotistic in recognizing that Anna Wang favored me. And what if she did? She is only a whore.

For all Li Chu's imposing credentials and racial identity it is fairly obvious that to a girl like her I must reek of dignity and time. With me she knows beyond a doubt that she is with a man who has found a place in the history books. More. I represent the most potent country on the

face of the planet. Perhaps in the universe. And the richest. Li Chu, whatever he is, is familiar ground to her. She is professionally suspicious of his youth and even his tenuous claim to power. Anna Wang has been around. She knows the game of cat and mouse. She knows in her wet parts that with the press of a button all the Li Chu's in the world would vanish.

More. I am a good lover. My body is not trained in karate but it is wise to the fingertips. I played Anna Wang like a cello. Li Chu mounted her like he would mount a problem. He loves like an engineer raping a bridge over a river. He fornicates like he eats chocolate *mousse*. Anna Wang was his idea in the first place.

We have met now for eight consecutive evenings. When our messengers crossed paths that second night it provided both of us with a humorous surprise. We agreed to dinner in a room selected by Li Chu. There too was an implicit recognition of relative power.

I was paternal with him. We ate some abysmal oriental concoction. Fish and more fish. But fish that must live in the bottoms of cesspools. What do they use for bait to catch creatures like those? I ate tails and eyeballs and drank what must have been shark sweat all in the cause of cordiality. And we took off our jackets and talked. Of what, I can't remember. One thing we agreed upon. We would file no official reports or say a word to our bodyguards. That way, they would assume we were acting on orders so secret and profound the chances were they would file no report. And if they did, the readers would make the same assumption. Who among those idiots would imagine that we were simply attempting to form a friendship? Who among them remembers the days when diplomacy ended at dusk and the rising of the moon was the cue for a round of civilised pleasures? I hand it to Li Chu for suspecting the existence of a baroque past he never learned about in the comic books they fed him. Discovery of the past is, in the best people, the result of intuition. The third night we met in my territory. Again it was a fine evening with talk of this and that and a game of checkers. On the fourth night we chose a third room. French food this time, and Li Chu brought a drug with him that left us in a frothy fog of amicability. We laughed together.

It was the sixth night that Anna Wang appeared. It was my birthday. Li Chu brought her to me as a gift. Or so he claimed.

She is a beautiful girl of mixed blood. She can be no more than 23, but she moves like a candle flame in a church. She is a church and contains a ton of natural knowledge. She wore a dress of tan leather over some kind of black body stocking. Her hair gushed down like rain. She had strings of beads and bells around her neck and a perfume that must have contained some narcotic.

She ate with us and danced for us. Not to twangy Eastern music. It was the *Beatles*, I think. One of those groups. Then she stripped naked. Li Chu stripped too and they sat squatting, facing each other. He said it was a yogi position, pre-coital. He said if you sit that way you drift into each other. I reminded him that she was my present and he laughed and said a present is best when shared and a travelled road is more pleasing. I joined them feeling ridiculous. I confess that I am self conscious about every

grey hair on my body. And I know I have a paunch.

But Anna Wang made me feel very much at home. She let me take her first. And, later, again. First and last. That first time I detected a pout around Li Chu's bluish chubby mouth, but I discounted it. The way he is carrying on today makes it clear that he is jealous. That does not make me feel exactly bad, a few days into my sixtieth year. He should be jealous. Last night Anna Wang would not let him do more than stroke her bony rear.

Under the circumstances, accusing them of *escalation* is a special slap in the jowels. Li Chu is practically howling. Tonight I will remind him that he could have given me a tie pin for my birthday.

As for the war, it goes on. A thousand died yesterday. Many more of theirs than ours.

19 August

Neither of us have heard a word from security. They must be befuddled. Getting rid of Anna Wang was a smart decision. And it was mutual. Cynthia Krane, the English girl and Rachel Eshkenazi, the Jewish student, are not sea-girls. They are as empty headed as the tin man. With marvellous soft bodies and pits as moist as mouths.

There is no more conflict over women. In fact, the other night we did not touch them at all. We played Go. It is a compelling and demanding game. There has been a welcome break in the meetings. We reached an impasse after one of our aircraft accidentally straffed beyond the bombing line. They claimed immediately that it was purposeful and malicious. I had plenty of counter evidence, and even produced the actual pilot to testify. He was superb, a child of 19 with a blonde crew cut and freckles. But the talks were suspended indefinitely.

Li Chu and I are planning a holiday on the Riviera. It will be good to smell the salt again and hear the gulls. I can taste the prawns. Both of us are pale as phantoms from all the indoor living and lack of exercise. We are eager to leave Paris.

As for the war, it goes on.

30 September

Li Chu's tan is fading. He is coming back to his yellowish hue. I don't like it. Is that prejudice? Learned or inborn? The color doesn't bother me inordinately. But it is annoying. It is like knowing a person and liking them but not their breath. Does he feel that way about my epidermis? I will ask him someday. My tan is fading too.

Li Chu is haranguing about a plane hijacked by a nation friendly to his own. There are the usual moronic run-on sentences about violation of sovereign air space. In the age of satellites they warble over a reconnaissance plane, unarmed and as obsolete as a Reuter's pigeon. I have concluded my statement about piracy on the seas and in the heavens. They did capture the plane intact which makes things a bit difficult. These splinters of news stick in the tail of history. Who cares? Nobody. Who yowls? Everybody.

The decision to give up our servant should make things

better. Since we moved in together, Li Chu and I have both been behaving like college room-mates nervous about the dormitory supervisor. The servant was safe enough. I'll vouch for that. But we are both paranoid and with some justification. It will be better alone. And doing the chores will help remind us of our humanity.

This is lonely work. To represent is to symbolise and to symbolise is to be depersonalised. Cleaning ashtrays and sweeping floors and cooking our own meals will be a reality check. I look forward to it and to the privacy.

A coup in Li Chu's government has given us some difficulty but things are quieting. There was rumour of a coalition offer but that appears far-fetched. Neither side is certain of their goals. Coalition of who representing what? Our concern was premature. As Li Chu says, it is best not to even read the dispatches much less the newspapers. There have been student riots again in the city. The riots create a wind. They take some of the mustiness out of the air. We welcome them.

As for the war, it goes on.

5 January

I with my Christmas cards and New Year greetings and Li Chu with his holiday of the Moon or somesuch. The apartment is jammed with papers and gifts. The season was exhausting and we saw little of each other. He was called home for a week. Nothing was said about our living arrangement which was a relief.

The President visited here and we had amicable talks. There has been a stalemate on the battle line. And a holiday truce. We had fears that they would launch an offensive as they did last year, but nothing came. Some infiltration of supplies and men but that is minuscule. Thank God there was no move to obliterate the talks. Before the holiday there was some indication of a softening in their position. They abandoned a base to the South-west. We gave up a missile launching position on an island North-east of the base. North-east of South-west. To be specific, we gave up Po Li Dan and they evacuated Ty Sut Nim. Happy Holidays!

Last night was the first night Li Chu and I had a chance to talk. We were both feeling mellow. A quart of Heine cognac helped some. I said that the truth about our century was ironic. We have the technology to eliminate the basic causes of conflict. With atoms and computers and God knows what, the earth could provide a bounty beyond imagination. It is my theory that in our time, the key is not violence but the repression of violence.

I believe we are about to repress violence the way cannibalism and incest were repressed in the race. Our wars are anticlimatic. They are a mockery of real need. They are the dying gasp of violence.

I believe the cannibals must have gone on an organ grinding binge before the last official swallow was gulped, give or take New Guinea.

It is hard to give up war and the reasons for war. Mankind is left to face his pulsating holes without any excuse. I told Li Chu I pitied all races the end of their favourite toy. I said I did not know if the finish of violence

was good or bad. And I don't. I told him to think about how many mammas and sisters and cousins and aunts must have been stuffed in the midnight of incest.

These wars for liberation are wars of masturbation. We are avoiding the horrible truth that war is antique. Li Chu listened in the dark.

Then the imp jabbed me with a nail clipper he brought to bed with him. That boy has developed a first-rate sense of humor. When we first met he would have broken his cheeks to smile.

As for the war, it goes on. At least we have heard no different. Neither of us so much as turned on a radio today.

11 March

"It was the action of pigs. Pig action."

"I must state that if the Distinguished Representative desires to roll in the mud with his language then there is no point in continuing this meeting."

"The invasion of the Delta shows the world how much you want peace. Butchers! You are spilling the blood of children and women to gratify your growing thirst."

"It is always the one whose fangs sink first into the neck of freedom who protests that there are vampires walking in the darkness."

As for the war, it goes on.

16 May

We cannot believe that it is a year.

And tonight, celebrating in our apartment, we were given the greatest of all gifts. We learned from the doctor that we are pregnant. Li Chu is beside himself. I feel a joy that I cannot ever remember feeling before.

The monsoon season has come. The fields are muck. No man can move without sinking into slime. The mechanized battalions are paralyzed. The planes are grounded by fierce winds. Our weather satellites offer the prediction that since the deluge came late this year, it may last well into June. After that there will be rebuilding of natural damage before the destruction can resume.

No end is in sight. They reoccupied Ry Sut Nim and our missiles are back in Po Li Dan. The summer is assured.

By September there will be the baby. How extraordinary. Years have fallen off my frame and, in contrast, Li Chu has gained in maturity. As for the war, it goes on. Yes. And new weapons are being developed. Our people at home and in the field have shown a fresh resolve. Theirs are drenched in a cause. We fatten with child. He will have time to thrive and be born in splendor.

It will surely be a boy.

Drunk and happy, Li Chu and I whirl around the room. We have made our own merry-go-round. He holds my sex and I hold his. We spin like the world and we are singing. ■

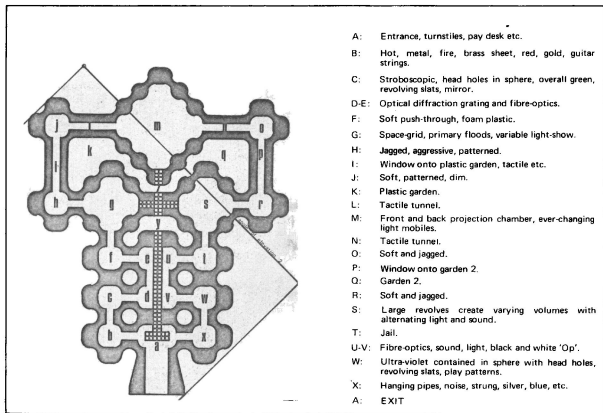


The Responsive Environment

by
Charles Platt

In our supposedly changing world, almost every element of our environment is still constructed with the preconception of permanence. We accept the walls of buildings as the limits within which we have to live, work and play, much the same way as an animal uses a cave. Even in the vast floor-space of an open-plan modern office block, its adaptation to suit the workers' requirements is usually limited to the placing of screens and partitions. The landlord who converts a house into five self-contained bed-sitting rooms is altering an environment in a manner which few people have the time or ability to carry out for themselves. System-built book cases, to which extra shelves can be added as one accumulates more books, are commonplace. But houses are still being built on the principle that if a married couple decides to have children, it will be easier for them to look for a new house than add a couple of rooms to the old one.

The traditional assumption that a house or an armchair, once made, can have only one form and one function, has persisted far longer than it need have done. McLuhan has pointed to the use of technology enabling a mass-produced



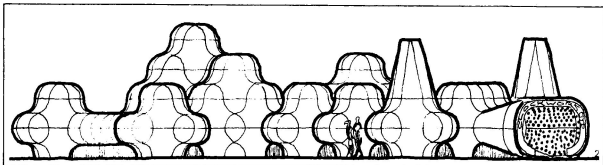
product to be tailored to individual customer specifications so that each example of it is 'customised'. What is even more important is that we have the ability to manufacture items which the customer can take to pieces, adapt and re-build to suit his changing moods and needs.

Keith Albarn is a great exponent of the latter philosophy, believing in the need for environment to be totally responsive to the individual. "We have a very bad relationship with our hardware," he says. "The sense of security, which until now has been strongly allied to emotional feelings toward our houses, monuments and so forth, is going to have to alter, to the far more honest situation of being allied to change. We must come to terms with a moving process rather than a series of status quos."

But Albarn, whose business is currently financed by selling glass fibre sections which can be put together by unskilled labour, without scaffolding, to build anything from a garden shed to a conference room, is not talking about change for its own sake. "Far from increasing the

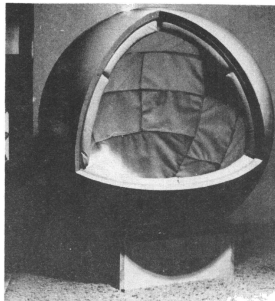
Above: Girvan Fun Palace plan. Below: Girvan Fun Palace.

tempo, I am really trying to take the steam out of the great terrible pressures-of-living-in-the-twentieth-century. I don't think you can say we *don't want change*; that's fighting a terrible battle, and though you may end up not changing much, by God you're going to work very hard at standing still. Really I want a much easier relaxed relationship with hardware—get rid of the Black Box phobia and the great 'They'. I'm not in favour of obsolescence either, because psychologically that does create a frenzy. I'm not talking about just being 'different'. I'm talking about creating an environment which responds to one's needs, and which one understands, so it really is an extension of one's personality. Initially this must be limited in its permutations. Our building kit, using one range of parts, can literally be furniture one minute, a pavilion a hundred feet long, or a hut in the garden. But the structures have to be light, the materials are primitive and have to be simple to



EKISTIKIT SPECIFICATIONS

- 1 Fire-resistant polyester resin.
- 2 Opaque or translucent shell.
- 3 Expanded neoprene gasket ensuring complete and instant waterproofing.
- 4 Base units are of heavy-duty glass fibre (shelters and kiosks), to which the main shell is attached, requiring no foundations. Ply base for furniture.
- 5 All fittings, ie floor, bench seats, shelves and doors etc in $\frac{3}{4}$ " weatherproof marine ply.
- 6 Shell is guaranteed for a 15-year life span.
- 7 Units co-joined by $\frac{1}{4}$ " bolts.
- 8 Colouring impregnated in skin - maintenance-free.
- 9 Simple construction designed for easy erection.
- 10 Individual units may be bought separately to increase the size and/or shape.
- 11 Basic colours available: black, white, clear, red, green, blue or orange.
- 12 Delivery 4-6 weeks on confirmation of order.
- 13 4" polyurethane foam cushions with zip-on covers in P V C - black, white, red and blue.
- 14 50 or more of any one item, 20% discount.
- 15 Ekistikode scale: $1/64$ or $1\frac{1}{2}$ " = 8ft



Furniture made from standardised Ekistikit sections.

produce, and I'm limited by a very tight budget. I want to get on to stage two, a more pliable and sophisticated technology at the production end. In ten years' time we'll be working toward basic building material as a service like water coming out of a tap."

The shapes of Albarn's structures are unconventional,

one suspects partly because he enjoys their style, but, inevitably, also because each section has been designed to fit as many different uses and purposes as possible. His Margate fun palace, built in the Dreamland amusement park, is crude and basic in shape compared to his current project of this type, a 'play environment' on a larger scale. As play environments, his structures are obviously sound propositions. They're a nice place to visit, but would anyone really want to live there?

"In a way, the pressures against us are very real—people aren't ready for this. For the average person to conceive of Aunt Mabel coming for the weekend and extending the house to put her up overnight is science fiction; I think this can only be done if we start by allying the ideas to a sense of play. If we fight on, people will gradually become accustomed to the ideas involved. Our structures get publicity in building trade journals; when we answer enquiries and visit clients we make a point of explaining if he wants to change it or take it down, he *can*. Selling our garden sheds, we sometimes find some clients *will* actually change it and switch it around. This is a very naive first step, and we're working with a Meccano kit principle for people not trained to think structurally or spatially."

Turning to Keith Albarn's most recent play environment, the Margate fun palace, we wanted to know how this

$$\begin{aligned}
 A &= 224(10) + 264(2) + 512(6) + 614(2) + 644(5) + 924(5) + X42 = \text{SPHERE SHELTER} \\
 &\quad \text{shell} \quad \text{shell} \quad \text{shell} \quad \text{shell} \quad \text{shell} \quad \text{shell} \quad \text{door} \\
 \\
 K &= 312(4) + 212(12) + 122(24) = \text{SMALL PAVILLION} \\
 &\quad \text{shell} \quad \text{shell} \quad \text{shell} \\
 \\
 N &= 212(4) + X32(4) + X22(6) + \text{BASE} = \text{SPHERE CHAIR} \\
 &\quad \text{shell} \quad \text{cushion} \quad \text{cushion}
 \end{aligned}$$



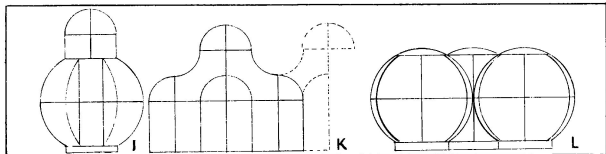
Above: Dreamland, Margate. Below: Examples of small buildings using the standardised range of sections.

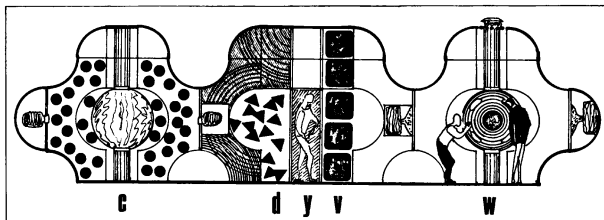
had worked out in practice. A year ago, when we published a short interview with him, the Margate project was two months from completion. What had happened since then?

"I did have some fears about trying to put it in an existing fairground," he comments. "My fears proved to be very justified partly because the existing fairground, as it is run, involves a security force and is almost built to encourage aggression. At first people would hurl bricks at the thing and kick it to see what it was made of; the

construction was strong enough to take most of that. But anything in a fairground is fair game for a mob intent on destruction. I was there one day, when £2,000 of damage was done in three quarters of an hour. They insisted on having two security men dressed up like police, one at the door and one inside the structure. This is just setting up a challenge, a provocation."

The fun palace was a chain of glass fibre tunnels and





domes, within which were experiences of sound, light and texture which were as responsive as possible to the actions of the people inside the structure. How had these effects worked out in practice?

"We were working with tiny chambers, a restriction imposed by the clients, who didn't want large spaces where people would stop or dawdle. Because people were being pushed through like a caterpillar, the noise they made and the noise from the fairground outside had the effect of making the proximity detectors, the devices that worked in response to the sounds made by onlookers, function non-stop instead of responding properly. This meant the fun palace failed to work as originally intended. But it was successful as an attraction and financially."

Sadder and wiser, Keith Albarn has designed his next fun palace along different lines.

"The new one will be much more open—some areas thirty feet across. You can wander around; following a proscribed route, but you shouldn't be aware of being funnelled through. It will be a gentle experience; slow movements, soft and dreamlike. Margate had the physical, aggressive kind of amusement associated with the fairground. The new one (which is to be in Girvan, in Scotland) will have softer sensual pleasures, richer in quality. Ultimately I'd like to see these things fulfilling the same function as a church, art gallery or amusement park—three in one—and we should have that range of experiences possible."

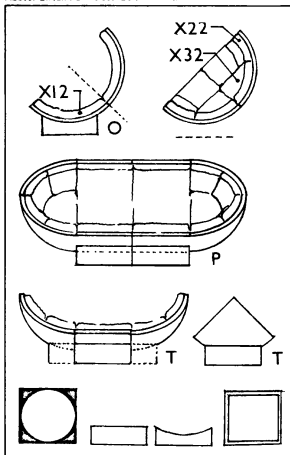
The new fun palace opens in May. Girvan is on the west coast of Scotland, in the Galloway area. It's more a village by the sea than a seaside resort, and the town council is very concerned with providing seasonal amusements for the summer (when the indigenous 7,500 population grows to 30,000) the amusements being, at the same time, sophisticated enough for the residents to use as amenities, off-season.

Keith Albarn's other current projects include a range of packages; educational aids in the form of toys that teach counting and reading; designs for a theatre and a seaside pier; and detailed estimates for emergency housing for Middle-East refugees. Albarn's most important concern at the moment, however, is a big development he is negotiating with the Lea Valley regional park authority, for an island site where he hopes to build a big play area, therapy unit and research and development unit. The latter

function would entail bringing together a lot of specialists and 'generalists' to work on environmental ideas. There would also be facilities provided for students to work there.

The Lea Valley project is his most ambitious so far, and may or may not ever come to fruition. But whether it does or not, Albarn has barely started exploiting the full range of environmental possibilities. (His business has only been in operation for about four years, and has often been hampered by lack of funds.) There is ample time and scope for him to continue toward the goal of manufacturing truly sophisticated, responsive, adaptable personal environments, for everyday living. ■

Above: Girvan Fun Palace. Below: Ekistikit.



Michael Moo

LIVE, FISH, SHOOT AND HUNT IN NATURE'S WONDERLAND

LAS VEGAS WAS quiet in the afternoon glare. The signs flashed to a steady, soothing rhythm that blended with the sounds of the fruit-machines and the blackjack tables. Las Vegas was one of those sleepy towns where nobody bothered you much as long as you didn't make trouble. It has all the old virtues of rural American life. Jerry felt at peace here. He made for Circus Circus and wondered if Murphy still owned it.

He went inside and began to cross the vast hall filled with gaming tables. A few old people were playing, a few performers were on the hire wire above the hall, but nobody noticed him as he located Murphy's office and went in.

Murphy seemed pleased to see him.

"Jerry! What brings you to civilisation?"

"I thought you might like to know that the tribes are massing. It looks like war."

"We don't need to worry about a few Indians, Jerry. The army'll look after them."

"The army seems to be busy elsewhere."

"Why should they want to attack us?"

