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going back to the 1880s. In Western Europe all students are political animals but in America a

writer is a writer is a writer," Malaquais said. "But that curiosity began in Paris, and he became

VERY interested. Being young and perturbed on an intellectual level by the ^Cold ^Wwar, he was open-

minded to a degree. He was willing at least to confront and combat." One of the

Malaquais suggested was *Report of Court Proceedings in the Case of the Anti-*

Right" and Trotskyites (1938), a verbatim transcript of the Moscow show trials of Stalin's

enemies, real and perceived. The show trials and the executions that followed led many

Communist sympathizers to turn against Russia. Another title Malaquais recommended was

Stalin: A Critical Survey of Bolshevism (1939), which traced the tumultuous history of Marxism

in Russia up to the outbreak of WWII. It was written by Boris Souvarine, a fervent anti-Stalinist

Malaquais knew in Paris. These two books and several others on Malaquais' list obliterated what

remained of Mailer's belief in the Soviet Union as the foundation of a new world culture. For the

rest of his life he referred to Russian history, including the history of Russian Jews, with great

familiarity. Occasionally, when he was criticizing some blockhead politician or public figure, he

would compare himself, with a wink, to Georgi Plekhanov, Lenin's teacher and one of the first

revolutionary Bolsheviks, who was unafraid to scold his former student.

Malaquais' flinty geopolitical analyses impressed Mailer, but not his friends. Irving

Howe, the founding editor of *Dissent* and a long-time flag-bearer for socialism, admired

Malaquais' *War Diary* (1944), but found him to be "opinionated, cocksure, and dogmatic." He

thought Malaquais was joking when he said there were only two genuine Marxists left: himself

and Marc Chirik, a key figure in Malaquais' novel, *World without Visa* (1948). When Mailer

brought Hellman and Malaquais together, "it was a disaster," he said, "They couldn't bear each

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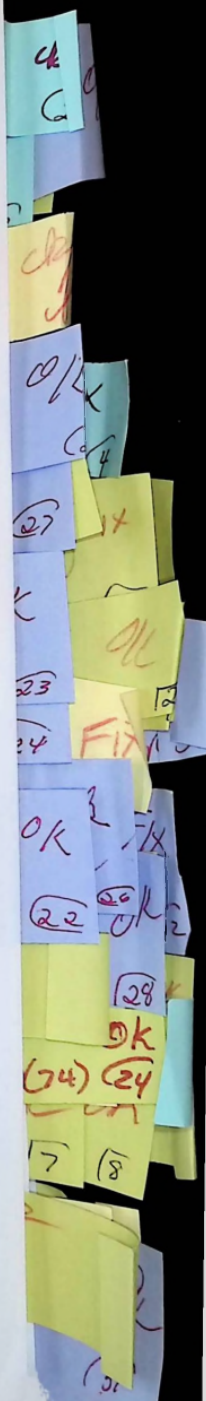
other." Cy Rembar didn't much care for Malaquais, and Mickey Knox, a young Hollywood actor who became a close friend when Mailer returned to Hollywood, found Malaquais to be "unrelenting." Before Mailer met Malaquais, his guide to Marxism had been Charles Devlin, and good ... p70 back in Brooklyn after the election, he arranged for him to meet Malaquais. Ma Devlin was a specialist on the Russian economy, but Malaquais found him to be constipated Stalinist hack." It was child's play, he said, "to destroy him." The meeting with Devlin reinforced Mailer's recognition that he had been led down the primrose path by the communists who had infiltrated the Wallace campaign. mbm 112

Wallace's horrendous showing, coupled with the ongoing popularity of *Naked* in first place on the *Times* best seller list, through November 19) led to a period of self-reflection for Mailer. When he went out in public, admirers surrounded him, and given the wonderful reviews *Naked* had received, he felt like a champ, bulging with self-esteem. "There were times," he said, when *Naked* seemed like "the greatest book written since *War and Peace*." But in his sessions with Malaquais, he was painfully reminded of the limitations of his knowledge, and when he looked in the mirror, he saw someone, he said, who was "a bit of an imposter," as much a fraud as a champ. Many times over the years, Mailer looked back at that young man who felt unworthy, for example, in 1979: "You're 25 and you've written one good book that you wrote on a streak that was a natural book, and then you don't know what you want to do with yourself after that. It was a terribly tricky time." He began to examine the assets and liabilities of fame. Two things were certain: First, women were attracted to him as never before. "Celebrity," he said, "was great for one-night stands." Second, fame "cauterizes a lot of your past". It was, he said, using another medical term, "a lobotomy to my past." Although the phrase had not yet been

invented, Mailer was having an identity crisis. There were two Norman Mailers. One enjoyed the attention and savored what he called the "ego-gobblings" of celebrity, while the other suspected that the compliments he received were ploys of phonies. "I felt as if I was secretary to someone named Norman Mailer," he said, "and to meet him, they had to meet me first."

I was a dependable pain in the ass to a great many people, because all through the first year I'd keep saying, 'Oh, now I will never know the experience of other people.' [. . .] I kept wanting to go back to what seemed like a sweet past when only a few people knew that I had talent. A young writer, if he is unknown, can be at a party and watch what everyone is doing. If he has a marvelous ear for dialogue, he can wake up the next morning and remember all that was said and how it was said. He is a bird on a branch. Sees like a bird and writes books that can be extraordinarily well observed. But once you are successful, especially if it happens quickly, it's as if the bird is now an emu. It cannot fly. It's big and it grows haunches and fore shoulders and a mane: Lo and behold, it is a lion. And everyone is looking at the lion, including the birds. But it is a lion with the heart of a bird and the mind of a bird.

Mailer wrote to Sinclair Lewis in mid-November and told him he was getting started on a new novel, "a big fat one," although it does not appear that he began until after he and Bea moved to Jamaica, Vermont, near several ski resorts. They leased a house from January to May of 1949. Mailer spent November and December in Brooklyn reading and meeting with Malaquais, who later came for long visits in Vermont. After six weeks of research and outlining, he began work in mid-February. The idea novel came from the week in October that Mailer had



spent in Indiana gathering information on the case of the college professor who was fired. The working title was "The Devil's Advocate," but he also referred to it as the "strike novel." For raw material, he relied on notes and clippings on a contested strike and subsequent blacklisting of Indiana union workers. Cy Rembar sent him material on the 1947 Taft-Hartley Act, which labor leaders viewed as unfairly restricting the right to organize and strike. Mailer struggled to embody the strike in narrative form, but finally, realizing that he didn't know "a damn thing about labor unions," abandoned it. The 21 pages he eked out tell the story of the death of the matriarch of a Ukrainian union family, and the visit of a labor organizer. His name is William McLeod, the same name he will use for the central character of his second novel, *Barbary Shore*, which would grow out of "Mrs. Guinevere," begun in Paris. "Full of second-novel panic," he worked on the manuscript through April, interrupting it only for a brief visit to New York at the end of March to participate in an international peace conference, sponsored by the National Council of Arts, Sciences and the Professions. It was called the Waldorf Conference, after the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel where it was held.

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The conference, which ran from March 25-27, brought together close to 3,000 delegates from around the world to discuss ways to promote peace. Although this soured America's attitude toward Russia at this moment was one of fear and loathing, newspapers and magazines of the day, with few exceptions (most notably, the *New York Times*), attacked the gathering as a communist front designed to alter American foreign policy. The hotel was literally surrounded by right-wing groups such as the American Legion and Catholic War Veterans, but also by refugees from Eastern Europe protesting Russian-backed takeovers of eastern European countries.

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The protestors had come, Mailer wrote later, "out of the dream that the doors of the Waldorf might open to them, and they could smash some motherfucking reds, loot the silk of that overrich hotel and perhaps drag back to Queens or Staten Island a real live Russian to char over a slow fire on their barbecue pit." The Russian delegation included the world-famous composer, Dmitri Shostakovich, who was pale and nervous in all his appearances. It was reported that he agreed to attend only after Stalin made a phone call to him. The American delegates and sponsors, many of whom Mailer knew, were well-known Russian sympathizers, "Stalinoids," as Dwight Macdonald referred to them: Henry Wallace, Langston Hughes, Arthur Miller, Lillian Hellman, Dashiell Hammett, Dorothy Parker, Charles Chaplin, Frank Lloyd Wright and many others. Several Harvard professors attended, including Mailer's psychology instructor, Henry A. Murray and F.O. Matthiessen, with whom Mailer had campaigned for Wallace. *Life* magazine, now rabidly anti-Soviet, ran a five-page story about the conference that included a double-page spread, "Dupes and Fellow Travelers Dress Up Communist Fronts," consisting of photographs of 50 prominent conferees. A smiling Mailer, in a white T-shirt, was one of them.

Mailer's ten-member panel on writing and publishing in the Starlight Roof Room drew a packed audience of over 800. It was chaired by Louis Untermeyer, who had been involved in a public debate with Sidney Hook, a strident anti-Stalinist and head of a new organization, Americans for Intellectual Freedom. Some members of A.I. F.—Robert Lowell, Mary McCarthy, Elizabeth Hardwick and Dwight Macdonald—were in the audience and challenged the Russians on the panel. Malaquais was also there. When Untermeyer made a comment about Hook being a dirty four-letter word, Mailer recalled that Lowell, "trembling, full of rage," objected strenuously. As each speaker was introduced, including Matthiessen, there were cries of

"Mailer, Mailer." When he did speak, he said that he was at the conference as a Trojan Horse and had been uncertain about whether to come at all. Later, he called his speech a "melancholy debauch" and recalled that he was almost weeping. He said that "both Russia and America are moving radically towards state capitalism, and that the differences between them finally will be cultural differences, minor deviations, and that actually there is no future in fighting for one side or the other." He concluded by warning that if the movement continued, "we would be put in concentration camps." The only thing writers can do, he said, is to tell the truth and perhaps what is written will affect "the next turmoils of world history."

Norman Podhoretz, in an oft-quoted comment, said that Mailer "must always work everything out for himself and by himself, as though it were up to him to create the world anew over and over again in his own experience." Podhoretz's insight is accurate, generally. Mailer was a lifelong autodidact. But the exception that proves the rule was the political tutorial Malaquais conducted for Mailer from October 1948 through March 1950. His conversations with the younger man, and the books he gave him to read, convinced Mailer that Stalin was a monster and—the central point—that the Russian and American economic systems were implicitly geared for war. He was now ready for immersion in the bible of revolutionary socialism—the writings of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. At Malaquais' urging, he began reading *Das Kapital* after the Waldorf Conference. By his own accounting, he spent a year "living more closely in the history of Russia from 1917 to 1937 than in the events of my own life." It should be remembered that Mailer never took a history course in college, and until he met Malaquais, Spengler was his chief historical guide. The model of cultural growth, blossoming and decay that

he absorbed from *Decline of the West* was amply confirmed by Malaquais' interpretation of the revolutions, wars and catastrophes of the twentieth century.

Mailer said that he "felt like a rodent" at the conference because he was leaving the Progressive Party. Indeed, he was booed at the end of his speech just as vigorously as he had been cheered before he began. He was unsure if he had spoken "out of a new and deep political conviction," or if he was "afraid of the final wrath of those psychically starved hoodlums on the street outside." When Irving Howe praised his bravery and candor, therefore, he was quite pleased. "I was immediately able to recognize the intellectual fingerprint of who was behind that speech—Jean Malaquais," ^{MBM 114} Howe said. When Mailer went outside, Dwight Macdonald came up to him on the street and told him he liked his speech. As Malaquais' influence waned somewhat in the mid-1950s, Macdonald would become one of his intellectual godfathers. Lowell and, especially, Howe also became close to him after the conference. friends.