Eugene Murphy had known Jerry in London. Ex-president - turned - motion - picture - star - turned - casino - owner, Murphy had a battered, cancerous face and a big cigar.

"They're attacking everything," said Jerry.

"What are they riled about?"

"Most everything or nothing in particular. You know the Indians."

Murphy nodded. "Well, I'll bear it in mind. Is that why you came to Vegas?"

"I came to borrow a plane. I lost mine out there."

"Sure. You can have your pick. I've got a lovely little LTV C-150A tiltwing turboprop that should suit you fine. Have something to eat and then we'll go and take a look at her. What d'you say?"

"Sounds fine."

"Great! I bet you're glad to be somewhere you can take it easy, put your feet up. All that trouble. All that burning. Washington, Atlanta, Kansas City, Philadelphia, Salt Lake City, Houston. I sometimes wonder if it's worth it, Jerry." Murphy poured them both large glasses of rye. "And it's not good for business, either. I can tell you that for nothing. You must have come through the place. Not that I'm complaining. Not yet."

Jerry peeled off his war-bonnet. "I think they'll make for Carson City and take over the mint first. They were still in council when I left."

"I'm part Indian myself, you know," Murphy said proudly.

COPS WHO ARE HELL ON PILLHEADS

JERRY CLIMBED INTO the cockpit of the LTV C-150A and ran his fingers over the controls with a

A Cure for

rock:

sigh of relief. He settled himself and switched on. Slowly the wings tilted upwards and the propellers sang.

Jerry sat back and took her up.

She rose neatly into the air and at 500 feet he tilted the wings forward and headed, at a comfortable 350 mph, for California.

As he flew over the Sierra Nevadas he saw that they were black with riders. A Mayday message came in on the radio. It was Sacramento.

"This is General Partridge, Sacramento Control Tower."

"Come in Partridge, Sacramento."

"We're completely surrounded. I've hardly got a man left. We can't get a message through for reinforcements. Will you relay a message?"

"What's the problem?"

"The problem! Indians is the problem. They're howling round and round and round. Fire arrows. . . ."

"How long can you hang on?"

"Another hour. We need paratroopers. A regiment at least. Half the tower's on fire. Can you get through to Hollywood?"

"I don't think so."

"Well, get through to someone. There must be a thousand of the devils out there at least. My head's spinning. Round and round. Nobody warned me."

"It's a fast world, general."

"No kidding."

"I'm on my way to San Francisco. I'll inform the authorities when I arrive."

"If we hadn't had guerilla experience, we wouldn't be here now. It's Dien Bien Phu all over again."

"That's the way it goes. Over and out, general."

Jerry could see the blue Pacific. He began to hum.

Jerry brought the plane down over the mellow ruins of Berkley and headed for the recently built Howard Johnsons where he had a large steak with all the trimmings and a Quadruple Pineapple Astonisher with hot fudge sauce topped with grated nuts. It set him up. He left one of Murphy's thousand dollar bills under his plate and began the long walk to the bridge. The bay was blue, the bridge beautiful and the distant city had almost died down. A few buildings were still standing, a few reconnaissance copters hung about in the sky but most of them were heading back to the Hollywood base, now the Greater American operations centre.

An old man joined Jerry as he reached the bridge. "Mind if I walk along with you a taste, son?" He wore a dingy brown fedora and dirty overalls and he had a cheroot between his wrinkled lips. "Going in for a loved one?"

"Something like that." The bridge swayed. Jerry looked down at the boats leaving the bay. Most of them were cruisers from the ruined port.

"I hail from Kansas. I was on my way to join up in L.A., but then the truck broke down. Thought I'd do some fruit-picking instead."

Jerry stopped and peered through the bars. He recognised the *Teddy Bear*. She was in full sail and she was loaded with patients; he saw some of them staring up from the forward hold just before the hatches were battened. Beesley must have moved the yacht overland in a hurry.

Cancer

Now they were heading out.

"There's a lot of fruit to pick," said the old man. "So I hear."

Jerry sighed.

"I'll be seeing you," he said, and he jumped, swung through the struts, poised, dived, hit the salty water not three feet from the yacht, sank, somersaulted, struck for the surface, saw above him the keel, the churning propellers and grabbed the rope that trailed in the foam, hauling himself up the side.

When he climbed aboard he had his vibragun in his hand and Bishop Beesley and Mitzi had a nasty shock when they saw him.

"That was just a warning." Jerry smiled apologetically. "I seem to be in and out of water all the time." He waved them towards the rail over which he'd climbed. "It's your turn for a dip now."

"Good heavens, Mr Cornelius! This is piracy!"

"Well, I see it another way, bishop. After all, it's my crew."

"That's a moot point, sir!"

"Jerry." Mitzi's eyes were full of adoration. "Let me come with you. I'll be . . ."

"I'd like that, Mitzi, but I have to remain impartial at the moment. You've used up so much of my time, do you see. You know how it is."

She tripped to the side, pulled her tight, white skirt over her creamy thighs and straddled the gleaming brass rail.

With a wave she disappeared.

"Now you, bishop."

"A boat, at very least. . . ."

"Come along, now."

The bishop moved reluctantly and looked down at the sparkling water. "When I asked you for a lift. . . ."

"Don't make me feel guilty."

"I shouldn't think it would take me. . . ."

"Bishop."

"A bag of provender. A Bounty bar?"

"Not even a coffee cream."

"I don't like coffee creams." Blowing like a great white whale, Bishop Beesley heaved himself over the rail. Somewhere a building toppled and crashed.

Jerry walked up and pushed him on his way. With a yell the bishop whirled his corpulent arms and fell on the water. He lay there, bobbing up and down in the yacht's wake, his arms and legs waving gently, his red mouth opening and closing, his bulging eyes staring at Jerry in pained outrage. Mitzi appeared, shaking water from her hair, and began to tow the bishop shorewards.

"Bye, bye, bishop. It's like a game of dominoes in many ways."

The bishop honked pathetically.

Jerry climbed up the companionway to the bridge and checked his charts and instruments, plotting his course.

Within half-an-hour they were bound for Sumatra where the organisation had an emergency Reclamation Centre and Greater America had disappeared below the horizon.

Coming Events

THE DREAM

FOUR YEARS AGO I dreamed that I stood in a room behind, and to the left of, a young man I did not know. He was younger than me. On his left, but in front of us, stood my brother, and beside him stood an old man whom I did not recognize. On our right, two large

cream-painted doors were closing. I thought that my brother and this other man were in some way assessing this younger man, who I felt was either my husband or my intended husband. Since then, I have without any doubt met this young man. The dream is troubling me, as I fail to understand its meaning. Never before have I dreamed so clearly of something so far in the future.

THE MEANING

We may accept the above as a good example of what is called precognitive dreaming. Instances of dreaming ahead of time crop up fairly often and some of them get on to this page. As to what the brother and the old man are doing, that comes under a different head altogether. The earliest objects of a girl child's physical affection are her father and her brother. Any later male attachment is a result of these early, though unlocalized, sex objects. The question the reader is asking in her dream is how far the later object of affection stands up to the early ideal of childhood. The result rests with the dreamer's own nature. The old man is a father symbol; the closing doors represent the flight of time.

(Dream Meanings, *Prediction*, March 1969)

LIGHTS

OUTER SPACE: IN THE BEGINNING, A BIG BANG?

Fantastic things are being discovered in outer space. Some astronomers believe they have located cosmic bodies of a cataclysmic force that might indicate a primeval Big Bang. And a hiss located in outer space may be an echo of this explosive Creation, coming from thousands of millions of light years ago. Next week, in an exciting new series, we explore the new ideas which may lead to a complete overhaul of our thinking about the universe and our place in it.

(*Observer Colour Magazine*, 26 January 1969)

UFOs ARE UNFRIENDLY, UP TO NO GOOD AND SOME OF THEM ARE TRULY DANGEROUS

A QUICK TRIP to the cellar then Jerry moved easy in soft browns and yellows and a gold silk tie, out into the mellow sunlight of an early autumn in Ladbroke Grove, on his way to Chelsea.

Kings Road was a healthy step away.

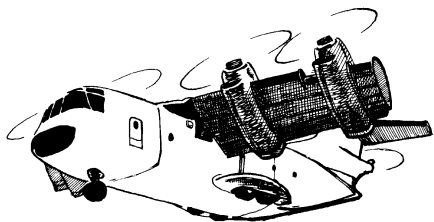
He strolled along, savouring the day, swinging his sonic cane and listening to the music in the handle, turned down Elgin Crescent, shaded by old oaks, and trod the length of Clarendon Road until he came to Holland Park Avenue with its tall trees and its huge, hollow, empty houses.

Pulled by two Shetland ponies, a red and green baker's cart moved slowly through the falling leaves. The lean driver stretched on his seat in the soft warmth of the day, listening to the lazy drone of distant aircraft. Jerry stopped and bought a bun.

"It's a mild sort of day," said the baker.

"Not bad." Jerry bit his bun. "How's the wife?"

"Not so dusty."



"Finished your round?"

"For what it's worth. Very little bread, of course. Just the eclairs and custard tarts and stuff."

"I suppose it's for the best."

"Wouldn't have it otherwise."

Jerry headed for the park. His cane played the *Fool on the Hill*.

A few children ran about in Holland Park as he passed through. An old man fed the peacocks and pigeons and guinea fowl from a big tub of peanuts at his belt. Jerry paused by Holland House and looked at its white facade, but the Elizabethan mansion was silent so he kept going until he reached the cricket pitch and the burnt-out skeleton of the Commonwealth Institute that faced Kensington High Street where the traffic moved slowly.

He had a feeling in his bones.

On the corner of Earls Court Road, he climbed into his parked Maybach Zeppelin convertible, pushed back the top to let the breeze get to his hair, drove rapidly towards Chelsea and stopped outside *The Purple Parrot* where he had arranged to meet Spiro Koutrouboussis to discuss the past, present and future over lunch.

The lobby of the club was hung with gilded cages full of minah birds, canaries and cockatoos who called to each other in several languages and dialects. The receptionist, dressed in elaborate quills, looked like a Polynesian chief in ceremonial robes. She smiled at him. "Your table's ready, Mr Cornelius. Your friend's in the Linnet Room."

Spiro Koutrouboussis sat by himself on a stool by the bar, staring pensively at a cage of sulky wrens. A thrush perched on his curly black hair, a Marguerita lay between his well-scrubbed hands. "Ah, Cornelius."

"Sorry if I'm late. I had rather a rough time in the States."

"I told you so."

Jerry sniffed.

"That Karen von Krupp—she trapped you. I knew she would. You never listen. . ."

The thrush began to sing. Koutrouboussis brushed at it absently but it dug its claws in.

"It was an experience." Jerry ordered a Pernod. "Nothing like experience."

"The time lost!"

"That's something you can never do anything about. Come now, Koutrouboussis."

"Cornelius. We are in danger. Our whole project is in danger—your project, after all. If you have double-crossed. . ."

Jerry reached for the menu on the bar. "What have we got?"

"The duck's very good today," said Koutrouboussis. "So I'm told. Or the Chicken Apollinaire."

"Too heavy for me. I'll start with *pate de foie*, I think." Jerry stroked the tip of his nose. "I miss the food. Still. . ."

"Is Karen von Krupp out of the picture now?"

"I should imagine so."

"Well, I suppose you were successful, essentially. But there's still Beesley. Particularly under the circumstances."

"Which circumstances are those?"

"President Boyle has increased the military advisors. There are three million on the Continent, seeking out certain fifth column elements."

"Surely nobody's worried."

"Not about that. Nobody but the Three Presidents, anyway. And maybe Israel. You heard what happened

yesterday? A fleet of Israeli helicopters landed in the Vatican City and arrested the Pope. Admittedly, they had a lot of aggravation."

"I've been a bit out of touch."

"I'm not blaming you for that."

They walked into the restaurant. It had been converted from an old orangery and its pillars were covered in vines, its windows looking out onto a white paved courtyard with a Regency fountain in which sparrows splashed.

Jerry ordered his *hors d'oeuvre* and chose roast quail as his main dish. They decided to drink Blue Nun.

"I think the machine should be found, you know." Koutrouboussis chewed his chicken. "After all, we're not in a very strong position without it, are we? Our chances are slim."

"I don't much fancy the Shifter at this stage." Jerry picked up a little leg.

"You might not have to go into it. We've got something of a lead. Does the name—?" Koutrouboussis choked on an asparagus spear. "Does the name," he took a sip of his Liebfraumilch, "Gordon mean anything to you?"

"Flash Gordon?"

"Gordon Gavin?"

"That's right." Jerry nipped at a quail's breast. "The last I heard of him, he had twenty-two offences behind him. For flashing."

"Ah. Well, be that as it may, he got in contact with me a little while ago. He'd heard about our conversion scheme."

"So he's at a centre."

"Not yet. You know how timid these people are. He made an appointment but didn't keep it. Then he phoned again to say he had a message for you from a gentleman concerning an invention of yours that got lost during a test run. The machine, obviously."

"I've lost a lot of inventions."

"I'm sure he meant the machine. It could be our salvation, Cornelius."

"Get away."

IGNORE ADVICE TO STRIP AT HIGH SPEED

KOUTROUBOUSSIS CROSSED THE street heavily and entered the gates of the Pheasantry where he had an apartment. Jerry followed him down the crazy paving between the crumbling statues and into a dark hall full of varnished doors and unseen fluttering wings.

They went along silent corridors, across quiet courtyards and up stairs until they were deep in the Victorian complex. Koutrouboussis stopped by a door on a second floor balcony overlooking a rock garden full of finches. The door's wood had been stripped and a thin yellow undercoat had been laid on the top half.

"Here we are."

They went into a sunlit studio. On the raised floor to the right stood a brass bed with a large, loud, enamelled bird of paradise as its headboard. The bed also had a Turkish counterpane in dark red, yellow and blue.

The raised floor to the left had deep white cupboards containing Koutrouboussis's sink, stove and supplies.

An Old Gold fitted carpet covered the floor and the steps; by the far wall a large light screen was full of flowing colours that frequently changed shape.

In the corners, close to the ceiling, were four stereo speakers. In the middle of the floor kneeled two girls wearing lace and feathers, pale make-up, lots of big rings,

and richly decorated eyes.

As the girls looked softly at him, Jerry remembered them.

"Hello, Jerry," murmured Maureen the Groupie.

"Hello, Jerry," murmured Barbara the Groupie.

"Maureen and Barbara are staying with me for a bit." Koutrouboussis loosened his tie. "They're between groups at the moment."

Maureen had honey-coloured hair and Barbara had chestnut-coloured hair; they stood gracefully up and went to the kitchen where they collected two tins and brought them back.

Maureen put an old Zoot Money record on the deck. The sound came softly through and the light screen shifted its shapes and colours.

Barbara kneeled to make cigarettes. She took the ingredients from the tins with her delicate fingers and rolled fat, full fags. She lit two and handed one to Jerry and the other to Koutrouboussis. The men sat down on the ostrich plume cushions and smoked.

Maureen came back and kneeled beside Barbara; she drew on her cigarette with vague dignity. Then both girls tilted their impassive faces and directed their intuned eyes at the skylight until someone should ask for something.

"Now if it wasn't for the beans that come out the can, the peas, the beef, the rice and the spam, you can get going down to the grocer's store, really I couldn't eat no more. Let me tell you, my wife—now she can't cook and if I thought she could I wouldn't bother, but all she can do is fuss and holler, she don't even know how to boil water," sang Zoot Money.

"Nineteen sixty five." Koutrouboussis took a long pull. "So long, long, long..."

"If you leave me, I'll go crazy."

Jerry smiled reminiscently at Maureen the Groupie who smiled back, sharing the secret that only kindness made them keep. "Jump back, baby, jump back..."

Koutrouboussis lay down and closed his face.

Maureen's warm lips framed the words as she and Jerry looked matily into each other's eyes: ("Sweet little rock and roller...")

It was too much for Jerry.

He got up and grasped Maureen and Barbara by their small, soft hands and led them across the Old Gold carpet, up the three steps to the bed with its bird of paradise and began to pile the lace and feathers and rings they handed him. They were so fine and their style was so nice; and their agile, graceful, malleable bodies moved to their mutual pleasure.

When the record was finished, Barbara went and put on another. It was Zoot Money's *Zoot!*

Jerry looked across to the middle of the room.

Koutrouboussis's eyes were alive in a frozen, fading frame.

"Pigs."

THE NEW RM TOP 50 CHART EXPLAINED

JERRY, MAUREEN AND Barbara left the Pheasantry and went in Jerry's car to the Ball Room in Wardour Street, Soho, where, in a spot that shifted through all the shades of blue, Sneaky Jack Slade whined wildly his signature tune, played on his smooth sitar.

"I'm the sneaky guy, don't deny my name. Yes, I'm the sneaky guy, don't deny my name," he sang.

When Sneaky saw the new arrivals come in he scuttled off the little stage to be followed by Jonni Jane in platinum wig and rosepetal suit.

Jonni's hands flung themselves about. "Now it's time for our newest, bluest—let me introduce you—twelve or eight to the bar—the bombshock blues of the junkiest, funkiest, wailingest picker of the year—get ready—he's coming—it's Clapham—George—*Foulsham!*" Jonni trolled off and on came Clapham George to play his latest composition, *Ma Belly's Fulla Sour Milk*.

"Mean ol' U.D., brought sour milk to me. Oh, that mean ol' U.D., brought sour milk to me..."

Leaving Maureen and Barbara by the Coca Cola stand, Jerry went to look for Lionel Himmler, the proprietor.

He found him, all sorrow and shit, in his little office behind the bar.

"And what brings you out in the daytime, Mr Cornelius?" Lionel lifted a glass of Bull's Blood to his pale lips. "Not a blunt needle, I hope."

"How's business, Lionel?"

"We're going over to strip shows more. You've got to get the customers from the suburbs, you see. Out of the Stockbroker Belt into the Suspender Belt, eh?" A cigar reared in his mouth.

"Soho isn't what it was."

"Let me be the judge of that, Mr Cornelius."

"I felt like working."

"It's your mortgage."

Jerry opened a dark brown cupboard and took out his Martin 206. He checked it and tuned it.

"Sorry about the dust," said Lionel.

His guitar under his arm, Jerry walked back into the room. Clapham George had gone and a stripper towelled herself in the strobelight. Jerry flickered to a table, sat down and ordered scotch and milk.

Maureen and Barbara brought their cokes over and joined him. He felt happy with them, but they all knew the scene was patched.

When the stripper went backstage, Jerry played *Dutch Schultz* and then sang *Back Door Man* and Lionel came out to play the Hammond and Jerry plugged in on the stage and things moved a little as the audience went and only Maureen and Barbara, two old, old ladies, listened as Jerry mournfully finished with *My Baby Rocks Me*, which got them all going, so they left.

Jerry blew a kiss to Lionel. He didn't notice. He was playing a John Patton number, probably *Fat Judy*.

Off they went. Through the cold grease of the crowd on the pavement and down the street to where his car, a 1935 Phantom III Continental Rolls Royce with its involved V-12 engine and its independent front suspension and its fixtures of the purest silver, including the radiator, was parked.

"Maybe it should have been a Shadow," said Barbara, giving Jerry's arm a friendly hug. "Or is that perverse?"

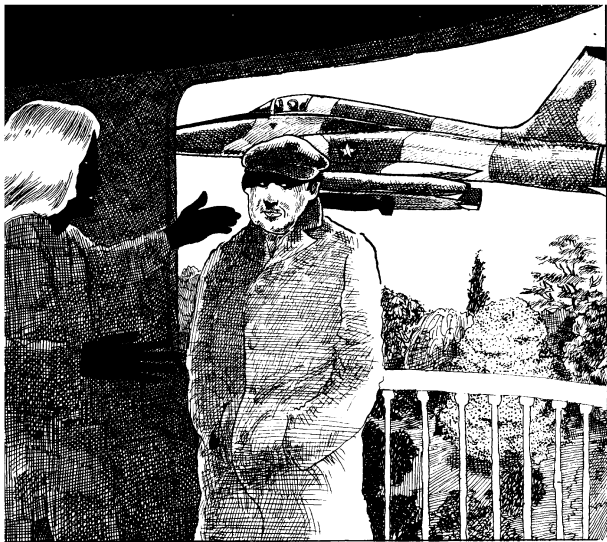
The girls climbed in the back with the Martin and Jerry started the car.

Wardour Street, all frozen brightlights and vague expressions, led to Shaftesbury Avenue, walled by brown shops, to Piccadilly Circus, and its green spot.

Soon Jerry was out of all that, driving down Pall Mall, round the palace, along beside the park, past the Victory Arch, into Knightsbridge, bowling along, singing a song, while the girls, huddled in each other's arms, fell asleep.

The music was going.

Koutrouboussis was right. He had to find the machine



He would drop the groupies off at the Pheasantry, get the whereabouts of Gordon Gavin and make an early start in the morning.

MY HUSBAND IS A "SPEED FREAK"

JERRY RODE THE 750 cc MZ straight down the middle of Hammersmith Road and the hog began to hammer as it reached 130.

Jerry's milk-white hair stood out straight behind him, his black silks were pasted to his body, his visor threatened to buckle as he leaned and took the roundabout and throttled down to a comfortable ton when he neared the Cromwell Road Extension and passed a funeral procession.

Three Austin Princesses followed the hearse, their debased lines and lumpy finish offering some loathsome insult to the coffin's contents.

Lying forward on the tank, with his arms stretched out to grasp the chopper's low racing bars, Jerry weaved in front of the Princesses in a dance that was at once graceful and obscene.

The gesture made, he accelerated again and screamed towards Brentford Market.

The Austin Princess was bad for his cool.