Back in Vermont, Mailer tried to work on *Barbary Shore*. There were no money worries. *Naked* had sold 197,000 copies in eight months, earning him about \$80,000 in royalties. Only Lloyd C. Douglas' book about St. Peter, *The Big Fisherman*, sold more copies. The Mailers, ~~however,~~ banked most of the royalty money. Hellman was still working on the play, but said she wouldn't have anything ready until the fall. The plan was to ski, write and watch Bea grow larger. She was about three months pregnant by the end of March. Mailer had written to Fig requesting him to address mail to him as Kingsley Mailer so he could "stay incognito to avoid all the literary teas." Progress on the novel was very slow; he was having difficulty finding the right tone. As he had explained in a letter to his Harvard friend Larry Weiss, his approach alternated

between "the theoretical and empirical," or between the realistic methods employed so successfully in *Naked* and the abstractions delivered to him by Malaquais. He had also been stirred by Kafka's *The Castle* and told Fig he saw it as "an adult fairy tale." He would attempt to meld all of these approaches in *Barbary Shore*.

There was something else on his mind: Hollywood. He had been lionized there and met celebrities like Hedy Lamar, Burt Lancaster and John Garfield as well as up-and-coming actors like Shelley Winters, Farley Granger and Marlon Brando. Winters always claimed that she introduced Mailer to her roommate, Marilyn Monroe, in 1948, but Mailer could not remember meeting her. He did remember another woman that he met, Lois Mayfield Wilson, a blonde graduate student from Kentucky, whom he met at a Stanford party given by the Linenthals. She recalled that she left the party with him, and they had an erotic wrestling match in the car, one that became the basis for Sergius O'Shaugnessey's tussle with Lulu Meyers in *The Deer Park*. Mailer gave her the pseudonym of "Junebug." They were deeply attracted to each other, and went on to have a very long and long-distance affair.

Malaquais, had worked as a screenwriter in Mexico and France. Mailer asked him and his wife Galy to join them in California. Bea, who loved films as much as her husband did, and was equally gregarious, was eager to go. Mailer's desire to sell *Naked* to a film studio was another consideration. In late April, he wrote to Cy about sale possibilities and also asked for help getting screenwriting jobs, noting that Malaquais had "a good flair for plots which I do not." His conditions were \$2,000 a week and a start date of September so that he could finish *Barbary Shore*. Because of Bea's pregnancy, she would fly and he would drive.

Barbara Probst Solomon told Manso that one night in Paris after *Naked's* extraordinary success was known, she was present when Barney said to Bea, somewhat bluntly, "You're going back to America, Norman's going to be famous, and you're going to have a lot of competition." He advised her to dress well and look attractive if she wanted the marriage to work. Bea blanched. Whether her clothes had anything to do with their marital difficulties is doubtful, but after they returned from France, their marriage did become "iffy," as Mailer recalled. When Bea got pregnant, he said, "I thought maybe that would improve the marriage, and it didn't, of course. In fact, the marriage probably was worse afterward, because I hated having a baby; I felt trapped. I wanted freedom, I wanted to be screwing a lot of girls and here I am stuck. So it was all of that. So we ended up with this ... and then after she [daughter Susan] was born, it just kept getting worse and worse. And I kept having more and more affairs on the side, whenever and wherever I could." One of the women was Lois Wilson, who Mailer got in touch with when they reached California. Barney, a bit of a womanizer himself, was correct about the competition.

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Mailer left in early June for California, driving via Chicago. His sister was working in Chicago and, for a few days, he visited with her and Adeline, now married to "Lucky" Naiman. At his request, she took him to the Union Stockyards, which gave Carl Sandburg the opening line—"Hog butcher for the world"—for his poem, "Chicago." The vast abattoir was fascinating and horrible. Adeline wanted to go right home after the tour, but he insisted, she said, on "eating some meat to prove that he had not been tarnished or damaged by the experience." After a week's visit with Fig and Ecey in Arkansas, Mailer drove through Texas, New Mexico and Arizona to California. In late June, he arrived in "the ugliest city in the whole world," as he

described it to Fig. He rented an apartment in Chateau Marmont, the castle-like hotel overlooking Sunset Blvd. where celebrities have misbehaved since 1931. When Bea joined him, she was more than seven months pregnant. Mailer wrote a cheerful letter to Malaquais in early July saying that he thought they had a chance to "reap the wind yet, the golden wind." He had been seeing Montgomery Clift and interested him in the idea of making Stendhal's *The Red and the Black* into a film, with Clift as Julien Sorel. Bea flew in shortly after Mailer found housing; Malaquais would not arrive for a couple of months; he was only at page 380 in his translation of *Naked*.

✓ Shortly after the Mailers left Vermont, the British edition of *Naked* was published by Allan Wingate, ~~was published~~. There was an immediate spike of criticism, led by the *Sunday Times*. On May 1, in a front-page editorial, the paper said that the novel was "incredibly foul and beastly." It should be suppressed, the editorial continued, adding that "no decent man could leave it lying about the house without shame that his womenfolk were reading it." Mailer responded in a telephone interview with the Associated Press by saying that the London paper was entitled to its opinion, but that the obscenity in the novel "is like a bell ringing in the background while you work. Before long you don't notice it." The British Attorney General, Sir Hartley Shawcross, speaking on the floor of Parliament, called the book "foul, lewd and revolting," but declined to prosecute it. Many British reviewers called the book brilliant, and the oil and water of indignant condemnation and unqualified praise led to tremendous sales in England after it was published on May 9. By the end of 1949, 80,000 copies had been sold. Mailer took note of how the controversy increased sales. The fight against suppressing *Naked* was led by his Wingate editor, André Deutsch, a Hungarian Jew who irritated the British publishing establishment by making

end runs. Mailer said winning the fight to publish *Naked* was "the biggest move" of Deutsch's life. The novel's success encouraged Deutsch and another Wingate editor, Diana Athill, to form their own firm, André Deutsch, with which Mailer would later affiliate.

Perhaps the shrewdest British reviewer was V.S. Pritchett, the eminent short story writer and critic. He found the obscenity flap overblown, noting that "respectable society cannot expect to indulge in two major wars in one generation without getting a flood of raw documents about what goes on in the minds and comes out of the mouths of ordinary men who are sent out punctually to these slaughters." Pritchett praised the novel, especially the long patrol, which he said was done perfectly. But he found it to be too long and thought Mailer could have done without the "Time Machine" episodes entirely. Criticism about Mailer's long-windedness would be heard again.

The length of *Naked* did not trouble George Orwell, who called the novel in a 1950 letter "the best war book of the last war yet." Mailer ^{admired} had great admiration for Orwell's work and praised his "profoundly prophetic" vision of the future in his 1949 novel, *1984*; his influence is obvious. Mailer said that Orwell had accomplished what he was trying to do in *Barbary Shore*: "combine the political essay with fiction." He worked hard on it for his first two months in "Lotus Land," as he called it, and finished the first draft on August 16 as Bea approached term. Hellman was visiting Hollywood scouting for male leads in the play and met with Mailer several times. Most of his time, however, was spent trying to work out a final agreement with Norma Productions, which had optioned the film rights of *Naked*. The company was a joint effort of Burt Lancaster, who Mailer ^{loved} admired enormously, and Harold Hecht, who handled the business side of the partnership. Hecht wouldn't give Mailer the level of script oversight that he wanted

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 and the haggling went on for weeks. Lancaster was slated to play Lt. Hearn, but even this casting

✓ was insufficient to break the logjam. Mailer finally got approval, but when he sa

✓ written by two Hollywood veterans, he didn't like it, and the deal ultimately fell

in part by war clouds over Korea, where fighting broke out in June 1950.

Sometime shortly after the Mailers arrived, Shelley Winters asked for his help. She wanted desperately to get a role in an upcoming film, *A Place in the Sun* (1951), based on Theodore Dreiser's *An American Tragedy* (1925), which George Stevens was directing and producing for Paramount. According to Winters, after a dinner at a Mexican restaurant with Mailer and Burt Lancaster (with whom she was having an affair), she asked Mailer to explain the novel to her, especially the character Roberta Alden, a factory girl who is murdered by the protagonist, Clyde Griffiths (played by Clift in the film). ~~She wanted the role badly.~~ After Lancaster left, Winters asked Mailer to come to her apartment. Mailer remembered that he had his "own little agenda tucked into the middle of it. Hey, I'll be alone with this blonde actress and maybe good things will come of it," but Winters was "totally unsexy" that night. She was very worried and looked "ready to go in for a strong case of the weeps," he said. Winters was impressed by Mailer's blue eyes, and for several hours, she said, "the young handsome Norman Mailer talked to me about the inner workings of that girl's mind and what Dreiser wanted the reader to feel about the whole American syndrome of success at any price. Norman knew so much about Dreiser that I got the feeling he had been his protégé." Mailer said that he gave her the key character trait: Alden is "a girl completely without artifice." Winters used the line with Stevens, got the role, and did a magnificent job in it. The film won seven Academy Awards, including best director, and Clift and Winters were nominated for Oscars. She told and retold the

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story of Mailer coaching her many times over the years, always acknowledging with gratitude his role in launching her career.

Barbara was visiting when Jean and Galy arrived on August 22. The Mailers were now living in a seven-room house at 1601 Marlay Drive in the foothills just beyond Sunset Blvd. Jean and Galy moved into the small apartment over the garage. Six days later Bea gave birth to Susan. Malaquais was named godfather. Mailer told his parents that, ~~at first~~, the six-pound baby "looked like a prize fighter at the end of a fight," but the swelling quickly disappeared and now she looked "astonishingly like you, mother." Writing to Fig a few weeks later to announce the birth, his tone was different. He said he had been "running to the hospital, dicking around, getting bawled out by my wife who acts infinitely superior to me now, and just generally suffering." No scriptwriting jobs had turned up; negotiations with Hecht were inching; *Barbary Shore* needed more work; and the new father was, temporarily, a satellite. He continued reading *Kapital* for intellectual ballast. Malaquais was still translating *Naked*, but had time for political discussions.

Mailer had dreamed of being a screenwriter when he was at Harvard and now he had his chance. Sometime around mid-October, Cy and Mailer's new agent, George Landy, arranged a meeting with Samuel Goldwyn at MGM. Malaquais said that the first meeting with the legendary producer was "high comedy." Goldwyn met them in his bathrobe in a huge living room with dummy books on the walls. Malaquais gave an overview of the script they wanted to write and Goldwyn asked for a two-page outline, which they refused, knowing it could be stolen. Shortly afterwards, they got a \$50,000 contract—a \$5,000 advance and \$15,000 for each of three revisions. They were also given offices and secretaries. "The day after the contract was signed," Malaquais said, "a notice appeared in *Variety*, and I became overnight a VIP of sorts, trailing in

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Norman's shadow: doors swung open, and there I was, invited to all the parties." The working title of the script was "The Character of the Victim."

Inspired by *Miss Lonelyhearts* (1933), Nathanael West's novel about a compassionate advice columnist, the Mailer-Malaquais script is the story of two disc jockeys, Peter Pity and Victor Vision. By happenstance, the two receive a record from someone seeking advice. Eventually, they solicit records on the air, and their show becomes a tremendous success—anticipating the "reality" television shows of the 2000s. Complications ensue, and Pity, the Good Samaritan, is killed by a guest on the show. Mailer and Malaquais worked on the script for a month and produced 90 pages. When they showed it to Goldwyn, he had already begun conversations with Montgomery Clift and Charles Boyer about playing the lead roles. But as Malaquais recalled, "He wanted it changed so that good sentiments would be rewarded and bad sentiments would be punished." ^{MBM 119} Mailer remonstrated with Goldwyn, telling professional writer and would not have his work tampered with by hacks. a good while until Goldwyn said, "Mailer, please stop this professional wr ^{religh.} writing," a comment Mailer came to ^{admire}. Then Goldwyn offered to buy the script. They refused and retained the rights. In retrospect, Mailer said that the script "stank. It was half-art, ^{CNM 18-19 (18)} half-commercial, the sort of thing you can delude yourself about for a long time. After Goldwyn's death, Mailer said that he "treated me well—if eccentrically—hurrah!—a ^E outrageously fond of his memory." The same week in late November that the break ^{CNM 18-19} Goldwyn occurred, Mailer got a letter from his father.