He turned into Kew Bridge Road, leapt over the bridge and headed along Kew Green for the big main gates, designed by Decimus Burton and erected in 1848, of the Royal Botanic Gardens. He went through the wrought iron gates that bore the golden Royal Crest, and reduced his speed to seventy, passing the John Nash Aroid House, the Chambers Orangery, the Filmy Fern House, his bike leaving a churned scar across the autumn lawns until it hit Broad Walk and zoomed through the fresh, early morning air towards the Burton Palm House that glistened, all glass and girders, by the Rose Garden, roared between the Australian House and the Temperate House, gunned through flower beds and lawns, wove between the quiet cedars and skidded to a stop outside the 163 ft. Red Pagoda that overlooked the cedars.

The metal plates on each of the pagoda's ten roofs reflected the sun, as did the glass domes that covered the bronze dragons at each corner of each of the octagonal roofs, exactly as they had been placed in 1761 by Sir William Chambers on Princess Augusta's approval.

Jerry let his hog fall and shielded his eyes to peer upward.

There in the shadows of the sixth storey balcony stood a figure which, as he watched, came and leaned over the rail. The figure was dressed in a long dirty raincoat buttoned to

the neck.

It could only be Flash Gordon.

Jerry opened the door and began to climb the central iron staircase that wound up between the bare floors of varnished oak planks. Dust sparkled in the sunlight slanting through the dirty windows.

As he reached the sixth floor, Flash climbed through an open window and stood limply waiting for Jerry to approach.

The large, brown, shallow eyes, set in the red, unhealthy face, stared shiftily at the silk suit and the blotched fingers stroked the buttons of his mackintosh as if the urge to undo them would get the better of him at any moment.

Below the raincoat Jerry saw a pair of thick, grey socks and boots heavy with mud and blakeys.

"Er, how do, Mr Cornelius, er," Flash moved his thick lips in a flabby smile.

"Good morning, Gordon. Kew's a bit off your usual manor, isn't it?"

Flash brightened up. "Ah, well. I'm fond of plants you see, Mr Cornelius. I had a little garden. I do a little gardening. I'd like a little shrubby. A little greenhouse. I'm fond of plants. All kinds. I look after these now, as best I can. There's no one else will. That's the state of this little country."

"And it's handy."

"Very handy." As Flash dropped his lids over his suddenly heating pupils his hands went convulsively into his pockets. "And warm. Winter's coming," he whispered. Then he cleared his throat. "But I need a good bit of oil. And oil doesn't grow on trees. Well... not on most... trees." Avoiding Jerry's eyes Flash moved to the staircase and began to climb down. "Shall us?"

"It is a bit exposed here," agreed Jerry unpleasantly as he followed Flash down.

They walked along the golden Cedar Vista towards the distant Australian House.

"It's spring in Australia, of course," Flash murmured.

"I wouldn't count on it. Not these days."

"I suppose not, no."

Flash took a key from his pocket and opened the door. They went into the hot, bright atmosphere and strolled among the eucalyptus, banksias, Kangaroo Paw, Sturt's Desert Pea, mimosa and acacia.

"You told our Mr Koutrouboussis you had some information about some stolen property," Jerry said as they paused to admire the purple flowers of a rhododendron.

"Perfectly correct."

"Hard or soft information?"

Flash gave him a startled look. "Er, hard, er."

"And you want a transplant job in return?"

"Ah, well, that's it, isn't it? No. You see, I'm happy here. I like the plants and they like me. And I can move about in them, can't I, waiting for the visitors?"

"So you can."

"Therefore, Mr Cornelius, by and large, that problem's settled. Over and done with. It's a different problem. I'd give you the info for nothing, you know that. For old time's sake. But I've got to have the oil, you see."

"Well, we could guarantee you a regular supply. Oil's one thing we had a bit of foresight on."

"That's what I understood."

"And, of course, we'd have a guarantee that way, wouldn't we."

"That's right. If my info's duff, you stop the supply. I hope it isn't duff, though." Flash looked anxiously at his Kangaroo Paw. "I wish you hadn't done that to my lawn."

"I wasn't to know, Flash."

"Fair enough. It'll grow over. That's something I've got to face, sooner or later. There'll be a good deal of growing over."

"It won't be a bad thing."

"I didn't say it was. But it's *different*, isn't it, I mean?"

A squadron of low-flying Northrop F-5A Freedom Fighters made the glass buzz on the frames. Flash looked up and shook his head. "There's been a lot of parachuting going on," he said. "Over Barnes way mostly. You should see what *they've* done to the grass and the trees on the common."

"They've got our interests at heart," said Jerry.

"But what about the little saplings and that!"

"You have to make some sacrifices, Flash."

Warm tears dropped from Gordon's eyes. "Well, I used like Barnes Common. Sorry, Mr Cornelius, but I did. That's where I first met you, wasn't it?"

"That info you were on about," said Jerry.

"Oh yes. Yes. Just a minute" Flash's hand moved in his raincoat pocket and eventually emerged with a scrap of paper. "The swine."

He handed Jerry the piece of paper "It is a deal, isn't it, Mr Cornelius?"

Jerry looked at the paper. "It's a deal. Where did you get this?"

"Off the bloke that wrote it."

"That bugger," said Jerry. "Would you believe it?"

"It's all go, isn't it?" said Flash.

Jerry looked at the piece of paper again:



"He said he'd make an appointment for you. Buckingham Palace. This afternoon." Flash stroked a eucalyptus leaf. "Is that all right?"

"It'll have to do."

CUT ONE

Frightened mothers welcome the avenging police

Police in Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo were tired of seeing criminals get away scot free. So a few of them organised 'death squads'—which operate only during the coppers' off-duty hours.

So far the deaths of more than 100 criminals have been attributed to the Rio squad. The bodies were stamped with a skull-and-crossbones, which is the trade mark of the killer cops.

The Sao Paulo squad is believed to consist of nine officers, five of them university-educated. Their grudge is the abolition of the death penalty in

Brazil and the lack of adequate police facilities.

One squad member, who preferred to be nameless, said, "We were fed up with going around with our hands tied. We decided to use unconventional methods."

Honest people among the ten million who live in the two cities welcome the unorthodox justice.

One frightened mother wrote to a local newspaper: "It is good to know we are being protected."

The men marked for death are those considered habitual criminals by the squads.

Many are drug traffickers. The squads seek maximum publicity, feeling that this will be a deterrent to crime.

The official police stations receive regular calls from a squad 'public relations officer,' who reveals where the latest body can be found.

(*Titbits* 1 February 1969)

BIOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF THE VIETNAM WAR

JERRY PULLED HIS Phantom VI up outside the gates of Buckingham Palace and lowered the window as two sergeants of the 5th Marine Division in the modified uniform of the Royal Horse Guards, complete with helmets and horsehair plumes, came to check him over.

"I've an appointment with Frank Cornelius," Jerry told them.

He was wearing his wide-brimmed lilac hat, with his hair knotted under it. His midnight blue shirt was trimmed in matching lace and his toreador trousers were in an even deeper blue. Around his waist was a wide patent leather belt with a huge brass buckle and a holster holding his vibragun. A flowing yellow bandanna had been tied around his throat.

The sergeants tried to keep their faces expressionless as they inspected his papers, but their lips trembled.

"Wait here, sir." One of the sergeants brushed at his new moustache and went and spoke to a man who stood in the shadows of the main entrance to the palace building.

The other sergeant rested his hand on the roof of Jerry's car and watched his companion intently until he emerged from the shadows and waved. The sergeant slammed the flat of his hand on the roof and Jerry drove through into the courtyard.

The first sergeant ran up to the car, his sword and forty-five slapping against his buckskins.

"I'll park your car, sir."

"Don't bother." Jerry got out and locked the Phantom VI. "I'll leave it here, I think."

"We can't do that. Cars outside headquarters are forbidden. They ruin the view, Sir."

Jerry pointed up at the flagstaff on the roof of the palace. "I see General Cumberland's in residence."

"Yes, sir."

"It's a proud banner."

Jerry walked into the hall and gave his card to a dapper lieutenant who placed it on a silver tray and bore it up the staircase, passing the portraits of Elizabeth I, James I, Charles I, Charles II, James II, William III, Mary II, Anne, George I, George II, George III, George IV, William IV, Victoria, Edward VII, George V, Edward VIII, George VI, Elizabeth II, Helen, and Ulysses Washington Cumberland (C-in-C, U.S. Defence Forces, Western Europe) who had occupied the building after Helen had left to run a small

riding school in Guildford, Surrey. The most recent of the portraits were by Aldridge, the last true Court Painter, in the mouth-and-foot manner that he had made so markedly his own.

Jerry admired the old-fashioned luxury, the archaic splendour of the guards who stood to attention with drawn sabres at every door.

"They certainly have dash." He nodded at the guards as the lieutenant returned.

The lieutenant eyed him up and down. "Major Cornelius is ready to see you. This way."

They climbed the plush and gold staircase until they reached the second floor and walked between the panelled walls and bad Romneys until they came to a white door with panel decorations picked out in black; the name MAJOR FRANK CORNELIUS, *Special Aide, C-in-C*, inscribed in red, and two splendid Royal U.S. Marine Grenadiers on either side. Their swords clashed as they ceremoniously barred the portal then returned their weapons to the slope.

The lieutenant knocked on the door.

A faint but unmistakable Afrikaaner accent answered: "Come."

The lieutenant saluted and marched off. Jerry opened the door and walked into a room decorated and furnished entirely in a style as ugly as anything by the Adam Bros.

Frank stood by the fussy fireplace looking at a little lyre clock that was of the German fake Directoire variety but quite pretty. He was dressed in the sharply cut uniform of a major in the U.S. 8th Airborne, one hand in his pocket, one arm on the mantelpiece. He looked very pale and his black hair was clipped close to his shoulders. He smiled at Jerry.

"Long time no see, old chap."

"You've been out in South Afrika, then."

"Good for the constitution, Jerry."

"Or reconstitution."

Frank laughed loudly. "Good old Jerry!"

"I wish you wouldn't keep using that word. You seem to be doing well for yourself."

"It's a mission."

"I saw Mr Gavin. I gather you have some idea of the whereabouts of a piece of property I own."

"Your invention, you mean."

"You could put it that way."

"Well, I haven't got it here, you realise."

"Where would it be?"

"Let's discuss it later. Time for refreshment first?"

Frank touched a bell and a ravaged girl with long chestnut hair came through a side door. "This is my secretary. Do you know her? Rose Barrie, my brother Jerry. Rose is a civilian auxiliary." Frank smiled. "They call you Bombhead Rose, don't they Rose?" He winked at Jerry. "Rose knows..."

Rose smoothed her cherry dress and raised a hand to her garish face. "Wh...?"

"Something to cheer us up, Rose. Good gal, eh?"

Rose went away again.

"She got smacked for speeding," Frank said. "But she's my type. You know, I couldn't let her down."

"You're too good."

"It's too sweet."

Rose returned with a white tray on which various bottles, ampoules and instruments were laid.

"Now—let's see," said Frank. His hand hovered over the tray. "Anything you fancy, old boy?"

"You go ahead. Unless you've got anything in blue."

"Rose had the last of the rozzers last night, didn't you, Rose?"

"Y . . ."

"She'll tell you. Nothing in blue."

"Then I'll let it go."

"As long as you're sure." Frank picked up an ampoule with the fingertips of his left hand, a needle with the fingertips of his right. "I've been experimenting too, you know, in my own field. Something that might even interest you, though I know you haven't my obsession with chemistry. A synthesised DNA, with something added." Frank rolled back his well-cut sleeve and applied the needle. He smacked his lips. "Tasty. The trouble is, I found, that it's virtually impossible to manufacture in large doses. With your physics and technical know-how, we could be in business."

"You shouldn't diversify too much, Frank."

"That's rich advice from you, old man!"

"Besides, it's not a lot to do with my work. Not if you mean transfusions."

"Transfusions are what I had in mind. A little from that source, a little for this, mix 'em together and see what happens."

"Schitzy!"

"Quite."

"But it still isn't my scene. Now, if you could hand over the machine. Or maybe let me know where . . ."

"Ah. Well, you see, it's Rose that knows where it is. She told me all about it the other day, didn't you Rose?"

"I . . ."

"It was a vision of some kind, I believe."

"I . . . wish . . ."

"Anyway, I checked her out."

"I . . . wish . . . I . . ."

"And she was right."

"I . . . wish . . . I . . . was . . ."

"So I got in touch with you."

"I . . . wish . . . I . . . was . . . pretty . . ."

"So it's around here somewhere is it?" Jerry frowned at Rose. "In London, I mean?"

"I . . . wish . . . I . . . was . . . pretty . . . again."

"Oh, it's in London, old sport." Frank smiled, turned Rose round and pushed her towards the door. "That's why I contacted you. I mean, there wouldn't be much time, would there? The way things are working out."

"You mean . . ."

"The Op, old son. The rationalisation program. That's why my boss and I are here, naturally. There's a conference of all European commanders . . ." he checked one of his watches . . . "in about ten minutes. General Cumberland has taken emergency measures already, but I don't think they'll contain anything for very long. Berlin, Geneva, Luxembourg are now negative threats and I expect reports on Helsinki and Milan any moment."

"Bombed?"

"Out of their *minds*, old bean!"

There was a knock on the door.

"Come."

The lieutenant entered and drew himself up in a salute. "Sir. The native commanders are in the conference room. The general hoped you'd entertain them until he can make it."

"Of course. Well, Jerry, if you'll ask Rose for anything you need . . . I'll be back in a little while. Take it easy. You look beside yourself!"

"I wish I were."

"Chin up." Frank, one hand on the butt of his own neatly stashed needle-gun, struck off towards the door. "Wise yourself up to the situation if you like."

He pulled a cord as he left and the wall over the fireplace glowed and became a map. "I never forget, you see. You taught me how to do that."

Jerry glanced at the bright relief map on which little spots of light flickered where cities had been. It was a bit of a bore. He wondered if you could change the channel.

GALLAGHER TO FORM LABEL IN THRU OVERSEAS BY MCA

JERRY FOUND A button and pushed it.

The map gave way to a scene somewhere in the palace; evidently the conference room. At the long table sat the generals and the field marshals of every European country (with the exception of the Three Republics and the one or two who were still having trouble with the Israelis). They chatted cheerfully among themselves, looking up when Frank, his seamed face set in a smile, came in.

"Gentlemen. I am Major Frank Cornelius, the general's aide in the European Theater. Please call me Frank."

He put down a slim file on the table and took his place near the top. "General Cumberland regrets he has been delayed, but will join us shortly. In the meantime," he spread his hands, "I'm here to answer any minor questions you might like to put."

The Norwegian field marshal cleared his thin throat.

"Field Marshal Lund?" said Frank.

"I was wondering if you could give us a brief run-down on which areas have been—um—"

"Depersonnelized."

"Ah. Yes."

"Capitals—Helsinki, Berlin, Geneva, Luxembourg, Vienna. Major conurbations—Milan, Munich, Kiev . . ." Frank's pencil paused over his file.

The commanders politely accepted the information.

"Of course, news is coming in all the time. We'll keep you up to date."

"Thank you." General von Chemnitz nodded his burly head. "We realise we are not up to date . . ."

"These are rapidly changing times, general. Who can hope to cope with so many events?"

"Indeed, so . . ." The red fat at the back of General von Chemnitz's neck trembled a little. "And what will you be needing our forces to do?"

"Work with our boys I should expect, general." Frank laughed and glanced at all their faces. "Seriously—we'll be needing your men to clean up any pockets of subversive activity after our first wave has gone over your particular areas. The details of that are what we're here to discuss just as soon as General Cumberland gets here."

"There's the question of looting." General de Jong of the Netherlands raised his elegant pen.

"Reclamation of goods. We have two basic categories here gentlemen. Perishable commodities and non-perishable commodities. Most perishable commodities may be used by the divisions that come across them. Non-perishable commodities should be stored safely until a committee of senior officers has conferred as to their distribution. We have had leaflets prepared which tell you how to cope with that problem. There are also leaflets available on Sexual

Intercourse By Force, Sexual Intercourse By Consent, Sexual Intercourse By Unnatural Methods, Sexual Intercourse Between Members Of The Same Sex, Sexual Intercourse With Animals, Sexual Intercourse With Minors, Sexual Intercourse With Enemies Or Those Likely To Be Potential Enemies Or Enemy Sympathisers, Sexual Intercourse While On Active Military Duty, Conditions Under Which The Use Of Torture May Become Necessary, Conditions Under Which The Orders Of A Commanding Officer May Be Disobeyed, Conditions Under Which Allies May Be Killed Or Confined, and so on and so forth. General Cumberland and his staff have thrashed all these matters out to save you time and trouble. General Cumberland wrote most of the leaflets himself, in fact. He is a man of immense energy and thrust. An inspiration."

Field Marshal Lord Martell glanced at his wizened wrist. "Good Lord! Look at the time! I say, do you mind if I bow out of this one? I promised a fellow a game of golf in quarter of an hour. You'll keep my staff up to date, I take it."

"Of course, Field Marshal."

Martell shook hands with some of the other generals, saluted and hurried off the scene. Two or three others got up and made their apologies.

"I'm sure we can leave it with you." General Groente of Belgium lifted his belly over the edge of the table. "The wife..."

"The children..." said the youthful Field Marshal Denoël of Switzerland.

"The car..." said pale General Ingrid-Maria Stafstrom of Sweden.

"Well, I guess this is cosier anyway." Frank's eyes hardened.

"But you are so capable of 'running the show'. It is a compliment." General von Chemnitz clicked his heels. "Ah, here he is..."

They stood up as General Cumberland came in. He wore light battle-dress, his tunic open all the way down and his shirt unbuttoned to show his chest and medallion. Dark combat goggles were pushed up over his cap and his light blue eyes were steady in his weather beaten face. He looked younger than fifty and he did not seem at all anxious about his immense responsibilities. As he shook hands with the other commanders he shuddered every time his flesh touched theirs.

"Now, gentlemen." He sat down at the head of the table. "I hope Frank's filled you in on the basics, uh?"

"I think they're in the picture," said Frank.

"Great. But I'd like to briefly reiterate the ideology behind all this again for you. See, we've been sent over here because we heard you needed some help with a few of your problems. And we didn't just say we'd help—we put our money where our mouths were."

"And we sent you the guys to help you out. Well, I guess you needed more guys, and you got 'em. You got 'em without even having to ask. And you're welcome. We know the trouble you have and that's what we're here to put a stop to. We know what the Israelis are up to and we think we can maybe give 'em something to think about—so they'll damn well stop what they're up to before they do something really foolish."

"We know that your armies, your intelligence outfits and your civilian communities are riddled through and through with fifth columnists—with traitors—and we're doing something about that, too. When action's called for—we're the guys to call."

He put his teeth together and smiled. "Let me read you something I got from back home the other day." From his tunic pocket he took a clipping which he carefully unfolded and spread before him on the table. Then he began to read in a quiet but declamatory tone:

"Let's start looking at the situation in which we and the rest of the free-world forces involved find ourselves. It is not complex, not obscure, not hard for anyone to understand."

"We are losing the war."

"So many of the people on our side are being killed that the rest of them are thinking about quitting."

"That definition of losing, incidentally, is not only my own. It was taught to me by Admiral Bull Halsey before I covered the battle for Iwo Jima, the first time I saw mortal combat. The actions in the Rhine Valley now are no less obscene or exalting or decisive than were those in the grey sands cradling Mount Suribachi twenty-five years ago."

"Even the hideous casualty totals are in the same magnitude, though they have taken days instead of years to inflict; the fighting in Europe between the forces of our side and those who would bury us has cost more than 100,000 lives. Of the dead, only several hundred have been Americans."

"Of those, seven were men beside whom I had walked or parachute jumped or river-forded or shared a stint of guard duty on a sandbagged emplacement at some place whose name we could not pronounce till we got there."

"Almost all U.S. casualties are from the small group of Americans serving in active combat. Most U.S. uniformed personnel do not actively risk their lives. Out of every five or six sent overseas, only one is exposed to actual daily fighting while the others serve in supporting roles. So these three millions of our men now in Europe add only several thousand to the active European armed forces which, including militia, now total more than twelve million."

"Those few exposed Americans, though, have accomplished something by their sheer character that no other Americans have been able to do in more than a decade. They have forced a major enemy to change tactics as a response to what they are doing."

"This is in utter contrast to what happened to free-world forces in Hungary and Algeria and Cuba and Formosa and Laos, where our side did all the second-guessing and did not once win."

"The fighting in Europe marks the first time that our side in the eyes of the enemy has been applying a system of force so effectively that the other side considers we must be halted at all costs lest we start winning the war."

"What we have been doing right, of course, is to provide some superb leadership to the tough European fighting man."

"I have watched the workings of the practice during fourteen months in the field with nine different combatant forces. The enemy fear it so greatly that killing Americans now is their priority tactical objective."

"The erstwhile ranking target used to be any European community leader; in September, almost a thousand mayors and provincial representatives were assassinated or abducted."

"Somehow, this fact seems not to have become known to most Americans and they impatiently ask what defect of will in the European people prevents formation of a stable democratic government."

"The facts as I saw them in the region where most Europeans live, the suburbs and the countryside, were not

mysterious at all; there just haven't been enough surviving politicians, thanks to enemy raiding and the attendant atrocities.

"But beginning this fall, enemy tacticians issued orders that were a little different from their previous ones. And shorter, too. *Get the Americans.*

"These orders are not being disobeyed. Out of forty-two American mentors attached to European combat units, who happened to be billeted in one headquarters in the heart of Bavaria's most strategic area, nineteen were killed or wounded in two months. I know: I too was quartered there then, and the count is my own, not that of any public information officer back in Bonn.

"By the grisly economy of war, this change in enemy targeting is the ultimate stamp of effectiveness on what we at home have been taught cynically and incorrectly to call the 'adviser system' of military aid to Europe.

"Obviously, it is more than that. 'Advisers' do not become prime enemy targets.