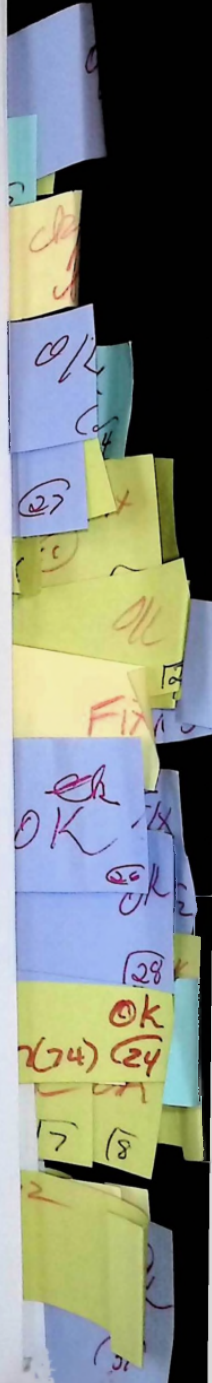
Given his huge royalties and his father's unquenchable gambling habit, Mailer had been half expecting the letter. Barney's opening line was: "I want you to give me a loan of \$3,000.00!"

OUCH!!” He went on to say that he knew he was putting his request “rather brusquely and this carries with it the appropriate sense of alarm. Well, there is no alarm, and if I put it this way, it’s only that I want to get around that old characteristic of mine of being timid when it comes to asking a favor of my son—or anyone else. Call it false pride—or what you will, but I always seem to go through a sense of shameful emotions when I have to ask you for a monetary favor.” He drops his indirections only once, and that is in a doubly underlined and vehement injunction not to tell Fan of this request. The reason for his loan is never mentioned. Mailer answered immediately, on Thanksgiving Day 1949:

If I ever had any doubt as to where I got my writing ability from, I know now finally that it comes from you. Your last letter was a masterpiece in which every line and every word is perfect—I doubt whether I have ever written two pages as good as that myself.

However, being a practitioner of the written word myself, I have come to understand a little about the emotional processes that go into writing, and so I find that I cannot accept your letter completely. For while it is a masterful document of the English colonel writing to his son about one of those bagatelles—a gambling debt—I finish it by reminding myself that you are not an English colonel but a Jewish accountant in Brooklyn, and that it is time you grew up.

I must confess that I have little hope in this direction. If I had I’d probably spend a great deal of time upbraiding you—I would scream about the three thousand dollars, would appeal to you as a grandfather (the money represents two years of college for Susan) would complain as a son (I figured out today that



when I work in Hollywood for a thousand dollars a week, it represents after paying agent's and lawyer's fees, income tax, and subtracting living expenses, no more than three hundred dollars each seven days are saved. Thus this sum represents ten weeks of very unpleasant work to me.) But actually, I've always understood you better than Mother. There's no use upbraiding you because your eyes look away, your mind wanders, and your mouth gets sullen. One's a fool to nag a little boy.

Mailer tells his father he will pay the \$3,000 but insists that Barney tell the bookies that this is the last time he will pay. He adds that if Barney tries to invade any of the accounts of the customers of Mailer and Troll, Barney's new accounting firm, "I shall probably let you go to prison, but in any case I shall never speak to you again. And I shall tell Barbara everything." The \$3,000 should not be seen as a debt because Barney will try to win it back and then owe his son \$6,000. He ends by noting that "my own vices are quite the equal of yours—but because the situation is intolerable, and I do not intend to be burdened with it for the rest of my life." The letter infuriated Barney and he promptly ran his debt to the bookies up to \$5,000. Dave had written Barney off after years of backstopping him and now Mailer, with his new wealth, became Barney's guarantor. He paid his father's debt.

Mailer's father was adamant about keeping Fan in the dark because he had avoided (or perhaps dealt with) any significant gambling debts during the war years, and now hoped to convince her that he had beaten his addiction. Fan was still vigilant, but whenever she tried to ferret out evidence of Barney playing poker or betting on the ponies, he would parry her probes. On one occasion, Mailer, in a pseudo-British accent, imitated his father's feigned irritation: "Oh Fan, are you going to bring that up again? What's the use of us being together if you are always

referring to that former problem?" Mailer used a similarly indignant tone when he was questioned about his infidelities by Norris, his last wife, as she recounts in her memoir, *A Ticket to the Circus* (2010). His infidelities are, in fact, the vices to which he refers in his letter. They are also the reason Mailer believed that he was exactly like Barney: he was also a secret addict, not to gambling, but to women.

✓ ^{Lennox} Shortly before he died Mailer told ~~a friend~~ "When in doubt about motivation, *cherchez la femme*." Barney's double life gave Mailer a model and even sanction for his own. His infidelities were numerous, but they were not motivated solely, or even mainly, by his desire for sex, although it was always strong. His thirst for knowledge and new experience were, at bottom, the final cause, the *telos*, of Mailer's duplicities. If risk were involved, so much the better; it added sauce. Lust partnered with curiosity. In his mind, the veins that novelists had been mining for over a century were petering out. Sex and violence were the last lodes. This meant exploring every kind of sexual activity and every sort of violence. There were countervailing factors, of course, and his children and wives (Norris especially), his sister Barbara, and Fan, the rock of family solidarity, would have a moderating influence on his philandering. Barney played an emblematic role, one not incongruent, as Mailer might have put it, with a comment he made toward the end of his life: "Whatever value my works have comes from my Dad going against the tide. My mother was in the center of the current."

Barney and Fan came to Hollywood in the late fall to see their granddaughter. Mailer squired them around and introduced them to Chaplin, which pleased Fan greatly. Their visit marked the beginning of the Hollywood experiment going sour. Barney pinched a few girls,

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according to Knox, including his first wife, Georgette, which raised hackles. Malaquais' self-importance and his influence on Mailer angered Fan. She said he was "a sponger" who was taking advantage of her son. Knox, who Fan also disliked, found Malaquais to be "very hostile and aggressive," although he conceded that he knew his Russian history. Barbara, who had come earlier, also found fault with Malaquais because he was harshly critical of Mailer's occasionally redundant style in *Naked*. Bea didn't like Malaquais at first, finding him to be pompous, but then came to admire his intellectual qualities. "I even fell a little bit in love with him," she remembered. At the same time, she seemed to be falling out of love with her husband. To Fan, she "was the unhappiest woman in the world" because of the adulation he received. Thinking back to that time, Mailer remembered the weather: "Smog rose every day," he said.

At Christmas, the Mailers threw a party and invited a large crowd. "It was," Mailer said, "the nearest I ever came to having a Hollywood celebrity party." Mailer sent telegrams to anyone he thought might want to meet the author of *Naked*. Bogart was there, as were Chaplin Goldwyn, Clift, Ginger Rogers, Cecil B. DeMille, Elizabeth Taylor, Adolphe Menjou, March, John Huston, Jean and Galy, Knox, John Ford, Victor McLaglen, Gene Kelly, Blair, and Winters, who came with Brando. Before the night was over Malaquais had gotten into an argument with Chaplin about the U.S. and Russia. Chaplin's position was that each country should have its own sphere of influence, which Malaquais found laughable. "Look, Mr. Chaplin," Malaquais said, "as far as being an actor, you are [a] genius, but when it comes to politics, you are a nincompoop." Malaquais' candor seems to have endeared him to Chaplin, and he later invited Malaquais to dinner. Accounts of the party do not entirely agree, but one

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incident, reported by Winters, points to the ambiguous position that Mailer now occupied in Hollywood. When Brando started to leave, Mailer came up to him and encouraged him to stay. Brando responded, "Norman, ^{Mailer} what the fuck are you doing here? You're not a screenwriter. Why aren't you ^{back} on a farm in Vermont writing your next novel? What kind of shit is this?" He did not immediately take Brando's advice. Shortly after the party, the Mailers rented a 14-room house at 7475 Hillside Drive, in the Hollywood Hills, where the parties continued.

"Norman had an enormous reputation in that town," Knox said, "as the first young writer to come out of the war." ^{say Knox} ^{MSM 121}

In poker terms, his reputation was his stack, and he it. After Mailer bought back the screenplay from Goldwyn, his plan was to sell the word got around that things had soured at MGM, and its appeal diminished.

Lancaster and Hecht disintegrated, Mailer tried to sell *Naked* to the big studios or independent producers, but had no success. They also looked for more screenwriting work and almost landed a job at Twentieth-Century-Fox, but that also fell through. There were daily meetings and lunches with actors, executives and producers, all to no avail. When Hellman told him in late 1949 that she was abandoning her effort to turn *Naked* into a Broadway play, it was just one more disappointment. Mailer was learning about the bubble called reputation.

Mailer knew he had to finish *Barbary Shore* and got back to work on it in mid-March. Malaquais had finished translating *Naked* by then and in early April he and Galy left town, hastened perhaps by the discord in the house. The Mailers knew their time in Lotus Land was coming to an end. At the end of March, he told his parents that "the whole Hollywood venture has turned out to be a fairly sad mistake." To Fig, he was more direct: "Hollywood stinks," he

✓ said and then opened up to about his deteriorating relationship with Bea. She has become "the
 Mother," he said. "Never sleeps at night, pushes me around. I just carry a fucking guilt complex
 ✓ all the time." The baby, however, gave him cheer. ^{SUSAN} ~~Susie~~ is cute, he said, and laughs a lot. The
 Mailers left California in early May. They drove to Chicago to see Adeline for a few days and
 Mailer was introduced to Nelson Algren, who took him to see a police lineup. He wrote to his
 sister that *The Man with the Golden Arm* (1949) "is the best novel written in America" since
Naked, and he and Algren saw each other more than once when Mailer visited Chicago. After a
 brief stay in Brooklyn, they went to Provincetown where they rented a big house at 1 Miller Hill
 Road from June 1 through the end of September.

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Over the next six decades, Mailer would summer on Cape Cod all but a handful of years.
 From 1952, the year he and Bea divorced, until 1962, he also spent part of almost every summer
 in Mexico, where Bea had gone to live with Susan. The house where he stayed in 1950, and
 again in 1960, the Joseph Hawthorne house, stands at one of the highest points on the peninsular
 that is Provincetown. He described it in "Advertisements for Myself on the Way Out" (1959), the
 prologue to a novel about a hipster named Marion Faye that he never finished.

The house Marion purchased was on a sand dune behind the last hill overlooking the
 town, and it was isolated, especially in fall and winter, reached by a sandy road that
 dipped down one dune and up another to give a view of rolling furze, rain water ponds,
 and the ocean and beach of the back shore. In bad weather the wind was a phenomenon, a

New England wind of the lost narrow faiths that slashed through open doors, tempted shutters loose from their catch and banged them through the night, vibrated every small pane in every Cape Cod window and came soughing out of the sky with the cries of storm water in its vaults—on such nights the hundred years of the house were alive with every murderous sleep it had ever suffered: it was the kind of house in which the dogs barked insanely in bad weather, and the nurse could not rest, and the baby awoke in hysterical terror at one in the morning while the mother would feel dread at the hundred rages of her husband beside her in marriage sleep, and the house shifted and swayed to the wind like a ship in the north Atlantic seas, yes it seemed to contain every emotion that had died a frustrated death in its rooms and walls through a hundred New England winters [. . .]

The passage reflects the pain and regret Mailer remembered from those months in Provincetown, and none of his delight with the town's quirky beauty. Writing to his sister a few weeks after arrival, he said that Provincetown, unlike the rest of New England, was not "quaint goy but has a certain vigor and vulgarity of its own." Over the years, he often remarked on the freedom and energy he found in this slightly nutty, whirligig resort, where lovers were lost and found in the bars and joints along Commercial Street. When Mailer went into The Old Colony Bar, he was surrounded by admirers, young women among them, who were as interested in one-night stands as was the handsome young author with a wife and a baby waiting for him in the house on the hill. Bea was working seriously, he told Barbara, on piano playing, and was also translating a long political document, "Socialism and Barbary," written by Malaquais and some Trotskyite associates.

However distracted, Mailer pushed ahead on the novel, working in the mornings and producing three pages of typescript a day. When Fan and Barney came for a visit in July, they "almost drove me nuts," he told Adeline, "and I acted like a complete bastard, almost incapable of being civil to either of them." After the opening comments about Provincetown in his letter to Barbara, he castigates her for spending time reading Henry Miller, who, he said, "fulfills none of the qualifications of the serious writer." This is precisely what Mailer was straining to be in the summer of 1950: a class-conscious, committed-to-social-change writer. As he told Harvey Breit in 1951, "If a writer really wants to be serious he has to become intellectual, and yet nothing is harder." Henry Miller was a serious writer and social critic with a prose style that come to envy, but Miller loathed politics. When Mailer rediscovered him in the 1950s, he elevated him to the high plateau of literary eminence occupied by his literary heroes: Farrell, Dos Passos, Hemingway and Melville. But at that moment, Mailer saw Miller's Rabelaisian adventures as frivolous.

He finished the second draft of *Barbary Shore* on August 15 and, a few weeks later, they moved to Putney, Vermont, not far from where they had lived in 1949. It was a last attempt to salvage the marriage. For \$9,000, they bought a 150-year-old farmhouse with a dozen rooms and a big barn, "such a bargain," Mailer wrote to Adeline. But it put the left-wing couple into a guilty mood: "To own something! Oh, Christ. We'll probably have to be psychoanalyzed." Undergoing psychoanalysis was something that Mailer began to consider during this period. His absorption in the failure of the Russian Revolution and its aftermath is reflected in the novel's lengthy debates between McLeod, ^{an} the ex-Soviet agent now to the left of Trotsky, and a sadistic F. B. I. agent,

Leroy Hollingsworth, in a Brooklyn boardinghouse. But Mailer had also become aware of promptings that had nothing to do with Marx, Engels or Malaquais. He felt as if he was "not writing the book myself," but that it was being written by his unconscious, which, he said, "was much more interested in other matters: murder, suicide, orgy, psychosis, all the themes I discuss in *Advertisements*. Since the gulf between these conscious and unconscious themes was vast and quite resistant to any quick literary coupling, the tension to get a bridge across resulted in the peculiar feverish hothouse atmosphere of the book."

The gulf was hardly bridged and even Mailer's most enthusiastic readers were disappointed. Speaking of the novel's bad reviews, Mailer said, "What nobody has ever understood is that *Barbary Shore* is my most autobiographical novel." Among the first three novels, there can be no debate. The novel is set in Brooklyn Heights and the narrator, Mickey Lovett, an amnesiac war veteran, whose roots are as cauterized as Mailer's, lives in an attic room identical to the one where Mailer wrote *Naked*. Mrs. Guinevere, described by Philip Bufithis as "brazen, touchy, touching, trifling, pathetic and gamey [...] bewildered and bewildering," is modeled on Mailer's buxom, redheaded Irish landlady, whose curves, according to Norman Rosten, were hard to miss. McLeod's political philosophy is derived root and branch from Malaquais, but his self-lacerating Irish wit, obsessive neatness and "quinine tongue" came from Charlie Devlin. Mailer later said that he put "Malaquais' philosophy in Devlin's body." McLeod's long-windedness also belongs to Malaquais, who could hold the floor for hours in debate. What completely destroyed any small chance the novel had for a sympathetic reception was timing: it was published on May 24, 1951, almost exactly at the start of the Korean War, a period when anything that offered a socialistic alternative was abominated.

The novel's mash-up of a plot resulted in the worst reviews Mailer would ever receive. There are no satisfactory links between the realistic but wearisome disquisitions of McLeod and Hollingsworth on "[s]tate profit and state surveillance, state-enforced poverty and state-endowed wealth," which comprise most of the latter part of the novel, and Lovett's surreal dream visions. For example, he remembers living in a barracks surrounded by wire and marching at five a.m. to a breakfast of bread, hot water and porridge deprived of salt.

That done, we marched beyond the enclosure and saw the dawn from down a long road lined with sentries and barbed wire. It was a cruel walk and at the end was a tremendous factory, almost new, but the windows were shattered, the roof of one wing was stripped, and the machinery did not always function. There we worked, hand on a lever to punch and press, and next to us, though in the range of our eyes, were other workers with a card, and they lived in a dormitory on the far side of the factory, and were free to walk to town once work was done. We were always promised that we would be allowed to join them if only . . . if only we would produce more than our fellows.

This Orwellian evocation, one of several, and half-dozen others reminiscent of Kafka, have an oblique relationship, at best, to the novel's implausible plot. Consider: three ex-Trotskyites (Lovett, McLeod and Lannie Madison, a mad Cassandra still in mourning for the murder of "the man with a beard"—Trotsky—by "the man with a pipe"—Stalin) are all sexually and/or romantically linked with a Brooklyn housewife, Mrs. Guinevere, who writes hilarious



movie treatments about a doctor with "the biggest whang on him in the whole town, and maybe he don't know it." She is married to one of the three, McLeod, and they have a three-year old child, Monina, but she cannot decide how she feels about any of them, or her other lover, Hollingsworth. The five chief characters visit each other's rooms at all hours to smoke countless cigarettes and talk about politics and history until the last third of the novel, where McLeod makes an interminable, polemical-hortatory, confession speech (the last thing Mailer worked on before submission), after which Hollingsworth offers him a slot in a protection program if he will surrender the unnamed but priceless object—Guinevere calls it a "thingamajig"—that he stole from the F. B. I. office where he worked after giving up his job as one of Stalin's hangmen. After much back-and-forth and gnashing of teeth, McLeod refuses, passes the revolutionary torch and the object to Lovett, and is shot by agents. Guinevere and Monina run off with Hollingsworth; Lannie, who has also had trysts with Lovett and Hollingsworth, disappears; and Lovett flees into the future. With the little object in his pocket and McLeod's socialist blessing on his head, he will attempt to become "the Lenin of tomorrow," the social theorist who will energize "even the most inarticulate peasant" with a revolutionary message "that will sweep the earth."

The uniformly strong praise that Mailer had received for the debates between Hearn and Cummings led him to build his second novel around another debate, albeit a far more protracted one, between McLeod and Hollingsworth. In one sense, the Lovett-McLeod discussions are a recapitulation of Mailer's political education under Professor Malaquais, who was brilliant on Russian history but uninformed on American. Both he and his student underestimated the resilience and creativity of American economic system—all excesses conceded—and the native tradition of resistance to abridgements of civil liberties—which, admittedly, at the time was

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weak. Finally, one need only compare the symbolic power of the objects on which the plots turn—the hornet's nest and the thingamajig—to see how Mailer, honorably and in places brilliantly, stumbled in his second outing.

Nevertheless, *Barbary Shore* was an advance in one important way. Mailer had begun to use language differently. In *Naked*, there are masterful descriptions of physical action, but there are also turgid and repetitive stretches, as Malaquais noted in his critique of the novel, and his style is greatly dependent on Dos Passos, Farrell and Wolfe. In his second novel, style shifted. Previously, Mailer was scornful for style. In *Barbary Shore*, it became more important and he redressed the balance between prose as a conveyor of content and prose as a stylistic invention. While he would always have reservations about style for style's sake, he now saw that a style tied to a deep sense of self was a great, if elusive, good. He would not fully achieve his characteristic style until several years later.

The completion of the third and final draft of the novel in January 1951 coincided with the breakup of the marriage. Bea was reading Simone de Beauvoir's *Second Sex* (1949) trying to write a book that Mailer said "would have been a precursor of Women's Liberation" she had finished it. She tried painting and gave it up. They had visitors in Vermont—Rosten, Knox and the actress, Eva Marie Saint, whom he was dating, Robert Gorham Davis and his wife Hope, and the Mailer family, but Bea was miserable. "Here I was with this darling little girl, the house was so gorgeous, and we had very interesting friends—writers and artists," she said, but "I was a very depressed woman. It just wasn't my bag to be the wife of a famous man without a life of my own." At Mailer's suggestion, she began to think about a career as a doctor,

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and eventually became an M.D. psychiatrist. Mailer was similarly miserable. Later, he said that one reason the marriage fell apart was that Bea "was a very strong woman."

She was perfectly prepared to go out and work for years in order to make enough money for me to stay at home and write a good many books. And if that happened, we probably would have been a happy couple of that sort, she the strong one, I the gentle one. Then what happened? I became successful so suddenly I got much more macho. My God, nothing like success for increasing the size of your muscle! I literally went from 140 to 180 pounds in one year—it wasn't all fat, it was muscle. I suddenly felt like a strong man. That altered everything between us.

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Mailer had several meetings at Rinehart about *Barbary Shore*. The meetings happy occasions, but trips were an excuse to leave Putney. Sometimes he brought Susan with him and they stayed with his parents in Brooklyn. He was drinking more now, Scotch, and his friends noticed a change in him. Adeline was still in touch with him and she saw "a growing braggadocio, lots more confidence and an ability to spar, the realization that he didn't have to try to please anybody." One evening in February 1951, he and Dan Wolf were deep into a bottle at an apartment at the 409 East 64th Street that Mailer had borrowed. "Norman was making one of his big moves," Wolf said. The breakup with Bea was impending and he could smell freedom. "I missed it," Mailer said, "and I wanted it." Wolf told him about a beautiful Spanish-Peruvian woman he knew named Adele Morales, an aspiring painter who made her living constructing

papier-mâché displays for department store windows. She and Wolf had been lovers for a short time and Wolf's friend, Ed Fancher, had more or less lived with her for three years. She was just coming off a brief affair with Jack Kerouac. Mailer was intrigued. It was late, but Wolf called her and invited her over for a drink. Mailer got on the phone and read her a quotation from Fitzgerald's unfinished novel, *The Last Tycoon* (1941). Monroe Stahr, the novel's movie-director protagonist, is beginning an affair with Kathleen Moore, the ex-mistress of a king. He feels something stirring: "[H]e listened inside himself as if something by an unknown composer, powerful and strange and strong, was about to be played for the first time." Adele was moved and agreed to take a cab and meet him. "How could I know that Scott Fitzgerald, Norman Mailer, and that cab ride would change my life forever?" she later wrote.

Because he was thinking about writing his next novel about Hollywood, it is almost impossible to imagine that *The Last Tycoon* did not give Mailer a push in that direction. Mailer's portrait of Francis Eitel, the movie-director protagonist of *The Deer Park*, clearly owes a debt to Fitzgerald's Stahr. Several weeks earlier, he had written to George Landy about getting him a screen-writing job in Hollywood. He would prefer something light, not a war film, he wrote. "A thriller, a western (Sam Croft is my credentials) and preferably a polish job, although I don't care. Actually, I'll take anything." What he really wanted was another chance to get more material for the novel.