"I submit with great pride that these Americans are not only advising; they are not just fighting in self defense. Without any trappings of command—indeed, without even a shadow of command authority—they are leading.

"They are leading foreign troops simply because that's the way the troops want it. Why? Because each of these men, in the European troops' opinion, is the best soldier around and hence the leader most likely to bring them back through victorious. And to put it bluntly, bring them back alive.

"In short, though the U.S. seems to have hidden its virtue, the details of the honorable course it has taken in Europe, the Europeans know and salute it when the chips are down.

"Why 'honorable'? Consider our defense treaty; it pledges to supply Europe whatever she lacks to win over communism. When it developed that in fact military leadership was a prime lack, we began delivering just what we'd promised.

"Well, then, why is there still a question about the outcome? Why aren't we winning?

"In my judgement, simply because we haven't sent enough of this leadership."

The general paused, looked up and spoke softly. "Well, gentlemen—that's the kind of support you're getting from the folks back where I come from. I'll skip most of the rest—but I'll read you the last bit:

"All of which puts the determination of tomorrow's history where I have every confidence it best belongs: squarely into the hands of the people of the United States.

"It is for each of us to decide what we want to do and to give the government we have elected freely some clear evidence of our will to win, lose or draw.

"After all, it is not that administrative abstraction we call a government that will bear the final bloody consequence if we choose badly.

"It is us and our sons and daughters."

General Cumberland looked reverently at the clipping as he folded it carefully and when he glanced up his eyes were chips of blue steel.

"That's how we feel. You know you can rely on us. The only way to win a war is to fight it. The road ahead will not be smooth or offer easy travelling. But the road map we're using today is a heck of a lot better than it has been. In the words of Patrick Henry as he stood before the Richmond Convention and delivered his famous address—"They tell us,

sir, that we are weak; unable to cope with so formidable an adversary. But when shall we be stronger? Will it be the next week or the next year? Will it be when we are totally disarmed, and when a British guard shall be stationed in each house? Shall we gather strength by irresolution and inaction?"—of course we will not! The United States will accept a decent negotiated peace in Europe. But it will not go, umbrella in hand, like Neville Chamberlain, to the aggressor, and let him write the settlement on his own expansionist terms. There can be no complaint about U.S. Marines being sent to Europe, except that they might have been sent sooner. For years the Europeans—with token assistance from the United States—have been trying to defend themselves against raids, murder by stealth, sabotage and subversion. The results have been a mounting loss of American and European lives—no progress at all in ridding the continent of the invaders. Now the Europeans and the U.S. have taken to offensive strikes of their own... hitting where it hurts! And that's the way it's going to be, gentlemen, until the last enemy is destroyed and Europe can settle down to building the continent she wants in the way she wants to, without fear of attack from without or within. There's a wave back there and it's coming in fast—and that wave is American strength, gentlemen. American strength, American manhood, American know-how, American guts, American money, American dynamism, American bullets, American guns, American tanks, American planes, American freedom, American efficiency..."

Frank took notes and the European commanders stared in faint surprise at the C-in-C. Those nearest the door were already leaving and the others were rising from their chairs.

"American love, American humour, American health, American beauty, American virility..."

The last general quietly closed the door behind him and General Cumberland raised his head at the sound.

"Have they deserted us, Frank?"

"I think they got the picture, general. I think their confidence is won."

"I hope so, Frank. I tried to raise their morale. It sometimes seems to be the hardest job. They're all fairies, of course. Decadence is a terrible thing to witness. But maybe if we improve their conditions—give them a chance..."

"They'll pull through."

"God willing, Frank."

IT'S KLM'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY. WE THOUGHT YOU'D LIKE TO SHARE A FEW HAPPY MEMORIES

WHEN FRANK CAME back Jerry was still looking at General Cumberland whose lips moved as he scribbled rapidly in his notebook.

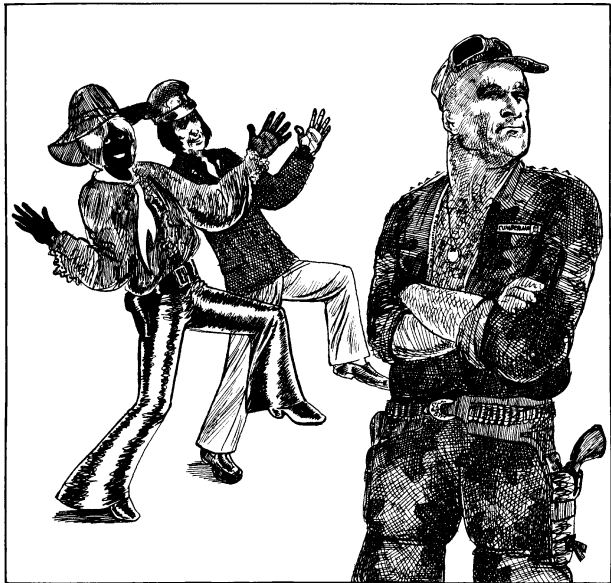
Frank stood beside Jerry and watched for a while. Then he turned the general off.

"It's rotten for him, really." Jerry was sympathetic.

"He takes it well. The responsibility." Frank crossed to the window and peered in the direction of St. James's Park. "Sometimes it seems there'll never be an end to it, Jerry. Or a beginning, in one sense, I suppose. There's so much to do—and so little time."

"True."

"I hope you're not brooding on our differences any more. After all, if brothers can't fall out occasionally, who can?"



"It all depends, a bit, on your position, Frank."

Frank shrugged and spread his thin hands. "You know me, Jerry. It's easy for you."

"It is easier. You've got the heat death to contend with. I've always granted you that, Frank."

"After all, what is a memory?"

"Perhaps nothing more than a hologram."

"Exactly. Remember that dream of mine when we were young? A hologram on every billboard. A billboard the length of every street. A grid of streets that covered the globe..." Frank shrugged. "But it didn't prove to be as simple as that, did it, Jerry?"

"That's the difference between you and me. Where's my machine?"

"It's a question of cycles, I suppose."

"Or equilibrium." Jerry rested his hand on his vibragun. "Come along, Frank."

"You'd never get out, Jerry. And you'd lose a lot of potential friends."

"I don't need friends."

"You don't need enemies, either. I only want to strike a

bargain with you. It could make us both rich--and extremely powerful. You've got to look to the future, old man."

"I'm not too happy about these artificial divisions, Frank. I want to look to it all at once. I don't like the way you and your allies slice up time."

"Somebody's got to do the dirty work."

Jerry drew his gun. Frank drew his gun.

Jerry sighed. "There doesn't seem a lot of point. Couldn't you just tell me where the machine is?"

"You tell me what it is, then."

"It's a simple diffusion device," lied Jerry. "A randomizer. Nothing complicated."

"It replicates conditions in the Shifter, is that it?"

"That's it."

"Well, it wouldn't suit me, Jerry. I've never had much sympathy for that sort of thing. You know me--live and let live--but it wouldn't..."

Jerry raised his gun.

"Well, it wouldn't! Christ--there are much better ways of having fun."

"Where's the machine?"

"Derry and Toms Famous Roof Garden."

"Thanks," said Jerry and waited until Frank had put his gun back. "Let me know something I can do for you." He holstered his own vibragun.

"Nothing at this stage," Frank said, riding swiftly into the new situation. "You haven't got much of a chance of getting to that machine or of getting out of London alive. But if you should manage both things, then it's quite likely I'll be in a difficult position and you'll owe me a favour, won't you."

"You've mellowed, Frank."

"I'm coming apart, Jerry. I'm desperate."

"It seems to be doing you good." Jerry grinned. "You're more mature."

Frank sniffed. "Call it what you like. I call it caution. You have to look after yourself when you get into my condition."

"Well, let's hope I make it to Derry and Toms."

Frank glanced at his watch. "You just might, if they don't get around to that sector right away. I'm off to Milton Keynes in a few minutes. That's our new base. The general thinks it's cleaner. No population, you see. They never had a chance to fill it."

Sure. Well, don't take any wooden nickels."

"Not from you, Jerry."

"I'll be off, then."

Jerry opened the door and the swords clashed under his nose.

"Let him through," said Frank in a peculiar voice.

Jerry closed the door and looked up and down the corridor. He frowned as he contemplated the rigid guards and then came to a decision.

It was just as well to be on the safe side, to give himself some sort of edge. Frank was so shitty.

"If you ask me," he said quietly, "he's not what he seems to be. He's all bits and fucking pieces."

He trod the soft carpets. The sunlight poured through the big window at the far end of the corridor and through it Jerry could see the green and gold of the quiet autumn trees.

It looked a nice day for a picnic.

CUT TWO

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(Real Confessions ad)

SCREAM AND DIE, EUROPEAN COMMIE HOMOS, IN YANK 'CLEANSE AND BURN' OFFENSIVE

IT WASN'T FAR to Derry and Toms, but the napalm was coming on heavy as Jerry drove west to the sound of Ronald Boyle's recorded voice booming in even tones from loudspeakers mounted in every flying thing.

BURN OUT THE CANCER

BURN OUT THE CANCER

BURN OUT THE CANCER

BURN OUT THE CANCER

BURN OUT THE CANCER

BURN OUT THE CANCER

The day was grey; the sunlight blocked by the planes—whose steady roar echoed through the city.

BURN OUT THE CANCER

BURN OUT THE CANCER

BURN OUT THE CANCER

BURN OUT THE CANCER

BURN OUT THE CANCER

BURN OUT THE CANCER

BURN OUT THE CANCER

The napalm sheets kept falling.

BURN OUT THE CANCER

BURN OUT THE CANCER

BURN OUT THE CANCER

BURN OUT THE CANCER

BURN OUT THE CANCER

BURN OUT THE CANCER

BURN OUT THE CANCER

Jerry waited impatiently at Knightsbridge for the lights to change. Several buildings, including the recently rebuilt barracks of the Royal Horse Guards, were beginning to burn.

BURN OUT THE CANCER

BURN OUT THE CANCER

BURN OUT THE CANCER

BURN OUT THE CANCER

BURN OUT THE CANCER

BURN OUT THE CANCER

BURN OUT THE CANCER

He decided to go through the park and turned right. As he did so the first B52s came in low, streaming clouds of defoliants and making a thick fog that reduced visibility to a few feet.

Jerry slowed down and switched on his own air supply, turned his most powerful lamps into the swirling white mist, and kept going. He could see just far enough ahead to avoid hitting any large obstacles. Derry and Toms was in Sector D-7 and this was Sector G-6. Depending on their sweep, he had a little time before they started on D-7.

He was, as ever, impressed by the efficiency of the strike. By tomorrow, London should be completely Triple A Clean. His brother, with his liking for systems and his knowledge of London, had probably had a lot to do with the planning.

As the mist thinned a little he looked up, recognising the hazy silhouettes of a squadron of General Dynamics F-111As lumbering across the sky followed by McDonnell F-4B Phantom IIs, F-4C Phantom IIs, RF-4 Phantom IIs, F-101B Voodoos, F-101C Voodoos, Republic F-105 Thunderchiefs, Ling-Temco-Vought (Chance Vought) F-8U Crusaders, Convair F-106 Delta Darts, Lockheed F-104 Starfighters, Convair F-102 Delta Daggers, Northrop F-5A Freedom Fighters, Ling-Temco-Vought A-7A Corsair IIs,

North American F-100 Super Sabres, North American FJ Furies, Douglas F-6A Skyraiders, Gruman F11A Tigers, McDonnell M-3B Demons, Northrop F-89 Scorpions, North American F-86D Sabres and, very much behind the others, Republic F-84F Thunderstreaks doing their best to keep up.

The planes passed and the helicopters chattered by. As far as Jerry could make out they were all heading due north, which meant that Derry and Toms, if it had so far missed the strike, would probably be okay for a little while.

He took a bearing off the Albert Memorial and bumped over the dying grass until he splashed into the Round Pond by accident and had to operate the screws for an instant as he crossed the pond and at last got to The Broad Walk near the London Museum, drove down The Broad Walk and came out onto a Kensington Road that was red with reflected firelight, but seemed as yet undamaged, though clouds of sodium cacodylate mixed with free cacodylic acid, water and sodium chloride drifted in the streets.

Elsewhere Jerry recognised n-butyl ester, isobutyl ester, tri-isopropanolamine, salt picloram and other chemicals and he knew that the park had got everything—Orange, Purple, White and Blue.

"Better safe than sorry." He pulled up outside Derry and Toms.

Business appeared to have fallen off badly in the last few hours, though it was relatively peaceful here. In the distance Jerry heard the sound of falling buildings, the scream of rockets, the boom of the bombs, the shouts of the dying.

A boy and a girl ran out of the smoke, hand in hand, as he entered the store; they were on fire, making for the drinking fountain on the corner of Kensington Church Street.

The fire would probably help cope with the plague.

There was nothing like the chance of a fresh start.

THE MAN BEHIND THE FACE THAT 350 MILLION TV VIEWERS KNOW AS THE SAINT

ALTHOUGH THE DEFOLIANTS hadn't yet reached the roof garden, there was a strong chemical smell as Jerry used his vibragun to shake down the door of an emergency exit and emerge into the Tudor Garden.

He wondered at first if the machine's batteries had started to leak. They had been manufactured hastily, for the machine had originally been intended only as a prototype. It was Jerry's fault that he had tried it out in the Shifter and had lost it in the ensuing confusion.

Jerry placed the odour at last. It was Dettol.

The disinfectant had been used to hide another smell which he now recognised as the smell of corruption. It would have been good for the garden, of course, if things had been left alone. He wondered who had been here recently.

Everything was tidy and there wasn't a trace of an old lady. Jerry noticed with disappointment that the ducks had flown.

He wandered across to the Spanish Garden, watching as the blue heaven gradually filled with black smoke, and climbed the wall to look at the burning city and the insane jets wheeling about the sky in their dance of death. Napalm fell. Rockets raced.

"Out of time, out of touch," murmured Jerry. It was what his father had always taught him. He didn't often feel this complacent. "Goodbye America."

"Europe," said a voice with a thick Russian resonance, "can become the ultimate possibility pool. You're slowing down, Comrade Cornelius."

Jerry shifted his position on the wall and looked down at the little man standing among the flowering ferns and dwarf palms, tugging at his goatee. "You've been taking speech training."

The man looked embarrassed and removed his rimless glasses. "I can't stay long."

"Is my machine here?"

"That's what I came to tell you about, comrade. I didn't think it was safe. I gave it to a friend of yours to look after. She was here until recently."

"Captain Hargreaves?"

"I didn't realise, until she put on her uniform, that she was with the defenders."

"Do you know where she is?"

"Presumably with the rest of her comrades, wherever that may be."

"You've never been able to do anything right, have you, you old sofie." Jerry jumped down from the wall. "Ah, well. It was nice of you to tell me."

"I'm sure everything will work out all right. Won't it?"

"Keep your fingers crossed, comrade."

The little man extended his hand. "Well, if I don't see you again." He vanished.

Jerry yawned. He was getting behind on his sleep. He left the roof garden as the first wave of planes arrived in Sector D-7, leapt down the stairs as the building began to shake, and reached the street as spluttering napalm flooded through the store.

He drove down Kensington High Street as fast as he could. He hoped Kourtrouboussis and the rest were okay. If they'd been able to get out they should be safe enough at the Sunnydale Reclamation Centre.

He didn't feel particularly disappointed. After all, things had gone very easily up to now.

He made for Milton Keynes.

EXTRACTION

Jews get out of Palestine it's not your home anyway! Moses was the first traitor and Hitler was the Messiah!!!

(Black militant placard, Harlem)

OUTLAW IN THE SKY

JERRY LEFT the burning city behind and headed up the M.1. It was a wide, lonely road, through the hushed countryside.

He turned on the radio and tuned it to Radio Potemkin. It was playing The Yardbirds, The Moquettes, The Zephyrs, Mickie Most, The Downliners Sect, Rey Anton and the Peppermint Men, The Syndicates, The Cheynes, The Cherokees, Cliff Bennett and the Rebel Rousers. Unable to bear either the nostalgia or the quality, Jerry switched over to Radio John Paul Jones which was in the middle of putting over *The Vibrating Ether Proves The Cosmic Vortex*, the latest hit by Orniriffa, the Nip Nightingale. All art, thought Jerry, aspired to the condition of Muzak. What would William Morris have thought?

It was at times like this that the brain needed balm. He turned to his taper and selected Schoenberg's Quartet No. 2, left the M.1 and took a winding lane towards Oxford.

Soon he could see the white shell of the city shining in

the distance. The concrete roof was good for anything except the H-Bomb.

He slowed as he reached the opening of the tunnel and drove through to emerge in the shadowy darkness of Magdalen Bridge.

The dim light from the central lamp at the highest part of the roof was reflected by the spires of the city. Power was failing, but Oxford survived.

Jerry felt the cold. The High was full of a strange, sticky dampness and black-coated figures crept miserably along beside the walls, while every so often hollow, echoing shouts and clatterings broke the stillness. The hissing noise of his own car seemed menacing.

Stopping the Phantom VI in the car park of the Randolph Hotel he walked to the Ashmolean Museum, pushed open the heavy wooden doors and paused. A few candles in brackets on the walls lit a sinister avenue of Tompion and Knibb longcase clocks which had all stopped at a quarter past twelve. He began to walk.

The sound of his footsteps was like that of a huge pendulum, regular and ponderous. He came to the locked door at the end of the avenue and took a key from his pocket, turned it in the lock, opened the door and descended the stone staircase, lighting his way with his torch.

Climbing downwards for half an hour he at last reached a tunnel which led to another door. Unlocking this, he came to a room containing a small power plant. He crossed to the plant and depressed a lever.

The plant whispered and then hummed softly and steadily. Lights went on. Jerry switched off his torch, passed through two more empty chambers until he came to a fourth room which was lined on three sides with cupboards that had mirrors set into their panels. The cupboards had been imported from Sweden nine years earlier. The mirrors were more recent.

The room was carpeted with a deep, red Russian rug. On it stood a couch draped with white mink covers and yellow silk sheets. It was unmade. Against the wall near the door was a neat console operating a series of small monitor screens and microtronic indicator boards, all slightly archaic in design and function but still in good working order. Jerry had not been here since he left the seminary.

Sitting on the couch, he tugged off his black-heeled boots; he removed his jacket and his shoulder holster and dropped them on the floor, pulled back the pillows and touched a stud on the control panel set in the low headboard. The console activated, he lay and watched it for a bit until he felt up to visiting the morgue.

The room had become unfamiliar, yet a lot of things had happened here. The Shifter gateways had been erected, the earliest prototype of the machine had been built, the Web completed and, of course, those ridiculous books had been written. It had been a rapid development really, from priest to politician to physicist, but it had been necessary and, he supposed, inevitable.

He was drained. He smiled and shrugged. Perhaps he had better visit the Web before he went to the morgue. It was still very cold in the room. It would take a while for the place to warm up.

This had been his grandfather's complex originally, before the old man had moved to Normandy, and his father had inherited it, passing it on to him. His father had built and stocked the morgue, too.

He got up shivering, opened one of the mirrored panels

and stepped through into a well-lit corridor with four steel doors on each side and another steel door at the end. He rested his palm against the fourth door on the right and it opened. A peg behind the door supported a clean black car coat. Jerry put it on and buttoned up. The schizophrenia had been bad at first, his father had said. He had been lucky not to inherit the worst of it.

There were ten drawers set low into the far wall. Each drawer was labelled with a name. Jerry opened the first drawer on the left and looked down into the eyes of the pale, beautiful girl with the tangled black hair.

He touched the cold skin of her breasts.

"Catherine. . ."

He stroked the face and drew a deep breath.

Then he bent down and picked her up, carrying her from the morgue and back to the bed chamber with the console.

Placing her in the bed, he stripped off the rest of his clothes and lay beside her, feeling the heat flow out of his body into hers.

His life was so dissipated, he thought. But there was no other way to spend it.

"Catherine. . ."

She stirred.

He knew there could only be a few seconds left.

"Catherine."

The eyes opened and the lips moved. "Frank?"

"Jerry."

"Jerry?" Her perfect brow frowned slightly.

"I've got a message for you. There's some hope. That's the message."

Her eyes warmed, then faded, then closed.

Trembling with a terrible cold, Jerry began to cry. He staggered from the bed, fell to his knees, got up and lurched from the chamber into the corridor, pressing his frozen palm against the first door on his left.

The door opened stiffly, almost reluctantly.

Jerry leaned against it as it closed, peering through his blurred eyes at the rustling machine before him.

Then he flung himself at the singing red, gold and silver webs and gasped and grinned as they enmeshed him.

Why was resurrection so easy for some and so difficult for others?

BEYOND THE X ECLIPTIC

WHEN HE HAD filed Catherine again, Jerry whistled a complicated piece of Bartok and returned, radiant and replete, to his cosy room to look at himself in the mirrors.

Time to be moving; moves to be timing.

He opened a cupboard and regarded his wardrobe. The clothes were somewhat theatrical and old-fashioned but he had no choice. His nearest wardrobe to Oxford was now Birmingham, the only major city in the area which had not needed cleaning, and he had never fancied Birmingham much at the best of times.

He selected a military-style green jacket, a suede shako with a strap that buttoned under his chin, matching suede britches, green jackboots and a shiny green Sam Browne belt with a button-down holster for his vibragun. A short green pvc cape secured by a silver chain over one shoulder, and the ensemble was complete.

He left the little complex and closed the door behind him.

Shining the torch up the stone staircase he climbed to the top and opened the surface door. Then, stopping at each and winding them up, he walked back down the

avenue of long case clocks. The gallery was soon filled with their merry ticking.

As he strolled away from the Ashmolean towards the car park of the Randolph Hotel, he heard the clocks begin to strike nine o'clock.