Experience for Mailer and many of his contemporaries—James Jones, Saul Bellow, William Styron and Jack Kerouac, certainly—had a talismanic quality. Dust jackets of American novels from the 1930s to the early 1960s typically bragged about the author's experiences as a

short-order cook, reporter, fisherman, hobo, farm worker and, after World War II, veteran. A college education wasn't a drawback, but a working knowledge of Crane, London, Lewis, Steinbeck, Hemingway, Dos Passos and—the key figure—Thomas Wolfe was much more important. Coming from Boston or Philadelphia was suspect. Brooklyn or Chicago or Middletown, U.S.A. was much better. The idea was to rebel against mean-spirited Puritanism, do a hitch in the service and then bum around the country, working here and there, loafing and observing your soul, reading tattered copies of the Viking portable authors and writing lyrical but realistic prose about the view from boxcars as you rumbled through the great, mysterious American night. Then, as a matter of course, came discovery, publication, white-hot fame, Hollywood and a long happily-ever-after. Did anyone ever have such an experience? No, not in such a storybook way. But Mailer and James Jones came closer than anyone else.

Mailer learned that a first novel by Jones that was receiving the kind of intense publicity from Scribner's that *Naked* had received from Rinehart, the kind that *Barbary Shore* was not getting, as he ruefully noted. When he read the galleys of Jones' *From Here to Eternity* (1951), he was more than routinely impressed. "It knocked me down, almost knocked me out," he said. "All the while I was reading it, I had a sinking feeling, 'Well, you're no longer the most talented writer to come out of World War II. You've been replaced.'" He gave it a blurb:

It's a big fist of a book with powerful virtues and serious faults, but its good is mixed with the sometimes bad, those qualities are inseparable from the author. Jones writes with a wry compassionate anger which is individual and

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✓ borrows from no writer I know. I think his book is one of the best of the war
 ✓ novels, and in certain facets is perhaps the best.

They met soon afterwards in New York and enjoyed each other's company. "[I]t always gave me a boost to know that Jim was in town," Mailer said. They almost had to become friends, he said, because they shared unique experiences. Both were young and had written war novels set in the Pacific; both books had enjoyed fantastic sales and reviews; both became famous overnight. "So in a certain sense," Mailer said, "we felt like the touchdown twins." Although it would be brief, his relationship with Jones would be the most intense male friendship of his life.

Mailer and Adele were immediately attracted when they met that first night. After Dan Wolf went to sleep, they made love. In the morning, Adele had an impulse to leave, but then she recalled the "incredible explosion" of the night before, and wanted "this half-stranger all
 LP-68 LP-68 again, his sweet-smelling body and his beautiful cock inside me." She decided it was not
 night stand. "What I gave and took was not to be discarded with last night's drinks. He was
 LP-71 happy, I could see it in his face, and so was I." Mailer's recollection was much the same: "It was
 intense on the first night, very. Very. It was a memorable first night."

I'd had a few affairs while I was with Bea, but almost always these affairs, the sexuality was sort of analogous to my own, in other words, you could pump it up, you could tone it down, you could control it. It was very much under one's control. With Adele, there was this feeling that it was never under her control. There was a power that took her over. And so it was the first passion I'd really

encountered. And mind you, a lot of people [would] say, "What? There he was, what was his age?" Most people don't realize there's very few passionate women in the world. Especially in modern times, I don't know about ancient times, or medieval times or the Renaissance, or the Enlightenment. But by now, given the double impact of religious orthodoxy and civilization itself, a great many women see sex as something that is best controlled. And so that was the startling element in the relationship with Adele.

The affair was headlong; his marriage was over. By the end of March, Mailer and Bea had agreed to separate and sell the house in Putney. He sub-let the 64th Street apartment and was spending the majority of his time there, with Adele sleeping over regularly.

All during this time, Mailer was mulling over his idea for a Hollywood novel, but didn't want to begin it until *Barbary Shore* came out and he had absorbed the blows that he was anticipating. In the meantime, he needed to work. In January, he had done a longish piece, "The Meaning of Western Defense," written in "the third-rate Eighteenth Brumaire style" of Marx, for an English symposium on the West's military preparedness against a possible Soviet attack. Mounting a strong defense would only enrage the Russians, he argued, ergo, "Western Defense has the ultimate and abominable meaning of Western annihilation." A month later, he again confirmed his Marxism when, in answer to a question about the nature of his humanism, said he was an atheistic humanist, and added that "the particular equipment of writers like myself, to wit, Marx and Freud, are more of a cross than a crutch when it comes to embodying what one has learned from them in one's work," a point made less gently in the reviews of *Barbary Shore*.

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The Mailer and Silverman families learned of the split in April when Mailer wrote to Dave and Anne to announce it. "We had a good marriage," he said, but now it is best we part." They divided the money in the bank, and Bea went to Mexico with a new boyfriend, Steve Sanchez, a student at the New School that she had met through Dan Wolf. Susan, who was not yet two, would remain for a time in Brooklyn with Fan and Barney. While Mailer was absorbed with Adele, he still had time to answer a letter from Lois Wilson who had asked him to come to San Francisco for a visit. He said that he found himself "liking you immensely, maybe even loving you a little," and would "love to have your round sweet ass under my hands." But, he concluded, "I find it not possible to love two or three girls at once." Adele had, for the time, captured him.

Neither Mailer nor his editors at Rinehart were prepared for the almost unrelieved nastiness of the reviews, which ran ten to one, unfavorable to favorable. *Time* labeled the novel "small-beer *Nineteen Eighty-Four*" and called the novel "paceless, tasteless and graceless," a phrase that became etched on the tablets of Mailer's memory. Anthony West in the *New Yorker* said that the novel had "a monolithic, flawless badness, like Mussolini's play about Napoleon." Even the tepid praise of leftist critics like Irving Howe and Harvey Swados was mixed with negatives. The novel's over-elaborated political debate and dithering plot pleased no one, although some of the characters—Mrs. Guinevere, especially—were found to be imaginatively drawn. The British reviews, coming after the book's publication by Jonathan Cape in January 1952, were slightly better. V.S. Pritchett praised it, saying that Mailer was "the most interesting American novelist to appear since the war." In some of the reviews, in both the U.S. and

England, there was some tentative cheering for a novelist trying to break new ground. Trying to make lemonade out of lemons, someone at Rinehart had the idea of running excerpts from the best and the worst reviews side by side. It was a technique that Mailer would rely on for the remainder of his career, usually with excerpts that he personally chose. In the case of *Barbary Shore*, it may have helped a bit: the novel did make the bestseller list for three weeks after it was published on May 24. *From Here to Eternity* made number one two months earlier and remained in first place for a month after Mailer's novel had disappeared from view. The success of *Eternity* would give Mailer the desire to write a new novel that would overtop that of Jones, his fellow infantryman and touchdown twin.

Mailer had hoped that Malaquais, to whom the novel is dedicated, would find some merit in the novel. After all, Mailer recalled, he and Malaquais belonged to "a party of two," on the left wing of Trotskyism. "I took up that position with great relief because it was an island," he said. "You really could be against everything, but with an inner purity of soul." But his mentor was also a novelist of exacting standards, and he found fault. "It's a political tract, not a novel," Malaquais said. ^{SAY} "You don't make a novel with political themes or you have to be a genius. I ^{MBM 126} didn't like the book and I told Norman so." But he did not give his opinion until months after the book and the reviews appeared. Malaquais said he had not written because he didn't know what address to use. Mailer responded by noting that Malaquais had found it easily enough: "But I rather suspect that your most infuriating vice—the pomp and false dignity of a third rate Central American diplomat came to the fore—and you probably thought, 'I, Jean Malaquais, do not write a letter to be forwarded like a common beggar.' The reviews angered and depressed him, he told Malaquais. He called the reviewers "first-rate

cocksuckers," and ended defiantly, "Fuck them. If I'm any good, I'll last no matter what they write, and if I'm not any good, it doesn't matter." Mailer began to wonder for the first time since his sophomore year at Harvard if he was really a writer, and if he shouldn't consider other occupations. He signed his letter, "The Misunderstood Genius." The fall of 1951 was one of low points of his life.

He had recently rented a loft at 85 Monroe Street between the Brooklyn Bridge and Grand Street on the Lower East Side. It was a tough neighborhood and he used to carry a roll of quarters in each hand when walking home at night. One hundred feet long, twenty-five wide and four flights up, the loft cost \$30 a month. He would use such a loft, with rows of windows overlooking the East River, as the place Sergius O'Shaugnessy lives and runs his bullfighting school in his 1958 short story, "The Time of Her Time." From March to mid-June, Mailer divided his time between the loft and the borrowed apartment in mid-town Manhattan. Until the Putney house sold the following spring, he let Jean and Galy use it. Adele thought Mailer handled the reviews well, but saw "an underlying anger and depression." He bought her new clothes, a lot of black velvet, she recalled, and took her to a party where she met Charlie Chaplin, who told her she was beautiful. She said she got a good idea of what Bea had gone to parties; "women flirted with him, boldly." Adele said, "as if I wasn't there."

To prepare for the Hollywood novel, he decided he needed to see it again. Knox was driving to Hollywood to see his girlfriend, Lois Andrews, and Mailer joined him, planning to see Lois Wilson. Years later, Mailer said he had another reason for going. He wasn't nearly ready to make any commitment to Adele and was "looking for action," women. When they got close to

California, Mailer asked if they could detour so he could see the resort town of Palm Springs, where Hollywood stars and moguls often vacationed. Mickey said that they spent only about 20 minutes in the town and then got back on the highway. When he read *The Deer Park* a few years later, he saw that Mailer had caught the town's architecture, landscape and amazing accuracy.

In Hollywood, he and Mickey rented an apartment on North Vine, where Mailer saw old friends. Knox introduced him to Andrews, who he used as a model for Dorothea O'Faye in *The Deer Park*. He took notes, and soaked up all he could over the two weeks he was there, but was unable to find any studio work. Shortly after he arrived, he spent a night in bed with two women and told Adele about it in a letter. She was upset and retaliated by going to bed with a man and his wife. She wrote to Mailer about it and when he returned in mid-July, they fought. She told him that she had done it out of jealousy. As so often happened, they made up in bed. "Late said, 'he told me he had walked around for so many years feeling dead inside, feeling not but I had changed that.'" Within two weeks of his return, they decided to have a party in the Monroe Street loft so Adele could meet all his friends.

According to Malaquais, about fifty people came to the party. He and Galy had driven down from Vermont, and Fig and Ecey had come all the way from Arkansas. Dan Wolf was there and several actors attended, including Montgomery Clift, Kevin McCarthy, Marlon Brando and Rita Moreno, who came with Brando. Lillian Hellman came, and also a young novelist named Calder Willingham, John A. L. [unclear] art dealer Richard Bell. Adele's friends from her painting classes. Adele said the party was "a mingling of personalities, painters, beat poets, writers, actors, critics, a lot of brains, sex appeal, beautiful women, and

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men, good talk against a background of laughter, the clinking of ice cubes in glasses and jazz on the radio." The party went well until about two a.m. when four or five local thugs crashed in.

They were looking for a woman who had said something negative to them on the street, a guest at the party. Mailer tried to reason with them to no avail; one of them had a hammer and two whacks to the head. He was staggering and bleeding, but still able to fight, he said later. Brando, Malaquais recalled, watched the whole thing without moving. Adele screamed and chased the gang out. Mailer wore a bandage on his head for a time and told his mother he'd gotten hurt in a taxicab accident. After that night, Adele was terrified of the neighborhood and wanted to move.