He started the Phantom VI and turned the car into the Broad, switched the taper to Nina Simone singing *Black Swan*, and lay well back in the driving seat until he reached the Western airlock which he passed through without difficulty. He blinked as he broke into the bright, warm morning.

Soon he could see Milton Keynes.

The new conurbation rose out of the greenish ground mist, each great tower block a different pastel shade of pale chrome yellow, purple, gamboge, yellow ochre, chrome orange, vermilion, scarlet, red (ost), crimson, burnt sienna, light red, cobalt, cerulean blue, turquoise, ultramarine, prussian blue, mauve, leaf green, emerald, sap green, viridian, hookers green, burnt umber, vandyke brown, orange (ost), ivory black and grey (ost).

Entering the quiet streets of the great village, with its trim grass verges and shady trees, Jerry was filled with a sense of peace that he rarely experienced in rural settlements. Perhaps the size of the empty buildings helped, for most of them were over eighty feet high, arranged around a series of pleasant squares with central fountains splashing a variety of coloured, sparkling water or with free form sculptures set in flower gardens. There were terraced gardens with vines and creepers on the buildings themselves and the air was full of butterflies, mainly red admirals and cabbage whites.

Jerry drove at a leisurely pace until he came to the middle of the conurbation. Here were the main administration buildings and shopping arcades, the schools and the play areas, and here were parked the armoured vehicles, the tanks and the helicopters of the advisory force. Neat, newly painted signs had been put up and it was easy for Jerry to park his car and make for General Cumberland's headquarters in the tall, domed building that the planners had intended for the town hall and which now flew the Stars and Stripes.

As Jerry climbed the steps, a detachment of unhappy marines broke from the building and surrounded him with a ring of sub-machine guns. "I was hoping I'd find Frank Cornelius here," Jerry said mildly.

"What you want with Colonel Cornelius, boy?"

"I have some information for him." A faint shock ran from the left hemisphere to the right of Jerry's brain.

"What sort of information, fella?"

"It's secret."

The marines sniffed and rubbed their noses with their forearms, keeping their steely eyes fixed on him.

"You'd better tell the colonel I'm here, I think."

"What's your name?"

"He'll know who it is if you describe me."

One of the marines broke away and trotted inside. The circle closed up. Jerry lit a Romeo y Julieta and dropped the aluminium tube on the ground. Still staring unblinkingly at his prisoner's face, a marine with pursed lips kicked the tube violently away.

Frank hurried out.

"Jerry! You made it! Great!"

The marines withdrew behind Jerry and came to the salute with a crash of boots and armour.

"Did you have any luck with the machine?" Frank put a cold arm round Jerry's shoulder and guided him into the

new town hall.

"I can't complain." Jerry spoke through his cigar. "And are you satisfied?"

"Relatively, Jerry. Look, we'll go to my private quarters. That's the best idea, eh?"

They went through a glass door, crossed the open quadrangle and entered the building's northern wing. "It's just here." Frank stopped, unlocked his door and led Jerry into an airy, pleasant room in which Rose Barrie was arranging flowers on a sideboard.

"That's fine, Rose, thanks." Frank smiled. The girl left.

"You're pretty loathsome, Frank." Jerry took a golden chrysanthemum from the vase and smelled it.

"So would you be. I was never the favoured son, Jerry. I had to fight for what I wanted. You had it easy."

"Until you fought for what you wanted."

"Oh, that..."

"I've just been to see Catherine."

"How is she? I was wilder in those days, Jerry."

"She's keeping pretty well."

"Our family always were great survivors." Frank grinned. "Do you want a...? No, I suppose not. But let's face it, Jerry. You got where you were by luck—by intuition, if you like. I had to do everything by thinking. Hard thinking. Logical thinking."

"It made you tense, Frank."

"That's the price you pay."

Jerry put the cysanth back. Then he smashed the vase from the sideboard and looked at the fallen flowers, the spilled water and the broken glass on the carpet.

"Don't lose your temper, Jerry." Frank was laughing. "You are a hothead! What's wrong, old sweat?"

"I'd love to be able to kill you, Frank. Kill you, Frank. Kill you, Frank."

Frank spread the fingers at the end of his extended right arm. "Jesus, Jerry, so would I..."

"I'd love to be able to kill you, Frank."

"That's a remote possibility."

"It's all too fucking remote."

Jerry swayed from the waist, eager for his gun.

"Calm down, Jerry, for Christ's sake." Frank snapped his fingers at his sides. "You'll need removing. Is this the time? Is this the place?"

"Space is all you ever fucking think about."

"Somebody has to. Listen, Jerry, I've got a moral responsibility. I never had that. I have changed. I could lose it all. Split. I'm going to keep it. The power's building up."

"You'd have thought Einstein had never happened!"

"Maybe he shouldn't have happened. It's running too wild. We need something concrete—definite—solid. Something hard."

"I want something easy."

"Exactly. Connect, Jerry—just for a moment."

"Shit..."

"Technology is potential freedom from brutality. I should know. The old can't riot and have no power. We must forfeit the right to breed in order to retain the right to breathe. Immortality is just around the corner!"

"Mortality is space."

"You've got too much imagination. That's what I mean."

"What's the matter with you, Frank? You..."

"I'm older. You can never be that."

"Piss..."

"Man is the only animal with the imaginative characteristics developed to any degree. No competition, see? The

trait has become *over-developed*. A survival characteristic. We must limit imagination. Destroy it, if necessary, in the majority, limit it in the rest. Jerry, it's our only chance to get back to something worthwhile. To normality."

Jerry stared vaguely at his brother. "Get back? Get back? But we're moving on. The abstract..."

"... can only destroy civilisation..."

"... as we know it."

"You see."

"See? Death."

"Death—and life."

"Sure."

"Then..."

"Kill you, Frank."

"No!"

Jerry felt faint. "You're fouling things up, Frank. You were nicer when you knew it."

"Forget Time." Frank slapped the sideboard. "That's what's important right now. A cleaning up. A getting back to fundamentals."

"Forget Space."

"Jerry—when I returned I decided there had to be some constructive action. We mustn't fight."

"Catherine. You killed our sister."

"You killed her."

"You made me."

"Who's the guilty one?"

"Guilt? There you go again." Jerry relaxed. "Well, I suppose you just saved your life. Boredom is a great preserver." He stretched. "So you've decided to think ahead? I can't see it myself."

"You won't give yourself a chance. You won't give me a chance."

Jerry began to pick up the pieces of broken glass and put them on the sideboard. He gathered the flowers into a bunch and crossed the room to a mock Tudor table which had an empty vase on it. He put the flowers in the vase. "It's a question of identity, Frank. What the hell. A wild environment, an integrated identity."

"We're clearing things up. Tidying the world."

"You might just as well be in the political age. You can't bring it back, Frank."

"We will."

"Not for long."

"You'll see."

"But you know what I'm out to do, don't you?"

"Randomise."

"More or less."

"You won't succeed. History's against you, Jerry."

"That's the difference between you and me, Frank. I'm against History."

"Where are you going?"

Jerry made for the door. "I've got to look up an old flame. You don't mind me hanging around for a while, do you?"

"I'd rather you did. Have you got the machine with you?"

"No."

"Then I'd rather you did."

"I'll be seeing you soon, Frank."

"Bet on it." ■

(to be continued)

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Star

turn again Maurice
you've won the cup
(no one else entered anyway)
the game's up

good show Maurice
pleased to present
those lessons have paid off
money well spent

mine's double gin Maurice
12 pints of beer
cheers Maurice cheers Maurice
coming back next year?

Poems by Libby Houston

alien pomp alien pomp alien alien alien pomp
alien pomp alien pomp alien alien alien pomp

once was a king
in youth quelled the sea
spent his life clothing
his daughters three

a life stuffed with trinkets
the best he could buy
when they had enough on
he felt he could die

as haycocks they grouped
round his hole in the clay
when the earth was trod down
they were trundled away

on long platforms of steel
the whole male population
heaving & pulling
as fitted their station

word reached the sea
up it leapt in its might
swamped that flat kingdom
during the night

& the queens in their great bed
partaking of spice
were so weighted with garments
they drowned in a trice

alien pomp alien pomp alien alien alien pomp
alien pomp alien pomp alien alien alien pomp

The Old Woman and The Sandwiches

I met a wizened wood-woman
Who begged a crumb of me:
Having four sandwiches to hand,
I gave her three.

"Bless you, thank you, kindly miss,
Shall be rewarded well—
Three everlasting gifts, whose value
None can tell."

"Three wishes?" out I cried in glee—
"No, gifts you may not choose:
A flea and gnat to bite your back
And gravel in your shoes."

At The Sign of The Times

The old schoolmaster crosses the bar
to crouch near the piano, marking time.

"Did I tell you, that roughneck
paid me in kind with a time cheque?
Well it bounced back to square one!"

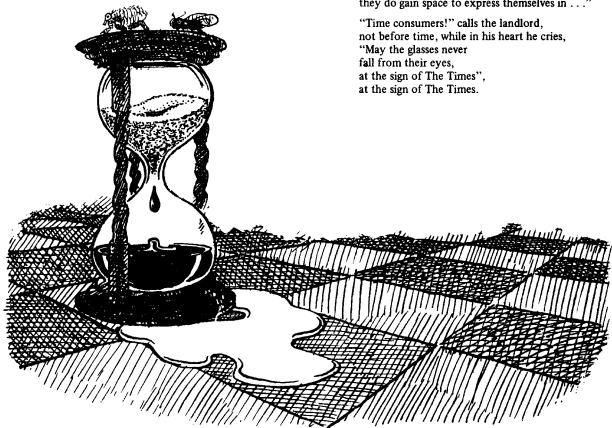
"Now my advice is,
you will find a friend in time—
and a friend in need;
but watch out if you let *her*
set your time-table,
she'll turn time-server, every time."

Mary plaintive waves goodnight,
hazy at the smoke-room door:

"If you can find time,
give him a message from me—
come back, all is forgiven!"

"Time flies . . .
how long it takes to get across the ceiling . . .
hm, though the dropouts lose time,
they do gain space to express themselves in . . ."

"Time consumers!" calls the landlord,
not before time, while in his heart he cries,
"May the glasses never
fall from their eyes,
at the sign of The Times",
at the sign of The Times.



Manoeuvres

the cupboard is bare
foundation plank rafter

marching on an empty belly
a route that led battalions over
barren tundra where yapping
foxes feigned attacks feel
the spine through the guts

bare boards within though
nailed to the door
a blank paper triangle
lifts flaps falls lifts

struck naked low trees
unprotected faces ooze
as winds career the ground tramped
unkind to slow files of torn feet

they bring nothing with them is it to
empty shelves? they march march march march

north beyond land-end lurches
the bare back of the far sea
making plain contours as of
clothed bodies breasting squalls

the cupboard will be filled
after they have abandoned it?
the cupboard will be filled
or will any survive to reach it?

Out of

water the ship cut's
almost reached sand

air feathers churned
has rounded on clusters
of oakleaves to pat them

the ship was white as she passed

a blackbird
fleeing fast as his wings
to disappear here? there?

the ship
may have been drawn
down or up—
nobody saw the moment

all day sand is tugged

the hurt



by marek obtulowicz

Prologue

Peter sits in the rocking-chair, slouched, motionless; his hands clasped behind his neck, his mouth open. He is thinking about his sister.

/not yet twenty and already the manageress of her own brothel/and a brothel that's rated as one of the best in town at that/only it's not called a brothel any more—is it/bastards/

He rocks back to ease getting a hand into his trouser pocket. The wrong pocket; other hand: cigarettes. A match spits and flares in the darkness. From the wall, aloof, a black nun leers down at the crumpled grimaces set on the many cushions that are strewn about the floor.

Bastards.—mumbled through a lungful of smoke. The match goes out. He shuts his eyes.

Exactly a year ago today, Peter cried. He still has the tear, keeps it in a large glass bottle hidden behind the heavy curtains that hang drawn across the French windows.

In an hour, if it stops raining, he will go for a walk.

—Hallo Peter, fancy a fuck?—unbuttoning her blouse.

—Pauline! I'm your brother!

—Who the hell cares.

—What!

—You don't have to call it incest.

—Listen . . .

—D'you think you wouldn't enjoy it? . . . That I'm no good . . . is that it?

—What's come over you?

—Come over *me*? It's you baby. *Wet!* Getting married like that! Why the hell did you do it?

—Pauline . . .

—Look, if you're not interested,—buttoning blouse—I'll go find myself a *man*.

—Pauline wait. . . .

Catherine lies on a bed of foam-rubber; two mattresses piled one on top of the other and pushed up against the wall opposite the windows. She is worried, afraid that her wet dress will become creased and ruined, yet she remains quite still, balancing a half-filled tumbler of brandy on her stomach. Should she turn her head and look up she would see the silhouette of a rocking-chair.

—Well somebody's husband, what is it?

—Pauline don't you realise that

—Sure, why not resurrect religion while you're at it.

—No please . . . don't you see

—Yes yes, but not now. I've got to go. See a man. Bye.

Rocking forward, doubled, Peter squashes the cigarette into the bare floor-boards. He unties a shoe-lace and wriggles his toes about in the tight leather.

/catherine's here and I don't love her/I don't love her/don't love/

Fourteen months ago, a woman went on a journey; a long journey to the far side of the town, just to see an old friend.

—Cathy! Cathy!

—Hallo Martha.

—Cathy what are you doing in this part of town?

—I've come to see you.

—Isn't that dangerous?

—It's been a long time.

—Yes . . . a *long time*.

—How are you?

—O fine fine. But you shouldn't be here, you'll get into trouble. Remember I'm a mother.

—And so how are the kids?

—Just like kids. And see here, number three well in the pot. But then let me look at you.

—Alan?

—Alan . . . he's O.K.

—You don't sound very sure.

—Well sometimes I think he must have regrets.

—Regrets? . . . About living here?

—No; being in a Family Ghetto is alright, but

An elegant hand crawls slowly over her stomach to thrust a steady finger at the brandy glass.

/martha looked funny pregnant/all puffed up like a/like/like a peardrop on legs/the wobble/woddle/still one gets used to it/the thickening of the ankles/sagging breasts/ an uncomfortable unsightly bulge just here/

An elegant hand slaps her belly, the fingers of the other lifting clear the brandy. Hot water coughs in the radiators. Her eyes feel sleep, hollow, sunken; weary eyelids weighted under false eyelashes. She lowers the glass to the floor and turns towards the wall; then right over. Strands of wet hair cling to her neck.

—Peter.

—Mm?

—Will you unzip me? I want to get into bed.

She sees the chair nod. A moist-warm patch straddles her shoulder while the material on her back zings into a split.

—Cath I'm

—Goodnight Peter.

He finds his chair again, sits and listens to the rustles of undressing.

Half an hour has passed; he does not think of his sister; he does not think of Catherine. It still rains.

Lights are switched on. Voices:

—Up there?—Female.

—Yes, straight up.—Male.

A young woman climbs to the head of the stairs; sharp shuffles. Slim, fashionable, she stands in the centre of the room and snatching both hands up out of the deep pockets of her shower-speckled raincoat, spins on tiptoe, in a warped collage of coat-hangers, rocking-chair, telephone and cushions. Stop; grin. Reed-like fingers fumble with the knot that ties a damp scarf about her bunched hair.

—Like it?

He stands on the stairs, his chin level with the top of the oak cage that surrounds the well. A thoughtful thumb moves to and fro along the lower transom of unstained wood.

—Mmmm?—she drones, shaking out her hair. It is wet at the ends.

—Well?—glancing up.

Silence. She holds the scarf out at arm's length, spins once more, but makes no reply; merely looks over his head, beyond the banisters, to the raised portion of the room.

—Library—he says, not taking his eyes off the ebbing digit.

—Library: she mouths. A deliberate tone—Aha!—and stuffing scarf into pocket, she walks round the cage up onto the thick-pile carpet.

He moves to the top of the stairs, unbuttons his coat and lights a cigarette. One hand leans on the banister-rail. He watches her; watches a nonchalant dawdle saunter past the continuous wall-shelves which are arranged at eyelevel and in three tiers around the room. She is drawing a silver finger-nail along the spines of the books on the bottom shelf, like a dreaming schoolboy draws a stick along a fence. Her eyes smile in a mixture of titles.

At the corner, she lifts the index-finger to the middle

shelf, about-turns and takes three or four paces—halts. But instead of tipping out the selected volume, she skips over to a large spherical lampshade which hangs alongside an elliptical table placed obliquely across the far corner of the library. Gently she presses two palms to the raffia globe and to check on her audience, throws a side glance through long false eyelashes.

He drags on his cigarette, takes in the shift of her eyes, waits.

Her lips purse into an intent smile; sly satisfaction. And now cow, tired of its fibrous feel, she urges the lamp into a swing. A cut chuckle, then over her shoulder:

—This is quite some place.

—You like it then?

—Yes and no.

She swings the lamp. He drops the cigarette into an ashcan.

—Cath listen

—No I don't think I could live here.—stroking the table, finger-tracing its chess-board inlay of wood-hues.

Pause.

—No. I couldn't live here.—a slight shake of the head.

—In that case, madam, I'll tell the man to have your luggage sent back.—taking off his coat, moving towards her.

—My luggage?

—Yes, your luggage . . . I took the liberty of having it packed and sent on after us.

—How thoughtful.—walking towards him, unfastening coat.

—Yes wasn't it.

—You're pretty sure of yourself then.—handing him coat.

—Well . . .

—And you've only taken me out once: in a *whole year*.

—Isn't that *enough*?

He walks to the pews opposite the stairs, mixed fawn-grey coats swaying over his hooked arm. She levers herself up onto the banister-rail.

—Do you sleep on that?—pointing to mattresses.

—If you mean that thing on the floor, yes.

—Then there's a woman in your bed.

—What's she like?

—Naked and asleep . . . or dead.

—Neither.—says the woman-in-the-bed, struggling to open her eyes wide.—And incidentally, it wasn't a bit like that at all.

—It *wasn't*??

—Nonsense my dear.—says the man-in-the-rocking-chair, already feeling much older.—It's perfect. They're doing splendidly.

—Who are you??

—Allow me to introduce myself.—replies the man-in-the-rocking-chair.

—Don't bother.—insists the woman-in-the-bed.—If you just leave them alone they might get it right.

—As you wish.—submits the man-in-the-rocking-chair.—But they simply *must* stick to the authentic version.

—We'll try, but we'd also be very glad if you would kindly point out any mistakes.—aimlessly patting rain-blotches from the coats.

—O yes, then we could put them right.—sliding off the banisters.

—No no, wouldn't dream of it.—answers the man-in-the-rocking-chair.—We couldn't be so . . . rude, could we, dear?

—Perhaps we ought to begin all over again.—stooping to pick up a cushion.

—O do get on with it.—sighs the woman-in-the-bed.

A little self-consciously Catherine begins to gather up more cushions. These she meticulously builds around and along one side of the well to form a solid semi-circle, on which she then lies down, fully outstretched. She smiles at the woman-in-the-bed, who in return nods a curt approval. Peter walks over to adjust a stray cushion with his foot.

—Drink?

—Mmm, please.

He moves back to the kitchen door.

—Satisfied?—turning in mid-step.

—With what?—looking up.

—Not you.

Silence. The man rocks; an abject metronome. Sheets whisk.

Peter throws open the kitchen door. Catherine rolls onto one side, the forearm a brace to her angled head.

—Peter.—she calls after him.—Are you going to invite me to sleep with you?

—I'm fixing a drink.

—Mine's a brandy . . . neat.

She sits up and folding legs beneath her leans back against the balustrade.

—The screenplay was good.—smoothing out the pleats in her skirts; content with the show of leg.

—What?—a cocktail-shaker churns in the kitchen.

—The screenplay was good.—a shout.

—Let's not talk about it.—return shout.—I'm not keen on cultural post-mortems. . . . So was some of the photography.

—I think it's too bare in here.

—It could have been shorter.

—You should have a few chairs, radio. Television?

—That part in the park was boring.

—I knew we were incompatible.

—What?—stepping into room.

—This place is too bare.

—D'you think so?

He carries a stainless steel tray on which stand two tumblers, a soda fountain, a bottle of brandy and a misted cocktail-shaker. This he sets down on the cushions and sits cross-legged in front of her. She sees a curled hair on the shoulder of his jacket and lunges for it: the jab startles him, he knocks over a tumbler.

—It's only a hair, silly.

—Cath will you sleep with me tonight?—pouring brandy.

—I'll say when

He stops pouring, hands her the brandy

—I haven't said when.—taking the glass and putting it back down on the tray.

She holds out the hair, squinting at it, pulling it tight across her eyes. He pours a soapy gin from the shaker into the other tumbler.

—Is it one of yours?—he asks.

—I don't love you Peter.

—I *don't* love you too.—leaning forward onto all fours, cradling tray and drinks.

They kiss for a long time; gently. Her lips, lightly gingered melon, break away first; her eyes fall helter-skelter down his face; an elegant hand runs across his cheek. He takes the hand and steers it to his mouth.

—Lets go to bed.

—NO!—he spits out irritably, straightening up, backing away.

His heel knocks the soda-fountain, ringing out as he turns to march to the window. There he cracks the curtains. She draws a flat arc over the cushions trying to find the hair. The stair-well separates them.

—It's still raining.—studying droplets of water on the panes.

Silence. He turns.

—O.K. then let's go to bed.—condescending.

—No; what do you think I am . . . a bloody nymphomaniac?

—Nymphomaniac! Why did you say THAT? Why did you say nymphomaniac? You KNOW don't you. YOU KNOW!

—Know what?

—YOU KNOW!—yelled.

—WHAT?—screamed.

—You don't know. No, you don't know.—pensive.

Silence. He draws a bigger slit in the curtains to stare up at the sky.

—Have you ever cried?—to himself.

—What are you mumbling about now?

—I ASKED whether you had ever CRIED.

—DON'T BE SO STUPID, you know it's forbidden; weren't you ever taught?

—Yes.—snap.

—Well.—snap.

The telephone rings. She swings her legs round as though to get up and dive for the receiver, but he twists back to grab it from its platform next to the cage.

voice:—03371?

he:—speaking.

voice:—I'm the speaker.

he:—from the board?

She stands next to him,
her ear to the receiver.

voice:—yes.

he:—yes?

voice:—we tried to contact you earlier.

he:—has there been a decision?—taking her hand and giving it a squeeze.

voice:—no, but we must be informed of your whereabouts at all times.

he:—but I only went to the Cultural Centre.

voice:—that's as may be, but unless we know exactly where you can be contacted, the procedure will only take longer.

he:—longer? Well I'm sorry. I don't intend going anywhere . . . but if I do I'll keep you informed.

voice:—for the present then we shall assume that you can be reached at this number.

he:—yes: do you know how long it will be? Hallo, hallo.

The receiver drops back into its cradle:—a shrug of the shoulders. She tightens the grip on his hand. He smooths back hair from her forehead

—Not yet.—whisper.

—There's no need to worry.

—No. It's just this waiting.

She lets go of the hand to slide an arm about his waist.

—Yes . . . the waiting.—a half-hearted gesture towards going back to the drinks.—Did I tell you that when I was very little I used to get these apprehensive feelings for no reason at all; like the night before Christmas, only it wasn't.

They stand over the cushions, arms about each other.

—I'd pace up and down in our room, waiting; so isolated in the dark and not daring to switch on the lights in case I woke my sister.

—I didn't know you had a sister.

She sits as before, staring blankly at the wall; he beside her, their drinks untouched.

—I did have.

—Did have?

—Yes.

—I'm sorry. . . . What happened?

—You're not supposed to be sorry.

She turns to look at his face; re-notes the rough texture of shaven skin; her eyes flicker, angered.

—Hell I can't help feeling sorry; and I do.—glancing at her. There's a fleck of mascara on her cheek.

—That's only because you're *not* supposed to.

—What do you mean?

He raises a finger to brush clean her cheek, but does not touch her; instead the hand falls back to his lap.

—I'm sure you never mourned when it was still allowed.

—I did . . . and anyway it's only forbidden now because they know we suffer.

—Yes. . . . The mourning's forbidden.

—I suppose you've experienced the hurt.—patronising.

—Yes.—subdued.

—Sorry.

—THERE YOU GO AGAIN!

Pause.

—D'you want to talk about it?

—No.

—Why not?

—Because.

—Because?

—Because NO.

Silence. Long silence.

He tugs at a shoe-lace, his head bowed; she studies her finger-nails.

—Peter?

—Yes.—toes itching.

—Peter, have you . . . have you been faithful?

—Perhaps you shouldn't have come.

—Have you?—surveying the other hand.

—Been faithful?

—Muhuh.—a silver crescent has flaked from the index-finger.

—Yes. Yes Cath I have.—said into his tie.

Silence.

—Was it your sister?—still into his tie.

—What?

—The hurt.

—Yes.

Silence. He sucks in his lips over his teeth.



Aggravated:

—It makes me want to have children just to spite them.
Silence. She gazes at the wall.

—I didn't even cry . . . and I couldn't have been more
than about nine at the time.

—*You didn't cry?*

—It's forbidden. . . . I'm sure I wanted to though.

—I've cried.—prodding a cushion.

—I think I ought to have cried.

—I've cried.

—Impossible.—unemotional.
She gazes at the wall, focused on some arched imaginary horizon.

—No, I have cried. . . I forced myself.

—Why?

—It was when you left.

—It was wrong of you.

—Wrong?

—Wrong.—an ethereal tone.

—It was the only way to express what I felt.

—What did you feel?—not quite so distant.

—Like crying. You see, having never cried I didn't know, or rather . . . couldn't think of, or even imagine a reason that would provoke tears. Then you left. I knew what made people cry.

—And so what did you achieve?—her eyes still beyond the wall.

—Nothing at first . . . But . . . that night I was lying here and I couldn't sleep. Just knowing that I had to sleep alone was enough. And it was very dark, but I could see the coats on the pegs over there; they looked like nuns, praying, kneeling over me with old sorrowful faces. I was thinking of you and things, the way they used to be; when all of a sudden it started, here under the eye, like a pin-prick, a quick stab. And then nothing for a while. And then another, a push. I know that I just couldn't stop thinking of you; us. The jabs were becoming more frequent, more painful, a sort of irregular throb, as if something inside my face was shoving and shoving. I was beginning to sweat. By making every muscle in my body tense, taut, I hoped to force out whatever was there; yet it just grew, getting bigger, swelling out under my cheek. I was sure my skin was going to split and

—Don't; no more!—swinging round to look at him.

He sits cross-legged, elbow on knees, chin on a clenched fist. The fine hairs on his knuckles bristle, scored in Indian ink. His eyes are shut, clamped; his torso a docile pendulum.

—Sssh . . . Listen. I was afraid to touch my face and my fingers were closed so tightly that the nails dug deeply into my palms. I was going to scream; sweat was pouring off me; my teeth gripped like clams. Something began to ooze from my eye.

—Stop it!

—It was wet.

—Please.

—I felt frightened, but all I could do now was push. I had to push: push hard. It came; slowly growing out till it covered most of my eye, yet there was more and more inside. I pushed. I pushed . . . and then, as the tear grew up over my eyelid, it must have become too heavy, or perhaps I moved, anyway it slid onto my cheek jerking sharply at the rest in my face; I shrieked and almost involuntarily put my hand up to my eye. I touched it; it was soft, soft and wet and it didn't break; it was like a balloon filled with water hanging under my eye.

—Stop! STOP!—leaping up.—I don't believe you.

—It's true like a balloon and it grew and grew until it was down to my jaw, pearshaped. Then it broke away and slithered over me onto the floor.

—It's horrible and not true.—turning away, folding arms

across stomach.

—I fell asleep.

—People don't cry like that.—a shiver flees her back.

—Anyway in the morning it was still there.

—Now you're joking.—facing him again.

—No. . . . When I woke up I remembered what had happened . . . and then I saw it, just sitting there on the floor, propped up against a cushion.

—You're lying, tell me you're lying.—squatting before him.

—Why should I?

—I don't know. I don't want to hear any more.—covering ears with elegant hands.

—Please listen.—lifting his eyes, aware of a spot of mascara on her cheek.

She drops her arms.

—I was terrified of it at first, but somehow got to touching it; I poked at it with my finger. It didn't break.

—You're revolting!—covering her ears again, turning head away.

—No listen, please; I tried to destroy it; I got the ice-pick and pierced it, but when I pulled the pick out again the hole just sealed itself. No matter what I did it always returned to being a pear, a polythene bag full of water. I didn't know what to do with it. I couldn't throw it away, somebody would find it and bring it back.

—But tears aren't like that.—blinking, the flesh about her lips creased into disbelief.

—I'd never seen one before. For days I sat there, looking at it, playing with it, even talking to it . . . once I called it Catherine.

—You're MAD.—putting weight on her hands, ready to move.

—I'm not mad, but I was beginning to think that I might go insane if it was where I could see it all the time. So I bought an old bottle, got it in a junk shop, one of those in a metal cage, padded with straw. I had to squeeze the tear in little by little through the thin neck; the only way to get it out now would be to break the bottle. Come on I'll show you.—getting up.

—No.

—Yes, it's only a bottle.—standing over her.—It's behind the curtains.

—No I don't want to see it.

—You must. I wish you could touch it; it's like cold flesh, soft and a bit squashy. . . . Come on.

—I'm not going to move.—curling up, cowering.

—It's only a tear!—spreading out arms.—Agh!

He marches over to the curtains and pulls them aside. There's nothing behind them.

—It's gone?

She stands up; looks across the stair-well to the windows.

—What do you mean, it's gone?—moving to head of stairs.

—Gone! It's gone! YOU!

—What?

—You've taken it.

—WHAT?

—Cath what have you done with my tear?—edging forward.

—Nothing. I've never seen IT.—down one step.
 —You bitch, it was you.—eyes narrowing.—What have you done with it?
 —Peter, no. No!
 —You *stinking bitch!*—fists clenched, rushing her.
 She runs down the stairs.
 —Bitch! BITCH!—from the top of the stairs.
 The door slams.
 —Bitch.—through locked teeth.

●
 An hour has passed; it still rains.

text

Many years ago, at about the time when the intensive social re-education programme was introduced to mould the planned penultimate generation, two small girls were walking home from school. The elder girl, Catherine, was about nine, pretty and wore the promise of one day being a handsome woman. Clare, her sister, was already beautiful; a beauty which, in comparison, showed Catherine to be plain. Catherine was jealous of her sister. Very jealous! Their mother did much to temper this jealousy by making clear where her preferences were concentrated; by making obvious which of the two was her favourite, so much so that Catherine, rather than ape her sister, chose to cultivate a character as far removed from that of the younger as possible. Thus, whereas Clare was prone to dawdle and daydream, to probe hedgerows and search out caterpillars, Catherine made the walk home brisk and direct. As a result, by the time she reached their apartment, Clare would often be more than thirty yards away.

Since they had but left school, there could not have been more than five or six paces between them as they approached the main road. On the crossing Clare was knocked down and instantly killed by a car which had swung out from behind a lorry. The driver did not stop. On the other side of the street Catherine froze. A crowd materialised with offers of explanations, curses, mumbles, questions and running commentaries. Dazed Catherine was silent. An elderly man stood over her saying: It'll be alright, you'll see, everything will turn out right in the end.

But as Catherine heard the ring of an ambulance she began to scream. Nobody could do anything to make her stop. The ambulance arrived. Her mother worked as an ambulance driver. It was her ambulance.

Catherine saw her mother step down from the cab, pick up Clare's body and press it close to her breasts.

Catherine shrieked.

Catherine's mother's face was gnarled, scared in disbelief.

Catherine shrieked.

Catherine's mother took dead Clare into the back of the ambulance.

Catherine shrieked.

Catherine's mother's co-driver recognised Catherine and took her into the back of the ambulance.

Catherine shrieked.

Catherine's mother was laughing hysterically, hyena-

screaming. And hating Catherine.

Catherine was no longer shrieking. Written all over her mother's face the little girl saw 'Why couldn't it have been you?' Every time she looked at that face that was all she saw.

At home, Catherine locked herself in her room. That was bad because it had also been Clare's room. There, waiting, so isolated in the dark, she realised that her father had been in the hit and run car.

appendix to text

HURT—n.1. A wounding blow; also the wound or any injury caused by a blow; any bodily injury causing severe pain, or the pain itself. 2. Any injury causing pain of mind or conscience. 3. Injury; damage. 4. *colloq.* (the hurt). Any injury causing permanent damage to the normal running of a family unit. (*Allegedly* authoritatively sponsored, the hurt has for its object: a, the dissolution of family concepts: b, the re-emphasis of the futility of procreation.)

Epilogue

Peter sleeps in the rocking-chair.

Daylight alters the room. It smells fresh after the rain and strong sunlight wraps a dust column round the banister-cage. The French windows are open. Catherine stands on the balcony looking across landscaped lawns and gardens where old men sit and read their morning papers. A mild spurt of wind pushes hair across half her face.

Peter wakes in the rocking-chair.

—Good morning.—yawned.

Catherine turns and walks into the room.

—Morning . . . Coffee?

—Not yet, thanks.

She leans her elbows on the balustrade, one foot crossed over the other; staring at him. He sticks a finger in his ear, bores a little, yawns.

—Any mail?

—No, nothing. . . . O by the way, what happened to those two who came here last night.—peering into the stairwell.

—O . . . aamm . . . how far . . . she came back after about five minutes, soaked to the skin and without a word took her brandy and went to bed.

—And him?

—He spent the night in . . .

The chair nods as he gets up to point it out.

—Cath I'm sorry about last night . . . I don't . . . hell, I'm just sorry.—imitating her pose on the other side of the well, scratching his back.

—It proves we're doing the right thing anyway.

—Are we?

—I'll put the coffee on.—starting towards the kitchen.

Somewhat drowsy, he lets her reach the telephone before going after her. Gently taking her elbow:

—No listen. I've been thinking.

He leads her towards the bed; his eyes screwed up, searching thoughts.

—I don't believe we're incompatible.

—But what's the point?—letting herself be led.—That hair on your jacket wasn't mine.

Pause.

—I want children.

—You must be mad.

—I want you to have my children.

—You're dreaming. D'you know what it would mean?

—Yes.—flopping onto the bed, drawing her down beside him.

—And you'd like to take me through it.

—Surely those Ghettos can't be that bad.

—O no?

Pause. He thinks.

—Have you ever had a baby?

—No.—indignant.

—You've not even been pregnant?

—No.—curious.

—I think you'd enjoy it.

—I would?

—Yes, sure, you'd blow up like a big balloon and knit.

—Peter you'd lose your job.

—And we'd start off with a girl.

—Peter. No position. No friends.

—There'd be nappies and feeding.

—Peter. No money.

—Four would be a good number.

—Peter you couldn't take it.

—D'you think you could manage four?

—You couldn't take it.

—A girl, two boys and a girl to finish off with.

—Peter

—Really I'd like seven sons. That would hit them a bit.

But then that's asking too much of you.

—Peter no.

—I'd have to find some kind of work.

—Peter, no!

—Anything . . . the Ghettos must need workers.

—Peter, listen.

—Mmm?

—Peter. You're

—It'll have to be manual work.

—PETER?

—Yes?

—You're . . . You're a father, you're already a father.

—I'm *what*?

—A father

—I'm a father?

—Why d'you think I left?

—I'm a father?

—I swore I wouldn't tell you. You can't take it.

—I'm a FATHER.

—I stayed with Martha.

—A FATHER!

Everybody's meant to think that it's hers. Nobody'll find out.

—Are you sure?

—Of course, you know I was supposed to be staying with Helen, well she handled everything, letters, telephone calls;

everything official.

—Are you sure?

—Yes.

—No no. Me. Father?

—He was born just over six months ago. February 12th. Tuesday afternoon. 2.38.

—I'm a father. February the 12th . . . HE?

—Andrew.

—Andrew . . . mmmm . . . The first of seven.

The telephone rings.

—Andrew, yes . . . mm . . . I like that, Andrew Wordsley.

voice:—03371.

he:—speaking.

voice:—this is the speaker.

he:—from the board?

They stand close to

voice:—yes.

each other, the re-

he:—yes?

ceiver between them.

voice:—a decision has been reached. I'll read it to you:

Peter David Wordsley and Catherine Suzan Wordsley; married 3 years 2 months and 15 days are hereby granted a decree nisi. The application for divorce was favoured following an investigation which determined that both requisite conditions: (a) NO offspring result from the marriage. (b) The applicants undergo total separation and cease all communications for a period of not less than one year (365 days): were complied with in full and in accordance with the law. Should either party attempt to re-marry they will be summonsed, fined £5,000 and imprisoned for a minimum period of one year (365 days).

You will receive duplicate copies of this statement by the next post.

he:—no wait. Hallo, hallo . . . Well that's it.

—No.

—Why Cath? Why?

—What?

—Why did you do it?

—What?

—Andrew? . . . Catherine your eyes!

—I'm crying.

—But why?

—What do you mean?

—You heard what he said. Why did you make up that story?

—Don't you see; they haven't found out.

—You mean it's TRUE?

—Yes, yes . . . I'm sure they couldn't have found out.

—Are you *sure*?

Silence. Long silence.

—Pe

—Somehow they turned my sister into a tart, a bloody nymphomaniac.

—What?

—And then there was your sister.

—My sister?

—And now . . . they've stolen my tear.

—Your tear? . . . What are . . . no. Andrew? . . . No! NO!

She runs down the stairs. A door slams.

—Bastards. ■

THE DREAMS OF THE COMPUTER

12IN 03/07/69 16:43:11IN CQJBAA:JACKIE MAKING
*COMPUTER DREAM

-;I'M NOW GOING TO LOAD ON A PROGRAM
-LOAD \$TUTOR1

TIME SHARING LIMITED. TELCOMP.

TELCOMP IS AN INTERACTIVE SYSTEM BETWEEN MAN AND MACHINE.
IT MAY BE USED AS A HIGH-SPEED CALCULATING MACHINE OR AS A
STORED COMPUTER. TO USE PURELY FOR CALCULATIONS, ONE NEED
ONLY TO SPELL OUT THE DIRECT COMMAND 'TYPE' CORRECTLY.
THE BACK ARROW MEANS THAT THE COMPUTER IS WAITING FOR YOU
TO GIVE IT AN INSTRUCTION.

+ MEANS ADD.
- SUBTRACT
* MULTIPLY
/ DIVIDE
^ RAISE TO THE POWER (I.E. SQUARE ,CUBE ETC.)

PLEASE TYPE OUT THE FOLLOWING, PRESS THE 'RETURN' BUTTON
TO 'FEED' THE INSTRUCTION INTO THE COMPUTER, AND WHEN THE
'BACK ARROW' RETURNS, TYPE 'GO', AND PRESS THE
'RETURN' BUTTON

YOU TYPE 'TYPE 11-7, 12+4+6, 2*3, 17/6, 2+3, 4+(5/2.37)'
STOPPED AT STEP 1.182

-TYPE 11-7, 12+4+6, 2*3, 17/6, 2+3, 4+(5/2.37)

11-7=	4
12+4+6=	22
2*3=	6
17/6=	2.83333333
2+3=	8
4+(5/2.37)=	18.6281085

-; THAT WAS A "CALCULATION PROGRAMME2". WITHOUT DELETING
-; THIS RPROGRAMME (WHICH I OUGHT TO DO) I'M GOING TO
-; LOAD ON ANOTHER. THE COMPUTER WILL BEGIN TO GET CONFUSED
-; BUT WILL PROBABLY CARRY ON OK. BUT THEN, WITHOUT LETTING

(Note: The bulk of this printout is reduced to half-size)

-I IT CLEAR THE OLD PROGRAMMES OUT I'M GOING TO LOAD 'N
 -I ANOTHER, AND THEN ANOTHER, BEFORE LONG, THUS DEPRIVED OF
 -I ITS SLEEP (OR MORE ACCURATELY ITS DREAMS) IT WILL BEGIN
 -I TO HALLUCINATE AND ODD THINGS SHOULD HAPPEN.
 -LOAD TRUTH***** STRUTH

```

*****
* 1.THERE ARE THREE NUMBERED *
* STATEMENTS IN THIS BOX. *
* *
* 2. TWO OF THEM ARE FALSE. *
* *
* 3. JULIE ANDREWS WAS A *
* STAR IN 'MY FAIR LADY' *
*****
  
```

HOW MANY OF THESE STATEMENTS ARE FALSE?

NUM=ONE
 ERROR AT STEP 11.43
 ONE IS UNDEFINED

GO NUM=1

WHICH?

NUM=3

SO #2 IS TRUE?

ANS=YES

DO YOU SEE A CONTRADICTION?

ANS=NO

YOU CLAIM ONE FALSE, BUT #2 SAYS TWO.

HOW MANY OF THESE STATEMENTS ARE FALSE?

NUM=1

WHICH?

NUM=1

#1 IS CLEARLY TRUE.

HOW MANY OF THESE STATEMENTS ARE FALSE?

NUM=1

WHICH?

NUM=2

GOOD!

INCIDENTALLY THIS IS NOT A PARADOX.

STOPPED AT STEP 13.8

-LOAD \$MSCOPE

TELCOMP IS AN INTERACTIVE SYSTEM BETWEEN MAN AND MACHINE.
 IT MAY BE USED AS A HIGH-SPEED CALCULATING MACHINE OR AS A
 STORED COMPUTER TO USE PURELY FOR CALCULATIONS. ONE NEED
 ONLY TO SPELL OUT THE DIRECT COMMAND 'TYPE' CORRECTLY.
 THE BACK ARROW MEANS THAT THE COMPUTER IS WAITING FOR YOU
 TO GIVE IT AN INSTRUCTION.

```

+ MEANS ADD.
- SUBTRACT
* MULTIPLY
/ DIVIDE
^ RAISE TO THE POWER (I.E. SQUARE ,CUBE ETC.)
  
```

PLEASE TYPE OUT THE FOLLOWING, PRESS THE 'RETURN' BUTTON
 TO 'FEED' THE INSTRUCTION INTO THE COMPUTER, AND WHEN THE
 'BACK ARROW' RETURNS, TYPE 'GO', AND PRESS THE
 'RETURN' BUTTON

YOU TYPE 'TYPE 11-7, 12+4*6, 2*3, 17/6+2*3, 4*(5/2, 37)'
 STOPPED AT STEP 1.182

-GO
 ONE OF THE DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED WHEN WRITING A PROGRAM
 ARE PURELY TYPOGRAPHICAL--- EITHER YOU MIS-TYPE SOMETHING
 OR YOU LEAVE SOMETHING OUT.

AN EXAMPLE OF HOW TELCOMP HELPS YOU TO QUICKLY SEE THE
 MISTAKE YOU HAVE MADE IS OBTAINED WHEN YOU PURPOSELY

AND SWAYED BY ***** MODIFIED BY *****'S SPHERE.