In August, they went to Provincetown and stayed in a seaside apartment on Commercial Street. Because of her painter friends, Adele was as well known as Mailer. He took part in a Provincetown Art Association panel on censorship with Dwight Macdonald, William De Kooning and Edmund Wilson, the esteemed literary critic and friend of F. Scott Fitzgerald, who summered in nearby Truro. At the time, Mailer said, Wilson "was the nearest thing to Jehovah" in his mind. They went to literary parties, to the Atlantic House to hear jazz, and mixed with the locals at The Old Colony Bar. Dwight Macdonald had nude beach parties in Truro (later satirized by Saul Bellow in his 1975 novel, *Humboldt's Gift*), and Adele remembers "the sight of paunchy, aging bodies, sipping martinis, engaged in conversations as if they were fully dressed" Macdonald, she said, "with his white goatee, a long string bean of a body, and his cute little belly," was a sight. For a month, Adele painted and Mailer worked on *The Deer Park*. After Labor Day, they returned to New York and moved to a "grim apartment, renovated in battleship grey" at 14 Pitt Street, not far from the Williamsburg Bridge. For his living space, Mailer alternated between beat-up bohemian lofts and handsome country houses.

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Shortly after moving in, he was cheered by a letter from a young novelist, Vance Bourjaily, who wrote to him with praise for *Barbary Shore* and the difficulties of writing second novels. Mailer had read about Bourjaily's 1947 novel, *The End of My Life*, in John Aldridge's book, *After the Lost Generation: A Critical Study of the Writers of Two Wars* (1951), in which he and Bourjaily had been affirmed as important writers, along with Vidal, expatriate Paul Bowles, author of *The Sheltering Sky* (1949), and Truman Capote, whose slim gothic novel, *Other Voices, Other Rooms*, was published just a few months before *Naked*. Aldridge's study had been impossible for Mailer to ignore, as it was praised by his Harvard mentor, Robert Gorham Davis, on the front page of the same issue of the *New York Times Book Review* that contained a surly review of *Barbary Shore*. When Aldridge's study was reprinted in 1985, Mailer wrote an introduction in which he said that Aldridge's study had given him a sense of identity very much needed at the time. It made "a talented, mixed-up, beleaguered, near-genius of an unworthy" feel as if he had been "entered onto the formal lists of literary endeavor." Aldridge soon became a friend—introduced by Bourjaily—and Mailer's most important admirer in the critical world, a position he held for over forty years.

Mailer wrote back to Bourjaily with thanks for his kind words on *Barbary Shore*, adding, "The reviews were depressing, economically as well as psychically," and that he made himself go though his novel again "to remind myself that it's not all bad." A few months later when Jones was in New York, Bourjaily telephoned him and said that Jones was visiting him. Mailer invited them over to his cold-water flat for a drink. He recalled their first meeting: "In those days," Mailer recalled, "Jones was an avatar of energy."

His presence could certainly fill any small room. The variety of his small-town personality was not only canny and overbearing, but also as warm as your best buddy. It felt like a great new kid had just moved onto the block. How rich was his simplicity—his was the wisdom of a good redneck. No doubt about it, he made Vance and me feel pale, establishmentarian, and much too modest by comparison.

But we all got drunk. That equaled us out. By twilight, we were the best of friends. And on the rise of this good musketeer spirit, three good writers ready to tackle all the ugly asinine powers above, we got candid with each other. Finally, Jones asked, "Vance, do you ever cheat on your wife?"

Now you had to know how cool Vance was in those days. He never showed his hand. [. . .] We had, however, forged a mood. Vance's belief in those days (it may still be active) was that there were few things as unattractive and dispiriting as being the man to kill a good mood. So he looked up, and a glint of divine or diabolical light came into his eye, and he said, "Yes! Whenever and wherever I can," and these being the lost years of rampant male authority (it feels like a millennium ago!) we all roared and hit another belt of booze and felt for a godly half-hour like the swashbucklers we were not, not quite.

A few weeks later, Mailer introduced Jones to Montgomery Clift at a party at Bourjaily's apartment in the Village. Clift always claimed that it was at that party that Jones and Clift talked about making a film of *From Here to Eternity*. It was made in 1953 and was a sensational

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success, winning eight Oscars, including best picture. The film's huge success undoubtedly helped reignite Mailer's desire to see *Naked* made into a film.

By October Mailer had 240 pages of the new novel, but he was dissatisfied with the draft, which he later said was "the worst writing I had ever done." He then turned "dispiritedly" to short stories. The easiest topic for him was the army, and by the end of 1951 he had turned out three stories, "The Paper House" (based on a story about prostitutes in a geisha house told to him by Bourjaily), "The Dead Gook," for which he drew on his memory of the Filipino Huks he had fought with in Luzon, and "The Language of Men," a story about an army cook, ~~which he said~~ his most autobiographical short story. He wrote all three in a day or two each, his idea being that if he couldn't finish a story in one day, it wasn't meant to be written. If one made a bad bet on the direction of one's plot, he said, it could mean the wastebasket and new beginning.

Therefore, when writing a novel, he said, "I move ahead like a banker, careful not to lose the investment of my work." Cy Rembar, ~~who was acting as his agent~~, tried to sell the stories to some of the most prestigious fictional outlets of that time: *New Yorker*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *Vogue* and *Mademoiselle*.

Mailer turned a small *contretemps* with Adele into another story, "The Notebook." They had exchanged angry words after an old friend of hers paid too much attention in a restaurant. When he began recording the incident in the small notebook he always carried, Adele got more upset and told him, "You were just watching yourself be angry, taking notes condition." She sulked for the rest of the walk home. Mailer turned the situation into a narrative equivalent of a mirror held up to a mirror. The story's narrator is a girlfriend, much as Adele snapped at Mailer, for being "nothing but a notebook," after which she

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stomps off; "her high heels mocking her misery in their bright tattoo upon the sidewalk." He asks himself if he started the fight so he could record it, and then "considers this, priding himself on the fact that he would conceal no motive from himself, no matter how unpleasant." As he runs after her, he rehearses how he will justify his incessant notebook jottings, and then asks himself if his explanation is for her or for the notebook. He stops and makes another entry. The story also underlines one clause in Mailer's credo, traceable all the way back to the notebooks he kept at Harvard: a promise never to hide his motives from himself, no matter how ignoble.

Ψ Ψ Ψ

After a weeklong ski trip in early January to Stowe, Vermont, Mailer started an untitled journal. He was still working on the short stories, and Lillian Ross had promised him a reading by a top editor at the *New Yorker*, but he devalued the stories to Ross. He always believed he was a "journeyman" in the form. He was experimenting with marijuana a bit, the beginning of a long love affair with the drug, and the journal has some entries about his experiences while smoking it. His actions puzzle him: "I will be so nice to people, so desperately determined to make them like me, and yet will be driven to give false romantic pictures of my own degeneration. How deeply I must be convinced of how uninteresting I am." The journal is studious in detailing what he called his "irrationality." The two chief topics of the journal, however, are his relationship with Adele and his ideas for a new novel. The two are more than just temporally linked, as the following excerpts from the journal demonstrate. Mailer interrogates his feelings about Adele the day after asking her to stand naked before him.

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She is so beautiful, her pointed breasts, her firm buttocks, her long back, her dark skin which does look golden even though I always feel as if I'm lying when I use the word to her. And yet she's beautiful as a Gauguin and all fuck. It is the adolescent hungers which never die, the idea that I am making love to a woman who is all fuck, who exists only to deploy herself sensually for me which furnishes such excitement. I suppose always we make love in obeisance to our adolescent archetypes. Certainly Adele does. She enjoys sex so much because it is dirty to her, because she is raped, ravished, taken, ground into nothing, and repaid with the sweetest kind of pleasure. It is probably the nature of women when all superstructure and complexity is cut away to be naturally, amoral whore and tender mother. It is why Adele is so womanly.

In the next paragraph, he says that what he has written is false to a degree because he has left out something: "I hate her often for her social inadequacies which make me feel bound (how romantic!) to a lower level of the world than I aspire to—dinner parties in the East Sixties which I give?" After this admission, he says that "even if I hurt her often, I like her, I wish her well, I feel tender toward her." Through several more long entries through the end of March, when the journal ceases, Mailer traces the sinuousities of their relationship. He does not use the word "Pygmalion," although in her memoir, *The Last Party*, Adele says that Mailer had "an intense need to play Pygmalion" but that she "resisted the role of Galatea." LP-102-03

January 14: As a writer, these have been the worst months of
Nothing breaks through, no ideas with any fluency, nothing seems to develop. I'm
living in a vacuum. How long can it possibly continue.

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✓ → January 15: Idea for a novel. About Adele written in first or third person, somewhat in the manner of [Alberto Moravia's 1949 novel] *The Woman of Rome*, about a Greenwich Village girl, and what happens to her, the milieu she passes through, the qualities and lacks she feels in her life.

January 16: Adele told me last night that she's been having fantasies of going into a convent, i.e., getting religious first and then convent—probably from [Graham Greene's 1951 novel] *The End of the Affair*. Also of dropping everything, job and all, and going to a strange city. Also, of murdering me, and then committing suicide.

January 17: In comfort station in subway, a man taking a piss wonders if the man next to him is a homosexual, then wonders if the man next to him suspects him in turn. Then has a moment of interest in the fate of poor driven subway homosexuals, remembers an episode from his childhood when a man had sat next to him, and had wanted to suck his cock.

February 5: For the omnibus novel: One of the lives—the life of crime. The end of the novel might be found in the life of resistant action to the powers that be—take the quote from Zola—but the problem is to find the definite action. Always the problem for today's novels. The quote: 'Ah, to live indignant, to live enraged at treacherous arts, at false honor, at universal mediocrity! To be unable to read a newspaper without paling in anger! To feel the continual and irresistible

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need of crying aloud what one thinks, above all when one is alone in thinking it,
and to be ready to abandon all the sweets of life for it'

Toward the end of February Mailer rented a studio in the Ovington Building on Fulton Street, and he took the subway to Brooklyn from Pitt Street most days to work there. He was seeing James Jones a lot and had recently met William Styron. Dan Wolf was someone else he saw a lot of during this difficult period. Mailer admired Wolf, and confided in him. They also did a fair amount of drinking and carousing together. The new novel still had not come into focus and his affair with Adele was reaching a critical juncture.

February 22: Right now, today, the thing with Adele seems hopeless, with future. I cannot conceive of myself as married to her. We drag upon each other so, we exhaust each other like leeches turned sucker to sucker. Without sex, I wonder if there would be anything at all in the relationship other than need. Yet a week ago, I felt very much in love with her (for me), I felt no sense of loss in emptying the house in Vermont, I felt warm and close to Adele. Was it only because Jim Jones obviously admired her?

I'm always so afraid of stops on a train, afraid someone will sit next to me, and I shall be forced to talk. It is even more irrational than that—I just don't want a body next to me. This hasn't changed in all the year. In social life I have a crutch, I am Norman Mailer, and I get a false sense of ego, but to be alone on a train, eat in a train diner, and everything intimidates me, including the hostess, the waitress and the other passengers. Once again I am little and ugly.

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March 3: It's ironic. I sit here and plan a novel or at least the beginning of one, so vast, so comprehensive, that the amount of energy, invention and determination to see it through would be staggering. Yet, never have I felt as lackadaisical, flat, and spiritless. From such beginning could a book come? I note this, only for the odd chance that I may follow it through.

Am I fucking too much? Can this account partially for my washed-out dispirit?