TYPE THE FOLLOWING: TYPE 11-7
 NOW YOU TRY IT, DON'T FORGET TO PUSH THE 'RETURN'

TYPE 'GO' WHEN THE '-' RETURNS.
 STOPPED AT STEP 1.18996

-GO
 ANOTHER USEFUL INSTRUCTION IS 'SET'

THIS IS USED TO DEFINE VARIABLES, AND STORE THEM IN THE

COMPUTER'S STORE. A SIMPLE EXAMPLE OF ITS USE IS
 INTERRUPTED AT STEP 1.194

-I WHERE'S THE HOSRDSOPE PROGRAMME I TYPED ON?
 -LOAD \$HSDOPE

TELCOMP IS AN INTERACTIVE SYSTEM BETWEEN MAN AND MACHINE.
 INTERRUPTED AT STEP 1.13

-LOAD

RUBOUT

-I TELCOMP IS BEGINNING TO GET CONFUSED

-LOAD \$EXPENS

THIS IS A PROGRAM TO CALCULATE YOUR EXPENSES FOR THE WEEK

ARE YOU RECOMPENSED FOR THE USE OF YOUR CAR FOR
 BUSINESS PURPOSES (ANS. YES OR NO THEN PRESS RETURN KEY)
 ANS=YES

PLEASE ENTER RATE PER MILE IN PENCE

RTM=28

LUCKY DEVIL! THAT'S MORE THAN WE GET

NOW HOW MANY MILES ARE YOU HOPING TO GET AWAY
 WITH THIS WEEK
 MIL=500

E YOU TRAVELLED BY ANY OTHER MEANS THIS WEEK
 NOW BUSINESS OF COURSE?

ANS=YES

PLEASE ENTER TOTAL COST (YOU WILL BE ASKED FOR POUNDS,
 PENCE, SHILLINGS (SH) AND PENCE (PEN) ON SEPARATE LINES.
 AFTER TYPING EACH VALUE PRESS RETURN KEY

PDS=2

SHI=14

PEN=2

DO YOU HAVE ANY HOTEL EXPENSES TO CLAIM? (ONE SINGLE
 ROOM ONLY)

ANS=YES

PLEASE ENTER THE AMOUNT ON THE BILL PLUS TIPS.

PDS=3

SHI=15

PEN=0

DO YOU HAVE ANY CHARGABLE ENTERTAINMENT EXPENSES

ANS=NO

DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER EXPENSES?

ANS=NO

DEAR BESS,

HERE IS MY EXPENSE ACCOUNT FOR LAST WEEK. 7/ 3/69
 CAR EXPENSES 500 MILES AT 28.0 PENCE PER MILE 41 - 13 - 4
 ALL OTHER TRAVELLING EXPENSES 2 - 14 - 2
 HOTEL EXPENSES (INCLUDING TIPS) 3 - 15 - 0
 ENTERTAINING EXPENSES (INCLUDING TIPS) 0 - 0 - 0
 ALL OTHER EXPENSES 0 - 0 - 0
 TOTAL 46 - 2 - 6

YOURS FAITHFULLY

DO YOU WISH TO REPEAT THE CALCULATION
 ANS=NO

ERROR AT STEP 21.1

NOT ENOUGH VALUES FOR THAT FORM

-I

THE COMPUTER IS GETTING VERY CONFUSED

-LOAD \$MSCOPE

TELCOMP IS AN INTERACTIVE SYSTEM BETWEEN MAN AND MACHINE.
 INTERRUPTED AT STEP 1.13

-LOAD \$DAY

ALL DATES REFER TO THE GREGORIAN CALENDAR

TELCOMP IS AN INTERACTIVE SYSTEM BETWEEN MAN AND MACHINE.

WHAT YEAR (NEGATIVE IF BC)?

YR=193

RUBOUT

YR=1931

- SUBTRACT

* MULTIPLY

/ DIVIDE

^ RAISE TO THE POWER (I.E. SQUARE ,CUBE ETC.)

PLEASE TYPE OUT THE FOLLOWING, PRESS THE 'RETURN' BUTTON
 TYPE ANBC=(C-A*6)

GO

STOPPED AT STEP 1.2125

-LOAD \$GAME 31

ONLY ONE FILE PER LOAD COMMAND

-LOAD \$GAME31

THE GAME OF 31 USES THE ACES (VALUE OF ONE) THROUGH
 SIXES OF A DECK OF CARDS. THE OBJECT IS TO FILE

BOOKS

& COMMENT

R. Glynn Jones:

Back in the U.S.S.R.

In November 1962 an art exhibition opened in Moscow which attracted such crowds and produced so much enthusiasm from young people that it was officially closed after a few days and the artists concerned were ordered to bring their works to the Manege building alongside the Kremlin to be examined by the Central Committee. There had been no official change in policy towards art since the



"Adam" Bronze, 1962-3

time of Stalin's rigid control of the Academy: now the situation was



Ernst Neizvestny

evidently to be reconsidered. The artists who submitted their work to this inspection ran the obvious risk that they would be falling into a trap—that they would be branded as "nihilist" and punished accordingly, although they stood to gain much if the government's apparent broad-mindedness turned out to be real. Most of them decided to take the chance.

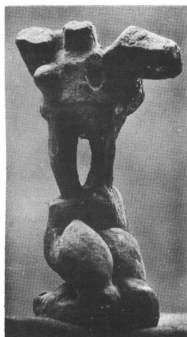
The Manege building had been thoroughly searched and was surrounded by security men when Krushchev arrived the next day accompanied by about seventy other officials. His reaction was immediate and predictable: "Dog shit! Filth! Disgrace! Who is responsible for this? Who is the leader?" The organizer of the exhibition came forward, but a voice from the government ranks said: "He's not the real leader. We don't want him. That's the real leader!" and pointed at a sculptor named Neizvestny. Krushchev re-directed his anger at this man, but this time the shouts were returned: "You may be Premier and

Chairman but not here in front of my works. Here I am Premier and we shall talk as equals."

The issue had become a personal one, and there was absolute silence as Krushchev followed Neizvestny towards the sculptures. The two men began to argue about the works there and continued for about an hour—during which several people fainted—then Krushchev said: "You are the kind of man I like, but there's an angel and a devil in you. If the angel wins, we can get along together. If it's the devil who wins, we shall destroy you." Afterwards there was an investigation which included an examination of Neizvestny's sanity; he was found to be sane, and Krushchev asked him how he managed to live under such pressure from the State. The reply was: "There are certain bacteria—very small, soft ones—which can live in a super-saline solution that could dissolve the hoot of a rhinoceros."

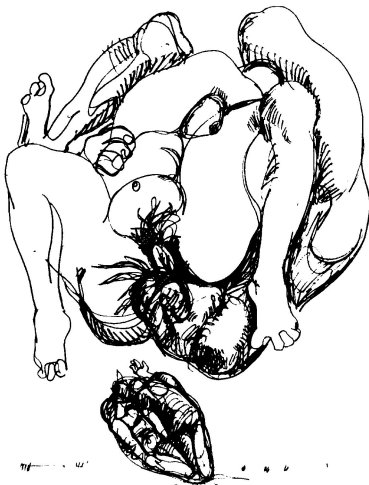
Given such romantic stuff, the temptation to use Neizvestny as an heroic and revolutionary symbol must

be enormous, but John Berger inflates him to absurd proportions in his book, *Art and Revolution: Ernst Neizvestny and the Role of the Artist in the U.S.S.R.* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 30s; Penguin Books, 12s). Berger takes the view that "the position of the artist has changed. He is no longer valued as the producer of his work but for the quality of his vision and imagination as expressed in his work. He is no longer primarily a maker of art: he is an example of a man, and it is his art which exemplifies him." Because Neizvestny is caught between communist ideology and the stifling power of the bureaucracy that was Stalin's legacy, his work is seen as a part and as a symbol of the "struggle against imperialism" which, in Berger's view, will lead within a century to a golden age of world equality and universal freedom from exploitation: "the best of his work reveals and expresses an essential part of the experience being lived by millions of people, more especially by millions in the three exploited continents. They do not know the work of Neizvestny. He does not live among them. But therein lies the gift of imagination, of prophecy. Or, to put it another way, therein lies the marvellous and inevitable interaction between the lives and events of what has become an indivisible world."



"Hermaphrodite Torso" Zinc, 1966

I don't know how closely John Berger's interpretation of Neizvestny's work corresponds with the sculptor's



"Lovers in Whirlwind"

own intentions, but this is ultimately irrelevant in assessing the *quality* of the sculpture. An artist's experience, character and beliefs may have an important formative effect upon his work, but they do not guarantee the result: the sculpture must finally be judged on purely aesthetic grounds, and not as a manifestation of "revolutionary consciousness." Not that Berger's comments on individual sculptures are necessarily wrong but, rather, their value is suspect because of the ideological stance he has taken on Neizvestny's behalf. So we must be particularly careful not to let our sympathy for Neizvestny muddle our judgment of his work or, on the other hand, to diminish its value because we might disagree with Berger's exposition of it.

The photographs of Neizvestny's work in *Art and Revolution* reveal an obsession with the human form and its construction. Because he has had to do his own casting, Neizvestny has been

able to develop a technique whereby he reworks the moulds of the original models *from the inside*—a peculiar negative process which produces distortions controlled only by the sculptor's sense of touch and his understanding of the human body. Surprisingly, his subjects are often borrowed from mythological or Christian themes (Dante's *Inferno*, for instance, has been a rich source of inspiration), but he sees them in exclusively human terms. Perhaps because of his own experiences, suffering and death loom large in his works, not in a morbid way, but as testaments to the very persistence and adaptability of life; Berger is right when he says that "the poles of Neizvestny's imagination are life and death..." and points out that when the sculptures are not concerned with death "the sense of the energy of life is so extreme that it suggests the same starting point. This is how life must appear in the light of its negation."

Neizvestny's sculpture has been criticized for its lack of modernity, and his style does resemble that of the nineteen-twenties. Zadkine, Epstein and Moore have certainly influenced him, but this in itself is no fault; to judge from the photographs of his work, the sculptures have a remarkable unity of style and the best of them—the *Adam*, *Hermaphrodite Torso* or *Construction of Man*—transcend their rather dated idiom. His drawings, too, show an individuality which makes fascinating comparison with the sculptures, illustrating as they do Neizvestny's idea of structure without being subject to the same distortions of form. It is unfortunate, therefore, that so many of the illustrations in *Art and Revolution* are duplicated: three of the drawings and eleven photographs of the sculptures appear twice in the book, and the same picture of the *Adam* is printed three times! Why?

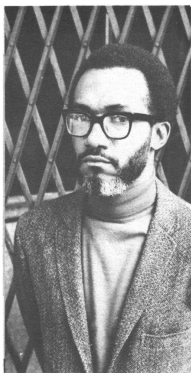
Since Neizvestny's work is rarely exhibited and all applications to buy it are refused, this book is valuable as an introduction to this sculptor, and the descriptive and historical sections in it are both useful and perceptive. I am sure that John Berger is utterly sincere in his political beliefs too, and it is regrettable that they had to play such a large part in the book.

M. John Harrison: *Twilight Crucifixion of the Beastly Black Sheep*

Two books from a new firm, Allison & Busby: *The Spook Who Sat By The Door*, by Sam Greenlee, and Michael Moorcock's Nebula-winner *Behold The Man*. Priced respectively at thirty and twenty one shillings, both are nicely presented, with simple effective dust jackets, and both deal with salty topics.

Greenlee's book is about a black revolution. His protagonist becomes the only black officer in the CIA, aping the arse-licking ways of the Uncle Tom negro—"Freeman used 'sir'

to whites as often as possible. He found that it had a magical effect on the relationship"—while quietly



Sam Greenlee

training himself as an insurrectionist. Turning to social work among the street gangs of Chicago, he establishes a guerrilla force complete with cell organisation: Greenlee's point being that, given the incentive of racial pride, the gangs will cease to be a nuisance to the white police and become an outright menace to the whole white majority. Various members of the group split, and, by the time the summer race riots hit America, they have set up effective insurrectionary cells all over the nation:

Oakland blew first, then Los Angeles, then, leap-frogging the continent, Harlem and South Philadelphia. After years of crying conspiracy, the witch-hunters found, to their horror, there was a conspiracy afoot among the black masses.

Finally, Freeman is forced to commit himself utterly, when, to preserve his cover, he has to kill an old friend working for the Chicago police.

Greenlee manages his humour—his portrayals of pro-black senators, white liberals and negroes who have sold out; the capture and boot-blacking of a National Guard commander by Freeman's guerillas—very well,

although it is a little unsuited. His action is carried by a fast but muddy style and suffers only in that the heroes always win. This is a necessity, as is his meagre characterisation of whites, because as well as being a thriller, this is a polemic book. Greenlee sees no non-violent solution to the USA colour problem, and *The Spook Who Sat By The Door* is an open incitement to riot.

The mock crucifixion of the young Karl Glogauer encapsulates the theme and action of Michael Moorcock's *Behold The Man*.

The game had begun earnestly enough and somewhat nervously Karl had suggested the role he play. At first he relished the attention, but now he was crying.

"Let me down! Please, Mervyn, stop it!"

They had tied him with his arms spreadeagled against the wire-netting of the playground fence...

"Stop it! Somebody help me!" They laughed again and he realised that his cries only encouraged them, so he clenched his teeth. Tears fell down his face and he was full of a sense of bewilderment and betrayal.

Glogauer, son of a neurotic divorcee, spends his early life looking for attention, for what he defines as love. Later, he invests emotionally in the religio-psychological doctrines of Jung. This search for something he cannot define—although his women can: "*Fear shapes your thoughts. You're not searching for a soul or even a meaning for life. You're searching for comfort.*"—carries him, via a time machine constructed significantly like a womb, to A.D. 28. There, finding the young Christ is an imbecile, that his final source of comfort is a myth, he takes on the tasks of the Messiah, and is crucified.

This theme is strong in both senses of the word; the book's brutal element of self-pity is almost too well handled; and there are some startling scenes—a portrait of Mary as a blowsy old semi-tart stands out particularly. But this kind of analytic narrative demands heavy emphasis on character, and Moorcock does not seem at home in the internal monologues or the fleshing-out of peripheral figures. Glogauer is a little too far gone to be true, and his supporting cast—with the exception of Monica the iconoclast and the taciturn Essene John the Baptist—are transparent.

Perhaps more important: despite its

overt unconventionality, the subject matter is *ordinary*. Moorcock is at his best in the complex, outrageous world of Jerry Cornelius, where motivation is a much more subtle proposition and a man knows what he must do as the entropy increases.

The hero of Paul Ableman's novel *The Twilight Of The Vulp* (Gollancz, 21s) is a novelist. He advertises for a protagonist for his new novel and



Moorcock & Daughters

selects from 73 applicants Prof. Guthrie Pidge; Pad Dee Murphy, an Irish-Burmese peasant; and Henry Glebe, inventor of the Earth-borer. The three characters do not react well together and he attempts to shunt them onto an sf novel entitled *The Silver Spores*. Neither he nor Mr Ableman need have bothered. This is supposed to be a comedy. For its effects it relies almost exclusively on verbal gimmickry and associative word-trains on the part of the author (both authors). At best, this gives rise to a surreal world in which Ableman, his character, and his character's characters become inseparable, at worst—which is most of the time—to self indulgence, damp puns and cumbersome pseudo-logic reminiscent of the Goon Show.

He was travelling on the "Sapphire Express". All the paintwork, the upholstery, the carpeting, every physical aspect of the interior was radiant sapphire in hue... The explanation is keenly interesting. The company psychologist... had ascertained that seals and penguins have the most equable temperaments. These live in a "sapphire" ambience. Therefore... travellers were rendered seal-like and only fish was served in the dining car.

In small doses this is fine, but as a habit it hooks only the writer. *The Twilight Of The Vulp* is weary, contrived, and far too long.

Philip K Dick's latest novel, *Do Androids Dream Of Electric Sheep?* (Rapp & Whiting, 21s), is a broth of

ideas. Shortly after WW III, man becomes increasingly artificially-stimulated while android robots become less distinguishable from the real thing; Earth is a dreary place, fallout impelling its remaining inhabitants to wear lead codpieces or to emigrate to the colony worlds; and as a counter-attraction, the colonies are nothing, so inimical that even the androids don't want to be there. Rick Decard's job is to hunt and eliminate renegade androids, and the book concerns his most difficult operation, against six new models with ultra-sophisticated brains.

Dick is preoccupied largely with the crumbling man/machine terminator: the androids have programmed emotions—while Decard's wife sets her 'mood organ' for "a six-hour self-accusatory depression"; the androids are fractionally less intelligent, but the human race has its radiation-induced rejects, the 'specials'. This problem is symbolised in the test given to suspect androids, which is in itself becoming unreliable, and in the artificial animals (thus the title) that are replacing Earth's dying fauna.

The book is beautifully constructed, yet disappointing. Dick develops his thesis quietly—until a climax in which the reader can no longer avoid its implications—and without too much of the rationalisation that dogs the genre. His satire is often very funny indeed, and his side details—the empathetic religion, the robot lover that no bounty hunter could bear to kill, the delightful prospect of two androids pulling the legs off an electric spider to see how many it could do without—are engaging. But his plot is weak and a little trivial, his characters are standard constructions, and his style makes the book difficult to read.

After *Balthazar B* had relieved himself into two empty milk bottles, the landlady found him in a compromising position with Breda... From J P Donleavy's *The Beastly Beatitudes Of Balthazar B* (Eyre & Spottiswoode, 35s):

Landlady scrabbling up to her feet. Curls hanging from streaming hair... As she plunges forward grabbing at Breda's white thin shoulders, pushing her back against the dresser. Bottles of pee falling and crashing and breaking on the floor.

"Filth. It's piss. Drown me in piss, will you. Slut."

"Pope's piss you hag."

And so on. This is the sort of pithy stuff readers have come to expect from Donleavy, along with his, chopped sentences and adept portrayals of mental isolation. This novel has most of the ingredients of the first two; too many of them, in fact. *Balthazar B*, the last of the rich, shy, elegant young men, blunders through a series of infatuations, legal scrapes, gaudy sex-acts and emotional ball-ups, aided and incited by characters that Donleavy has made into personal clichés: Beefy, a hooligan from the English upper class, looking for the living the world owes him; Millicent, who traps Balthazar into a marriage that resembles the Ginger Man's in all but the latter's sordid environs; Elizabeth, the lover-who-dies, corresponding to the Singular Man's Miss Smith.

They are well-drawn, believable characters, but they aren't exciting any more. Because of this and because its development also duplicates that of the previous novels—coming to a long slow nadir in which the protagonist wallows—*The Beastly Beatitudes Of Balthazar B* is only moderately enjoyable. It isn't enough of a departure, nor yet a necessary restatement: Donleavy is rapidly creating a norm for himself, which isn't a good thing.

Bob Marsden: *Notes on the Management of a Spoiled Identity*

Games People Play: The Psychology of Human Relationships, by Eric Berne MD, Penguin, 173pp. 5s.

The first third of *Games People Play* describes the theoretical framework employed, and the rest comprises a thesaurus of games and some supplementary comments. From studies of maternal deprivation carried out on institutionalized children during and after World War II, and from sensory deprivation experiments, Dr Berne derives the *stroke*, denoting any act implying recognition of another's presence as the fundamental unit of

social action. An exchange of strokes (a smile, nod, word or punch) constitutes a *transaction*, which is the fundamental unit of social intercourse. People need their time structured in order to function satisfactorily, and so stimulus-hungry, recognition-hungry, structure-hungry humans take part in such stereotyped sequences of transactions as *rituals*, *pastimes*, *games* or *intimacy* in order of increasing psychosocial complexity, to attain repetition. Despite the questionable validity of their derivation, these constructs are effective in describing certain aspects of social intercourse.

Dr Berne then introduces the ego states of *Parent*, *Adult* and *Child*, which are presumably derivatives of superego, ego and id. Since a person can carry out transactions in more than one ego state at a time, the conceptual system can accommodate fairly complex social events. The thesaurus of games and their analyses are easy to comprehend through sensible use of examples and expression in colloquial terms wherever possible.

The important thing about games is their ulterior motivation, so that, in most games the player seems to be trying to attain one thing, when really he is attempting just the opposite. For example, in *Rapo*, a woman signals that she is sexually willing and able, and it seems that seduction is her goal. Not so. At the last possible moment, and in 3rd degree *Rapo* later, she rejects the advances and claims to have been wronged.

The usefulness of games analysis can be estimated from the degree to which one identifies himself or acquaintances in so many of the games. Particularly satisfying in theoretical terms is the use of an automatic validating procedure to test whether a game really 'works': refusal to play, or undercutting the payoff disrupts the player's game and he goes into a state of despair or depression. If this doesn't happen, then perhaps one's idea of the game is false. On the other hand, pushing a man into a depression seems a pretty dangerous way to check the validity of an idea.

Dr Berne is eclectic in deriving his theoretical constructs, and it is not surprising that the seams of his patchwork system are under strain. His neo-Freudian concepts often seem oversimplifications, while his basic assumption, perhaps an existential psychiatric one, that people are almost completely capable of being changed

for the better is dangerously naive: "It is because (a person's) adaptation is in the nature of a series of decisions that it can be undone, since decisions are reversible under favorable conditions." This ignores the integral nature of organic growth. Despite these shortcomings the descriptions of games often contain original insights, and the book is interesting and well worth reading.

Put-offs and Come-ons: Psychological Manoeuvres and Stratagems, by A. H. Chapman, MD. Cassell, 256pp. 25s.

Dr Chapman's often synthetic clinical descriptions of psychological manoeuvres and stratagems reflect many of the stereotypical social reaction patterns also observed by Dr Berne, and one can infer that they must have much experience in common. But "theory and speculation occupy little space in this book," "Many patients stride boldly on to these pages and they tell their stories in detail," and so the focus tends to be on the establishment and development of long-term self-perpetuating hang-ups. The book begins well enough, with parent-child relationships being considered in depth, and halfway through there are some well observed miniature exposés of business and research stratagems, but it slips into a hysterical style reminiscent of Vance Packard, and then degenerates to spicy gossip, often tending towards maliciousness. The writing becomes slipshod, often using embarrassingly whimsical metaphors, and disturbing paternalistic attitudes begin to appear. Examples: "I assure the incredulous reader that this case vignette is true; both these people were my patients years later."; "When the Grey Angel paid his call one Thursday afternoon she did not recognize him and mistook him for a gentle visitor"; "Of course, we psychiatrists are sometimes wrong."

The book ends with tedious, trivial and ill thought out statements about the behaviour of social groups. It would seem that Dr Chapman lost interest, ran out of ideas, gave in to self-indulgence, or possibly had to finish the book in a hurry to meet a deadline.

Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity, by Erving Goffman. Pelican, 174pp. 5s.

Stigma is the discrepancy between what people expect a person should be, his virtual social identity, and what

he is, his actual social identity. We expect people to be able to see, hear, talk, walk, to have a certain number of limbs, certain facial features and certain acceptable styles of behaviour. If they can't, don't or won't, we disqualify them from full social acceptance. Dr Goffman is concerned with "the moments when stigmatized and normal are in the same 'social situation'". He distinguishes between those whose stigma is obtrusive—the discredited—and those whose virtual social identity remains intact as long as they can conceal their stigma—the discreditable. For the discredited the problem is to manage their spoiled identity. It is something they must learn, often painfully, perhaps with help from groups of their own kind, or from "the 'wise', namely, persons who are normal but whose special situation has made them intimately privy to the secret life of the stigmatized individual and sympathetic with it". For the discreditable, however, the task is the management of undisclosed discrediting information—"passing" as normal. The prostitute, for example, may be concerned to conceal her stigma from her family, in which case "her closet is as big as her beat, and she is the skeleton in it."

Dr Goffman unpicks the intricacies of the different aspects of information control with the technical skill of a transplant surgeon: indeed, the whole book is an outstanding example of lucid academic exposition, abounding in illuminating examples, mostly from unacademic sources such as popular accounts by the stigmatized of their lives. He develops new concepts comprehensively as the need arises, and his restrained humour is integrally woven into the text. He is impartial but not indifferent—something which becomes clear at the end of the book when he performs a heart transplant on the unsuspecting reader. One had empathized and sympathized with the stigmatized: now one is forced to identify with him. In a 20 page tour de force of veiled sarcasm and barbed irony Dr Goffman's scalpel exposes the selfish illusions of normalcy: "The stigmatized are tactfully expected to be gentlemanly and not to press their luck"; "... stigma management is a general feature of society, a process occurring wherever there are identity norms." "The most fortunate of normals is likely to have his half-hidden failing, and ... there is a social occasion when it will loom large, creating a shameful gap between

virtual and actual social identity." "... it should come as no surprise that in many cases he who is stigmatized in one regard nicely exhibits all the normal prejudices held toward those who are stigmatized in another regard."

This is an important book.

James Cawthorn: From Alice with Malice

Black Alice (W. H. Allen, 25s) is the product of the combined talents of Thomas M. Disch and John T. Sladek, two authors whose names have appeared with some frequency in the pages of *NEW WORLDS*. It is not a science-fiction novel, a fact which is unlikely to deter any reader of this magazine, nor does it fit very neatly into any other category. Alice (and the parallel with Carroll's heroine is perhaps overstressed by the authors) is the daughter of a white American couple, raised in comfortable circumstances, who suddenly finds herself forced to view the world through the eyes of a coloured girl. Kidnapped and held to ransom for the fortune she will one day inherit, Alice, by the use of drugs and dyes, is given the appearance of a negress, a process which effectively renders her invisible to the eyes of the Law. She is then given into the maternal but muscular care of an elderly coloured madam, and hidden away in the Green Pastures Home, a decrepit cathouse staffed by the white, pretty, retarded Fay, and the ugly, man-hating negress, Clara. Customers of this harlot's version of Cold Comfort Farm include members of the local Ku Klux Klan. It might seem that at this point Disch and Sladek have heaped a full measure of indignity upon the head of a tender, pre-adolescent Anglo-Saxon girl, but this, of course, is only the beginning. Alice is a child of more than average wit and resource, qualities which have been tested severely by her rather peculiar home upbringing, and her experiences subsequent to her abduction stretch them to the limit.

Taken as a thriller, **Black Alice** has all that could be asked for in the way

of violence, tension and shocks; as a comment on life in the southern U.S.A. it is sly, acid and broadly humorous by turns; in sum, to use an overworked but apposite phrase, it is a black farce. If you are curious to learn what sf-writers produce when they aren't turning out that crazy Buck Rogers stuff, this is one of the best examples currently available.

Dobson Science Fiction continue the adventures of Sub-sea Academy Cadet Jim Eden with **Undersea City** (21s), by Frederik Pohl and Jack Williamson. Making due allowance for the fact that it is obviously aimed at a younger audience, this is still a disappointing book. Most of the action occurs within Krakatoa Dome, a huge undersea city located close by the volcanic island which gives it its name, and it is the presentation of this background which robs the story of a good deal of conviction. In spite of repeated declarations that the city is under three vertical miles of ocean, the architecture creates a distinct impression of having been lifted bodily from some slightly passé surface community of today, in the manner of those unconvincing "artist's visualisations" of pressurized dome-colonies upon Mars. The plot concerns three cadets posted to a marine seismology unit in Krakatoa City, to study methods of forecasting undersea earthquakes; complications soon develop when it appears that someone is artificially inducing minor 'quakes and in addition a major upheaval is predicted, one capable of destroying the city. There is no dearth of incident and the story moves along quite briskly until the villain gets a rather offhanded comeuppance; nevertheless, it lacks the plausibility that a writer such as Arthur C. Clarke has brought to similar themes. Richard Weaver contributes an ingeniously appropriate jacket design.

Also from Dobson is **Twin Planets** (18s) by Philip E. High, a fairly entertaining adventure novel concerning an alternate Earth which, owing to the advance scientific weaponry of alien invaders, has ceased to rotate upon its axis. Conspiring to overthrow their masters, human biologists have created a number of supermen designed to out-think, out-fight and out-breed the opposition. The first and second of these duties are fulfilled with considerable gusto.

Adventure is the keynote also of the paperbacks featured this month. Sphere Books have published **The Ice**

Schooner (5s) by Michael Moorcock, which is substantially the same as the serial version originally presented in *SF IMPULSE* magazine. The narrative conforms to a deliberately formal and classic pattern; as in many of his stories, the author's preoccupation is with the inter-relationships of his characters and the conflict between ambition and tradition, rather than the physical action which carries them along. There is, however, plenty of the latter in the course of a fantastic voyage across the frozen Atlantic Ocean of a future Ice Age. In a fibre-glass hulled schooner designed to travel upon ice, Konrad Arlfane and several members of the powerful and wealthy Rorsetne family set out for the gleaming towers of New York, the legendary half-buried city of the Ice Mother. The picture of a race living in elaborately fashioned burrows below interminable plains of ice, maintaining a way of life at once primitive and luxurious which is almost wholly dependent upon the hunting of the huge, mutated whales which roam this frozen world, is convincingly drawn, and though Moorcock never quite succeeds in resolving satisfactorily the various problems posed by a fairly ambitious plot, **The Ice Schooner** remains a chilling glimpse of a world-to-come not quite like any other in the literature.

An Albian perfidious beyond the wildest dreams of Mon General darkens the skies of Europe in Michael Moorcock's **The Jewel in the Skull** (Mayflower, 5s). In this first book of a four-part novel comprehensively titled *The History of the Runestaff*, the great power blocs of the contemporary world no longer exist, and Europe has once more become fragmented, unstable and ripe for conquest. Squatting offshore, the islands of Gran-bretan seethe with activity military and malign as the masked servants of King Huon prepare to spread the rule of their Dark Empire across the divided lands beyond the Channel. Only the Kamarg, a tiny portion of what was once southern France, appears to present an obstacle to their progress, ruled as it is by the greatest warrior-statesman of his day, Count Brass. Soon it is the only centre of resistance on a war-riven Continent, and here the young Duke Dorian Hawkmoon of Koln, dispossessed of his lands by the soldiers of the Dark Empire, joins forces with Count Brass and his loyal followers to defeat, or resist to the death, the schemes of

King Huon. The fascinatingly complex struggle which ensues is continued in *The Mad God's Amulet* (Mayflower, 5s), and the four volumes form another notable contribution to the field of heroic fantasy by the creator of *Stormbringer*.

Captain Swing (Lawrence & Wishart, 70s), is not the name of some figure from the popular jazz scene of the forties, and any reader who can identify him with greater accuracy obviously has considerable knowledge of the social scene circa 1830. This expensive and exhaustively documented account of the rural uprisings in pre-Victorian England opens up a world as curious and little-known to the average modern town-dweller or countryman as any lost land of fantasy, for, as authors E. J. Hobsbawm and George Rudé point out, the illiterate rural workers of that age left few records of their way of life to guide later researchers. The uprisings, machine-smashing and burning of ricks ("Captain Swing" was a catch-all name for the incendiaries) arising from the struggle for a decent living wage and better conditions may never have received the literary attention accorded to the later conflicts of a growing industrial population, but they followed a familiar pattern of violence and suppression and, eventually, partial victory for the rebels. Price and subject-matter, unfortunately, are scarcely likely to make of *Captain Swing* a best-seller, but it would seem that there is the material here of a book with wider appeal if the requirements of a non-specialist readership can be met. "The price of coal" became a dramatic tag for the mining industry; the agricultural rebels might with equal justification have quoted the price of bread.

John Clute: *Against the Juggernaut*

*The Boy From The Green Cabaret
Tells of His Mother* Barry MacSweeney New Authors 25s
Juggernaut Gavin Bantock Anvil Press 3s

Could Barry MacSweeney's publisher-to-be really have spotted him

in a crowd of "likely aspirants" and taken him aside and whispered: For just a second I thought you were Dylan Thomas now keep it that way? Aw shucks, said Barry MacSweeney, it's just little ole me. And indeed it is, not to be unkind . . . just that there's not really a whole volume of poetry here, even in this thin book (54 pages). Too much of it is junk ("Dr Zhivago, Love Poem") or stuffed with "projective" "anti-revisionist" bumf ("Death Go Get Yr Shoes Repaired & Mend Yr Icey Hat"). Other poems, though (the title poem for instance), have a gabby, fresh, free-associative smart to them . . . "very pleasing," "very promising," . . . Barry's real main danger a habit of giving in to his metaphors, letting them railroad him into bathos, the Stuffed Owl.

But *Juggernaut* is simply godawful. Mixing among others Eliot, Yeats, a soupcon of Blake, into a boggy pedestrian blah ("It is time now / to make / love / to forget the alien name of the liqueur, / to plunge in the hypodermic needle, and again . . ."), Bantock *speaks up* for rational, sequential, linear thought, for "the sensible direction of time," calling on men to cast off the shackles of now-ness ("Become of the salt of the earth. / Be you men with green fingers."), and *inveighs against* Juggernaut, "the assassin of all rational thought," though when he puts words into "Juggernaut's" "mouth" he makes "him" sound like the villain of a Marvel Comic, but Bantock is *serious*: "For I am Juggernaut," tablethumps this allegorical mumpsinus, perorating pages of pale purple boasts, just like Doctor Doom. Poo.

A Point Of No Return Fwanyanga M Mulikita Macmillan & Co 21s

Never mind who the girl is (with almond eyes) pawing through the reviewer's stack of books, stopping here. "Oh," she says, passing on, "another one of those Negro books." As she is Australian the reviewer bristles, but dingbat, on closer examination, if she isn't right. The point of *A Point Of No Return* lies distressingly in the extra-literary: that it was written by a black (Mulikita), from Africa (Zambia on the eve of its second though predictable election). Mulikita is an intelligent and urbane civil servant and diplomat, but a lame writer. When he writes a story for the sake of telling it ("A Doctor of

Philosophy changes his Mind") he is flat, penurious, talky, amateur; when he writes a story to "uplift" and inform his fellow Zambians ("The Tender Crop"), he is Samuel Smile, smarmy, "paternal," condescending.



Barry MacSweeney

And Macmillan's production is vanity-press, shoddy. (The girl and I go on to other things.)

The Passion Players Edmund P Murray Arthur Barker 30s

The dust jacket compares this novel with *The Ginger Man* and *Lolita*, who would make a fine couple in bed, but never met; nor, except in bulk, does *The Passion Players* resemble either of them separately. But maybe there's a point somewhere . . . bulk is what's memorable about this strangely unreadable first novel which tells—down to the last detail—the story of a group of Americans who translate the Oberammergau Passion Play into English and put it on in Texas. Not that there's much specifically *wrong* with the book, technique-wise . . . but technique is where you start, now that the novel is dead; how many unpublished, unread, unlamented, technically-pure manuscripts there must be in the world today . . . and so in *The Passion Players*, after everything is said (and said again, because Murray sticks in a Thornton Wilder Stage Manager type who cannot keep his mouth shut), we're left with a

sense of torpor, as though we had just been forced to eat yesterday's newspaper.

The Philosophy Of Jean-Paul Sartre Ed. by Robert Denoon Cumming Methuen 50s

A handsome black volume. Stern, white, sans-serif lettering. Hefty, uncompromising, it absorbs the light, I reach out. The cover is slimy, an electric eel. I drop **The Philosophy of Jean-Paul Sartre** with a choked cry. But it will look good on my shelf, a black hole, an "enigma". Where did this book come from? (Born and edited in America, 1965.) Who is it for? (Not me.)

"Me?" "I" went to school, graduated, read what was required, like most of us; "I" do not stand out among the "literate" in any remarkable way. I've read *Nausea*, and *Being and Nothingness*, and *Words*, and some of the minor Sartre,—many or most of us have done something the same. I am not a student of philosophy, few of us are, but one does try to get at Sartre. *Being and Nothingness* was benumbing, a beartrap; *Nausea* was potent but passe (more on that in a minute); *Words* seemed to undercut much of the negative orientation-obsession with and horror of the Other—of Sartre's stricter writings, by relating their anguish to a weird, hermetic childhood (but nothing from *Words* appears in this anthology except, not clearly acknowledged, as source-material for the introduction,—I suppose on the principle that *Words* is not philosophy). I have the typical "anecdotal" grasp of Sartre, then. How will this anthology serve me?

Because surely it was meant—not for the professional philosopher or professional student but—for me. If I prefer to read Sartre from the original books, surely it is the duty of the professional to avoid cribs...and especially a crib, like this one, which comprises, in the main, excerpts from easily-available and translated works. Chunks out of *Being And Nothingness* make up most of Professor Cumming's collection (265 out of 434 pages of text); little is included from earlier works; nothing from *Portrait of the Anti-Semites*: 30 pages from *Saint Genet*; and a measly 70 pages from the late *Critique de la Raison Dialectique*, which remains untranslated in full, and of which a larger sampling might have had legitimate interest for the

professional wishing to corroborate his own reading of Sartre's anfractuious 1960 style. But it isn't the professional Cumming was aiming at; it's me.

Disregarding the fact that most of us would choose the original text over a book of excerpts, his aim was bad. For instance, the Introduction. Professor Cumming does not seem to know how to write for those who aren't colleagues or students in his field; his Introduction seems in fact to show that he doesn't really know whom he's trying to reach. Not that it is too abstruse for the non-professional to understand, after a great deal of labour. An intelligent person, sweating, can make head and tail out of most things in the realm of discourse,—as long as the language or reference-points aren't private, and too many inept assumptions of shared professional (private or specialised) knowledge seep through in this Introduction for it to be at all clear for the general reader. Page 27 tells us, for instance that we shouldn't confuse "the concept of freedom Sartre opposes to determinism" with "the Kantian conception," "as it sometimes is." I wasn't about to. "As it sometimes is" may be somebody's dirty linen, but it isn't mine. There's too much of this in the Introduction, too many casual ingroup references to Husserl and Heidegger, I spent far too much time piecing out what could have been *presented*...not journalistically, unless a generalist approach is journalism...I wasn't asking for spoonfeeding, just a nonspecialist focus...if Husserl has to be brought up (and he certainly has to be), then please, some elucidation, my familiarity with Husserl's phenomenology, whether first period or last, is not sufficient for me to relate it, without more help than Professor Cumming gives, to Sartre's later take-off. There's something skizzy here.

This—that if you are a professional you won't need or want this book; if you are the general literate reader, it won't fit your specifications. But suddenly a terrible thought comes, that maybe...could **The Philosophy of Jean-Paul Sartre** have originated as an undergraduate textbook? Would that explain this doing the splits between the professional and the gormless? A reason perhaps, but no excuse.

And one other thing. Methuen seems to have republished without updating it from Random House's 1965 edition of the book, so that the bibliography cuts off at that year, so

that the relevance or irrelevance of Sartre's more recent career (the War Crimes Tribunal for instance) is left undiscussed. Professor Cumming would I'm sure have had something to say about the Tribunal, if he'd been given the chance,—he's American, and he does characterize Sartre's "fellow-travelling" as a "flaw" especially evident to Americans....

All of which has little to do with Sartre himself, most deliberately. One is not about to do Sartre in a book review. He has spoken for himself, perhaps most clearly in *Words*, elsewhere more seminally, existence precedes essence, and all. Nausea, as Professor Cumming, who is competent but in the wrong puddle, puts it, "is the subject's inability to digest its experience by reflecting on it"; nausea confronts "the idealistic illusion that experience can be recaptured." One has read this before, absorbed it into the literary bones, so that, in this year, it may be taken as given. What may, in a sort of leftfield peroration, be interesting to readers of *NEW WORLDS* is the odd sense for us now that *Nausea* comes across as an historical fiction,—no imputation that we're any "better". The phenomenological message—that aesthetic form is a "lie" of the transcendental ego—is clear enough, incontrovertible unless you posit God and the Bunch, roger and out. But our response is no longer anguish or nausea, it seems. Rather, a sense of ebullition or "balance" (James Sallis: "insouciance over terror")—some of whose manifestations you may come across in this very magazine. Fiction is a trip of hypothetical rhetoric, or what you will; we read Sartre—even in the "assembled" version under review (by the way, assemblage would seem a fatal alternative to dialectic, not a presentation of it)—with the sense that he cleared away an awful lot of garbage, many thanks, many thanks.

Charles Platt:

The Nondescript Heroes

Just as a forensic scientist builds a picture of a criminal from clues like half a footprint, a speck of blood and a single human hair, so it is supposedly

possible for a psychiatrist to construct a model of a man's mind from a few examples of what he has written. (Freud's deductions in his essay on Leonardo da Vinci are an exceptional example.) But one wonders if such insight into an astronaut's mind is remotely possible, given only the late Virgil Grissom's autobiographical *Gemini!* (Macmillan, 30s) as a guide. It is less than revealing.

The Mercury and Gemini space programmes are described launch by launch, prefaced by a brief history of Grissom's life, told in terms of his education and career. He makes it clear that he is writing down to the level of the general public, so one can excuse the almost juvenile explanations and descriptions. But what does one make of supposedly sincere remarks such as "... the seven of us had some wonderful moments—for an American citizen there can be no higher privilege than meeting his President, and return visits to our home towns were occasions none of us will ever forget". The repeated platitudes are so banal that one can't help suspecting a concealed cynicism or sense of humour. And yet, aside from schoolboy jokes on the launching pad

("No handball playing in here" was the notice stuck on the instrument panel in John Glenn's tiny Mercury capsule), there is no hint of a sense of humour. If there is anything behind the naivety it is totally concealed, and by the end of the book one realizes that the dialogue in Kubrick's *2001* was positively pregnant with meaning and vitality, by comparison.

The technical aspects of spaceflight are glossed over with the same superficiality. "I was never really happy with the solution to the unavoidable problem of human waste disposal" Grissom writes, tantalisingly omitting to say just what the 'solution' was. "One hell of a headache, but a short one!" is the quip, as an ejection seat under test plows straight through an escape hatch that should have opened, but didn't. Meanwhile the unanswered questions accumulate: he mentions astronaut public relations training, but gives no details. He makes the selection of astronaut crews for new missions sound intuitive and vague. He implies there is no psychological test system which a man has to pass before becoming an astronaut—anyone with a test pilot record of 1000 hours flying time in jets just can't be

'psycho', asserts Grissom. His childhood, and those of his astronaut buddies, are described principally in terms of who their fathers were; there is little or no mention of the mothers. Perhaps this is the only significant psychological clue in the whole book.

As a document of the space age, I suppose *Gemini!* has a certain importance if only because of its authenticity. (Though edited, it is undoubtedly a basically genuine autobiographical account.) The question of how seriously to take Grissom can never be answered. But suppose we believe in his complete naivety, his bland acceptance of the system in which he is involved, right or wrong, his wholesome pride in his family and country, and the total nondescriptness of his character. We are left, then, with the image of the greatest and most exciting technological project in history, involving thousands of highly creative, intelligent people, dedicated to sending out explorers whose dullness and lack of perception (when it comes to anything outside of meter readings and reaction times) seems to be a carefully cultivated quality. It is unfitting that such men should be our first emissaries to other worlds. ■

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A binder is also available for the thirteen issues preceding no. 186 (the 13 issues published in magazine format after the change from digest size) at 15s. each post free (or \$2).

New readers can order the 13 issues binder (no. 2) containing issues no. 173 to 185 for an inclusive price of £3 10s. only post free (or \$11). A LIMITED NUMBER OF THESE SETS ONLY are available, so order quickly. If you wish to see a contents list, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to the address below.

Order form DELETE WHERE NOT APPLICABLE.

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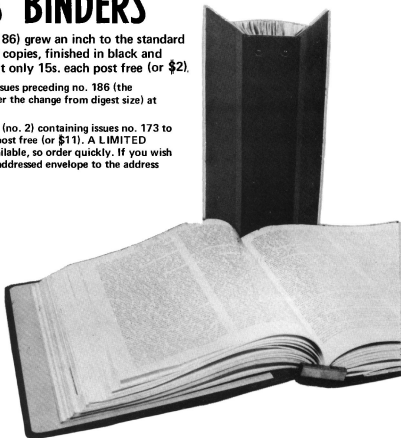
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