Mailer was not a huge admirer of the women's magazines where Cy was peddling his stories. In 1947, when he was writing *Naked*, ^{Adeline} ~~she~~ had introduced him to Pearl Kazin (Alfred's sister), an editor at *Harper's Bazaar*. "She irritated the hell out of me. She was so superior," he recalled. "She read more books; she was more on top of things." When Kazin later wrote to ask if he would care to submit something to the magazine, he wrote back: "Dear Pearl Kazin, I'm still too young and too arrogant to care to write the kind of high-grade horseshit you print in *Harper's Bazaar*." He was "very happy" to mail that letter, he said. But in early 1952, his arrogance was on a leash. At a cocktail party in early March that he hosted, he met Cyrilly Abels, the managing editor of *Mademoiselle*, where his stories were being considered. A close friend of Katherine Ann Porter, she was responsible for publishing new young writers such as ^{and} ~~James Baldwin~~ ^{Baldwin}. But she was not immediately taken by Mailer's stories. "What a horror she was. I felt like screaming Shit while talking to her about my stories which [she said] were very interesting but not quite right for them," he said. "At one point I had to say something about, 'I know editors always want blood, but what color blood do you want?'" Mailer got drunk after the party and his stories were later

turned down. He ends his account of the failure to connect with Abels by saying that he wished he could "forget all this shit connected with short stories." What he really wanted was "to get my teeth into a novel."

Chapter 5

The Deer Park

The next day, a Sunday, he woke with a hangover. Dan Wolf had been at the party and he too was hung over, as he informed Mailer when he called to tell him that he had obtained "a dirty film" from Ed Fancher. Mailer went to Brooklyn to borrow his mother's projector as Adele, her friend, Irene Fornes, Wolf and Rhoda Lazare, who he was ~~dating~~ *would later marry*, gathered in Wolf's Village apartment. The DC current in the building blew out the motor and when they put new fuses in the projector, it blew out the power in the entire building. "Just Kafka," Mailer wrote in the journal. Adele remembered that Norman Rosten had a projector and Mailer rushed back to Brooklyn Heights to borrow it while the rest of the party went to the Pitt Street apartment, which had AC current. They ate, drank and watched the film several times and after the others had left, Mailer and Adele watched it again while making love. But the film had "depersonalized us," he said, and the lovemaking was "without personal heat."

After confiding these "hilarious" events to his journal the next day, Mailer had a thought. Perhaps what happened the night before could be recast as a comic prologue to the omnibus

novel he was trying to conceptualize. He began making notes. It would be told from the point of view of a novelist thinking about the nature of his profession:

[H]ow the novelist must be paranoid and therefore seeks to fuse with the entire world, how he must have a feminine component to his nature and be obsessed with his masculinity; how he must be terrified of experience and intensely hungry for it; how inferiority and megalomania must alternate in his conception of himself. Is this sufficient to project the novel? Also he must want power, and have no capacity to gain it. Be a narcissist, too.

The vast ambition of this novelist-character (who, it must be said, has a good deal in common with his creator) would be realized in a sequence of eight interlocking novels that would explore the following worlds, in this order: pleasure, business, communism, church, the working class, crime, homosexuality and end with mysticism. The narrator, he wrote, "dreams or conceives of himself in many milieu, and traces out his adventures in each milieu with the same set of characters. This scheme, which he said would require "the seat of Zola and the mind of Joyce," was the ladder Mailer used to climb out of the depression that followed the failure of *Barbary Shore*. Several times over the next half century, including his final years, he came up with ambitious, skeletal plans for multi-novel projects as a way of getting started on the first one. The projects were huge, daunting, but not to him; he was energized by their scope and complexity. Robert Lucid called Mailer's bootstrapping efforts "exercises in "imagination-isometrics"; they are also reminiscent of Baron Munchausen pulling himself out of the swamp by his own hair.

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✓ Mailer retained the novelist as the unidentified narrator, but he is a step removed. The protagonist of the prologue is "a small frustrated man, a minor artist manqué," one Sam Slovoda, who makes his living writing continuity for comic strips, but toys with the idea of writing a novel. The eight novels are to be stages of the dream he has after watching a pornographic film with his wife and friends. Aided by encouragement from Adele, his sister, Lillian Ross, and Dan Wolf, Mailer wrote "The Man Who Studied Yoga" in a month of hard work, finishing it in early April (the title refers to the old joke about the man who goes to India to study yoga and is told to unscrew his navel whereupon his ass falls off). The 30-page story, perhaps Mailer's finest, opens with his ghostly narrator speaking: "I would introduce myself if it were not useless. The name I had last night will not be the same as I have tonight. For the moment, then, let me say that I am thinking of Sam Slovoda." We soon see that Sam is nothing close to a heroic figure, not by any means, but he has one redeeming virtue: he doesn't like himself; he wants to grow.

Over-stimulated by the film, Slovoda is displeased with himself for wasting another day. His vision for the enormous novel he hopes to write "lies foundered, rotting on a beach of purposeless effort." As he doses off, the narrator, who seems to be the shade of a novelist now turned muse, gives Sam an idea: "Destroy time, and chaos may be ordered." Inflamed by this idea, Sam will now dream the first novel of the sequence, which will be devoted to pleasure. He remembers reading about the garden of Louis XV, where beautiful virgins were brought to be despoiled by the king. It was called The Deer Park, and Sam's meditation on it in "Yoga" reappears as the epigraph to Mailer's pleasure novel of the same name.

Adele will serve as the model for the female protagonist, Elena Esposito, who has affairs with two friends of Eitel, the male protagonist, before settling into a complicated affair with him.

John Huston is the kind of director—beholden to the studio system, but with a deep maverick streak—that Mailer may have drawn on for some of Eitel's traits. Whatever the case, he now had all he needed to make a new start on *The Deer Park*: a prologue, a vast narrative scheme, and a first novel which would draw on his time in Hollywood, his current Latina lover, and his 20-minute visit to Palm Springs with Knox. As he was finishing "The Man Who Studied Yoga," he wrote in his journal that he had the strength and optimism to work on the project for years to come, "going into obscurity if that is necessary, indeed even looking forward to that." Most of his energy for the next three-and-a-half years would be expended on *The Deer Park*.

In April 1952 Bea married Steve "Chavo" Sanchez in Mexico, and when Mailer wrote to congratulate her, he said that he had not been in touch earlier because he was revamping the novel. The effort was "agony," he wrote to Fig, but by early May he had established a foothold of 30 pages. He was determined not to go back to the 240-page draft he had shelved; he wanted the new version to be markedly different. Writing to Adeline in late May, he described its style as "quiet, witty, sad." He mentioned to her that he had an article in the May-June *Partisan Review*, his first contribution to what was then considered to be one of the most significant literary-political journals in the U.S. Somewhat to the right of *Dissent*, it was also somewhat more literary. Founded by William Phillips and Philip Rahv in 1934 as a platform for what was sometimes called the "independent left," it became anti-Soviet in the late 1930s. With a circulation that never got much above 10,000, it was a major force in American intellectual life until the late 1960s when it was overshadowed by the *New York Review of Books*. *PR*'s notable contributors (most of whom migrated to the *NYRB*), included a number who became friends and/or sparring partners with Mailer: Macdonald, Howe, Rahv, Lowell, Mary McCarthy, ~~and~~

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✓ Bellow, Diana Trilling, James Baldwin, Leslie Fiedler, Cynthia Ozick, Susan Sontag and Norman Podhoretz.

✓ Mailer's inaugural contribution was part of a symposium titled "Our Country and Our Culture." ~~"If a reaffirmation and rediscovery of America is underway,"~~ The 25 participants were asked by the editors to expound on the current role of writers and whether the old "tradition of non-conformism" could/should be maintained, as exemplified by exiles like Henry James and Ezra Pound, whose hostile statements about the barrenness of American life preface the editorial statement. Mailer stated boldly: "I think I ought to declare straightaway that I am in almost total disagreement with the assumptions of this symposium." He derided American intellectuals for moving from social protest to writing uplifting pieces for *Time* and *Life*. The American writer, he said, "is being dunned to become healthy, to grow up, to accept the American reality." Mailer was having none of it. The writer works best in "opposition," he said, and integration into society was "more conducive to propaganda than art."

Of the 25 participants on Mailer's panel, which included Howe, Margaret Mead, Delmore Schwartz, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., Louise Bogan, Leslie Fiedler and Lionel Trilling, only Howe was as truculent as Mailer. Howe contacted Mailer after seeing the symposium in print, and asked him to write something for a new left-wing magazine that he and some others—Lewis Coser, Stanley Plastrick, Emanuel Geltman, and Meyer Shapiro—were founding. Howe and his colleagues recognized that a mass socialist labor party modeled after those in Europe had no chance to compete with the Democrats or Republicans in the U.S., not in the 1950s. *Dissent*, therefore, would try to work within the Democratic Party for some of the goals of socialism, while standing firmly against totalitarian regimes. The first issue appeared in winter 1954 and

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Mailer's name was on the masthead as a contributing editor. He published three pieces there in 1954, and in 1955 became a member of the Editorial Board.

In early 1952, Mailer saw Jones and Styron several times. Mickey Knox often joined them, making it a quartet. They hit the bars of the Village and Eighth Avenue in Manhattan, boozing and playing liar's poker for dollars. "We did a prodigious amount of drinking, and there were always flocks of girls around," Styron later wrote. Given his doubts about his writing and his depression, Mailer relished these outings with his peers. Styron said later that there seemed to be "a moratorium on envy" among writers at the time, and much camaraderie, "as if there were glory enough to go around for all the novelists trying to fit themselves into Apollonian niches alongside the earlier masters." Envy may have been absent, but not competition. Knox described a contest Mailer had with Jones: "At the last bar one night, the match finally took place. They sat in a booth facing each other. Their forearms held the middle position for endless seconds." The look on Jim's face was concentrated determination. He was not going to be put down. He wasn't. He slowly pushed Norman's arm up until they reached the middle position again and it was over: a tie. They unclasped at the same time without a word being said.

One night walking in the Village, Knox recalled, Styron put his arms around the shoulders of his two novelist friends, "joyously announcing, 'Here we are, the three best young writers in America.'" Neither Norman nor Jim objected, but let it be noted that they did appear both pleased and embarrassed." "Moving about at night with Jim," Styron said of the writer who would become one of his closest friends, "was like keeping company with a Roman emperor." When the partying wound down, the group would settle into a corner of the bar with their drinks and talk about writers and books, often until the sun came up.

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He wrote to Bea about his slow progress. "I seem unable to recapture the kind of simple humanity I had in the best parts of *Naked*," he said, and characterized his new style as "a kind of lush gargoyle." The root problem, he continued, was that for most of the previous year, "I was convinced that I was through as a writer" which, in turn, made him reflect on the pain Bea had felt at the time of their breakup when she didn't know what to do with her life. Now she was in medical school and committed to a career while he was "irritable, gloomy and feeling quite hopeless in my distaste for myself." He was, however, able to keep the same schedule he had kept for *Naked*: four days a week, seven hours a day.

In early July, Mailer had his appendix out. He told Bea that he was "seriously fagged" by the operation, and needed time in Provincetown to recuperate. "I need this vacation physically, emotionally, spiritually, and what have you," he said. He and Bea had promised to state frankly in their correspondence any gripes they had, and Mailer ended his sour letter by laying into Bea for telling Fan that "Danny Wolf is a procurer," which was, apparently, her interpretation of Wolf's role in introducing Adele to him. The comment was turning Fan against Adele. His mother already had a low estimate of Adele. "I felt very antagonistic to Adele" Fan wrote in 1971. "To me she was an interloper, a plain ignorant girl ready to satisfy Norman's physical needs. How could she ever measure up to my son, a Harvard graduate, a famous author." Mailer's love of his mother was unshakeable; he revered her always, but ignored her judgments about his male friends and female companions. Fan called the former "bums" and "spongers"; for the women she had harsher language. Adele "was just a plain common sucker," and marrying her, she said, was the first big mistake of her son's life.

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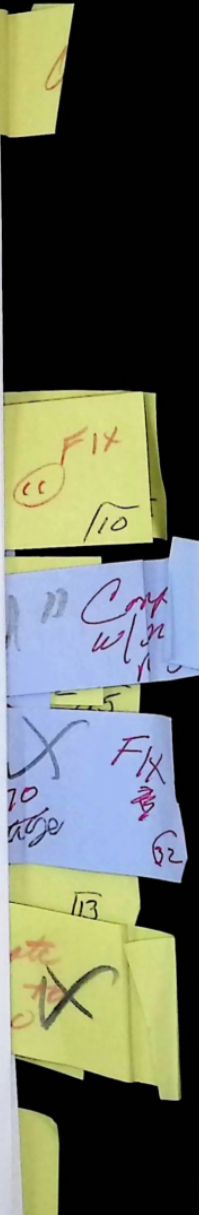
After his vacation, Mailer learned that his three war stories had been accepted: "The Paper House" by *New World Writing* and "The Language of Men" by *Esquire*, the magazine that Mailer would write more words for than any other over the next half century. The third story, "The Dead Gook," after being rejected by the *New Yorker*, was taken by a new periodical, *Discovery*. Its co-editors, Bourjaily and Aldridge, sent out a statement of the periodical's goals that tweaked the nose of Time-Life publications by saying that the editors would reject the sort of material that appeared in large-circulation magazines, writing that was "inoffensively general, meeting the romantic needs of the pabulum set at both ends of the human life span." The inaugural issue of *Discovery* was printed as a 300-page paperback, and distributed by Pocket Books.

Styron had the longest piece in the collection, a novella titled "Long March," an account of the killing of eight Marine recruits by misdirected mortar fire during basic training at Camp Lejeune. Mailer admired the story extravagantly and wrote to Styron to tell him so: "I've been meaning to write ever since I read Long March about a month ago. I think it's just terrific, how good I'm almost embarrassed to say, but as a modest estimate it's certainly as good an eighty pages as any American has written since the war, and really I think it's much better than that." Styron wrote back a very warm letter thanking Mailer and said that he had been influenced by *The Naked and the Dead*, although not revealing where or how. The friendship of the Brooklyn Jew and the Tidewater Wasp took a leap after this exchange and would grown even stronger before it blew up in another exchange of letters exactly five years later.

Lillian Ross, had continued to encourage Mailer, and he wrote her with praise for her controversial "Portrait of Hemingway" that the *New Yorker* had published two years earlier. He knew she would be aware of *Life* magazine's recent publication of Hemingway's short novel,

The Old Man and the Sea. Mailer liked Hemingway's idea of the old Cuban fisherman's Homeric struggle to land a huge fish, "but I just can't bear his prose," which he said was ripe with "affectation." But what really bothered him, was that Hemingway was always implying the following: "I am a great man who happens incidentally to be a great writer. I know that all of you will be interested in my noble, strong, and beautiful attempts to exercise myself as a great man, and will be happy when I succeed except for professors, other writers, and assorted cocksuckers." This is the first time Mailer had put his feelings about the elder writer into words since his Harvard parodies. The earlier work, especially the short stories, *A Farewell to Arms* (1928), and *Death in the Afternoon* (1932), were close to sacred texts for Mailer, but he had reservations about Hemingway's later books and distaste for his enormous public presence, as the above words-from-Hemingway's-mouth indicate.

By the late 1950s Mailer would reverse himself, however, and praise Hemingway for struggling to "make his personality enrich his works." Looking back at the time when he was rewriting *The Deer Park*, Mailer realized that he was now "one of the few writers of my generation who was concerned with living in Hemingway's discipline, by which I do not mean I was interested in trying for some second-rate imitation of his style, but rather that I shared with Papa the notion, arrived at slowly in my case, that even if one dulled one's talent in the punishment of becoming a man, it was more important to be a man than to be a good writer." A good deal of Mailer's self-reflective writing from *Advertisements for Myself* (1959) to *The Fight* (1975), would explore the web of relations between personal valor and virtue and literary growth and mastery. In regard to Hemingway, Mailer always rode a seesaw, lauding him here and socking him there.



In September, Mailer and Adele moved again, but only a few blocks away, to 41 First Avenue, between 2nd and 3rd Streets, in the East Village. The rear windows of the apartment overlooked the Marble Cemetery, the oldest public cemetery in the city. The apartment was next door to Dan Wolf's and next door to Adele's—she had kept her place there even though she was spending most of her nights with Mailer. The First Avenue apartments were 60 feet long and eight to eleven feet wide. He and Adele knocked down some of interior walls between the apartments, added bookshelves, and painted the walls white. Then he borrowed plumbing tools and with the help of Mickey Knox ran forty feet of gas pipe through three walls, hooked the pipe to a heater, and installed a hot water line and a bathtub. When Lillian Hellman came to a party there one night, climbing six flights up to the railroad flat, he proudly showed off his handiwork. She told him that it was "more impressive than *the Naked and the Dead*," a remark he never forgot. Having learned the skills of carpentry, wiring and plumbing, he now believed he could make a living with his hands, if necessary. "I don't think Norman was ever happier than he was in that cold-water flat," Adele said. When he wasn't improving the apartment, he was in his Fulton Street studio writing. He still saw *The Deer Park* as the first of eight connected novels, and he intended to start on the second one—devoted to the business world—before polishing the manuscript of the first, leapfrogging in this manner through all eight in the series. The "overall scheme is so grandiose," he wrote to Graham Watson, his British agent, that it was possible he would "steal away from it in terror." By October 1952, he passed the 200-page mark in the manuscript.

Mailer pushed on through November and at the end of the month turned in a manuscript to Rinehart of approximately 300 pages. It carried a subtitle—"The Search for the Obscene"—

crossed out on the title page. He accomplished this while entertaining Susan, who had been visiting for a month. The three-year old enjoyed her time with her father and Adele and visits with both sets of grandparents. Mailer flew her home to Mexico on December 1—Adele remained in New York—and he enjoyed his first visit there, staying with Bea and Steve for a week, and then stopping off for a weekend with the Gwaltneys in Little Rock. When he returned, he found out that the Rinehart editors had some large reservations about his manuscript. Mailer pushed back, asking for another reading by an outsider. John Selby accepted his recommendation of John Aldridge, who Mailer thought would naturally side with him. Aldridge agreed to do an objective report, despite his friendly relations with Mailer. He was writing as critic, not novel doctor.

The editors agreed, Aldridge recalled, "So I wrote the report in that way, and then with great glee they went waving it in his face." The frank sexual scenes in the book—it was after all a novel about pleasure—didn't bother Aldridge. He wrote that there was nothing in *The Deer Park* that would trouble "anyone above the level of 16-year-old daughters and 70-year-old grandmothers." But the episodes of casual fornication in the novel did bother the top editors, and partly because of his mother, they bothered Stanley Rinehart even more. Mailer always believed that behind the scenes, Rinehart's mother, the world-famous mystery writer Mary Roberts Rinehart, had much to do with her son's intense dislike of the novel. A 76-year-old grandmother of six, and also a director of Rinehart, Inc., Mrs. Rinehart, it can be surmised, detested the idea of seeing her last name on the title page of *The Deer Park*. Aldridge assumed that the crossed-out subtitle revealed the real theme of the book. "Mailer is careful not to deviate" from his search for the obscene, he wrote. The result of "his singlemindedness is that

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the experience he presents is precisely dull, mechanical, monotonous, passionless and unobscene AS
to the reader as it is to the characters." He also said that Mailer had made a terrible mistake in MBM 146
sharing the manuscript with 20 friends and relatives. The fact that Mailer sought such extensive feedback made Aldridge conclude that Mailer "felt an uncertainty and insecurity." These MBM 146
criticisms angered Mailer. OK
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✓ Mailer wrote back to Aldridge that "The Search for the Obscene" was meant to refer to the all eight interlocking novels, not merely the first one, which was about the disasters and corruption that flow from a search for mere pleasure. Thus, the strikeover of the words. "You have hardly acted toward me like a friend," Mailer said. In fact, you act "like a sort of literary General MacArthur [Aldridge had the profile] delivering harsh pronouncements from your high and lonely peak, deriving your pleasure I suspect from the bitter notion that you have been true to yourself, and hang the consequences. The worst of it that like the good General it gives you such pleasure." Mailer argued vociferously, and defensively, that it was a writer's sole prerogative to show or not show early work-in-progress. It was none of the critic's business and "Jehovah" Aldridge was unfair to object. But he didn't forget what Aldridge had said, and by the late 1950s had come around to the idea that it was a mistake to let anyone see his manuscripts at an early stage. When work jelled—polished first draft—he would share it with his family, editors, agents and secretaries, most notably Judith McNally, who worked from him for almost three decades. In later years, he shared his manuscripts with some of his older children and friends, most notably, Jean Malaquais; Mickey Knox; scholar-critic Robert B66 Lucid; his lawyer, Ivan Fisher; writer and filmmaker Richard Stratton, and Walter Anderson, editor of Parade. Norris saw all of his first drafts from the time they met in 1975 until his death. Mailer's sister is the only person who read every one of his major books before publication.

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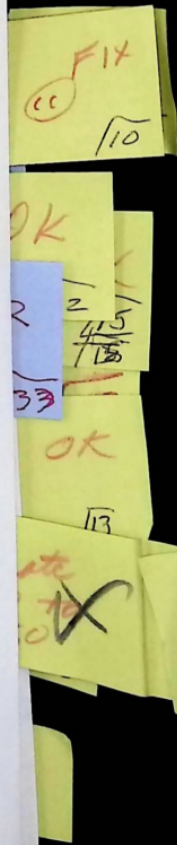
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While Mailer was mulling over what revisions he would make, he learned that his father had been contacted by the Civil Service Commission and told that there was a "reasonable doubt" about his, Barney's, loyalty to the country. This allegation was made because his father, an accountant at the War Department, was said to have a "continuing close association" with a person who was a "concealed Communist, that is, his son." This occurred at the height of Sen. McCarthy's campaign to expose and extirpate secret Communists and fellow travelers. Cy Rembar was brought in, and with his counsel, Mailer drafted an affidavit in response. It began by addressing the question of whether the son had influenced the father.

My father is a man of conservative stable temperament, and though we have many of the relations proper to a father and a son, I think I may say with assurance that he has never had any political influence on me nor I upon him, nor for that matter have I ever made any attempt to influence him. He is not in the habit of ever speaking about the details of his work, nor have I ever had any interest in asking him about his work. Our political ideas are in great disagreement, and I should like to submit to the members of the Loyalty Board the notion that disagreement between fathers and sons is a human phenomenon which has been long remarked.

The second allegation, that he was a Party member, Mailer dealt with by pointing out that for years the Communists "have been calling me a Trotskyist; the Trotskyists call me a 'so-called splinter Socialist'; the splinter socialists call me an anarchist; the anarchists call me a capitalist," and now the Loyalty Board has brought it full circle by calling me a "concealed Communist." In



actuality, he continued, he was "admittedly and openly a dissident from the conventional and generally accepted attitudes about America and its position in the world today" and "had influenced exactly no one." He ended with a dramatic fragment, the Mailer family at dinner arguing:

THE TIME: (one of those rare times when politics is discussed.)

NORMAN MAILER: I think the whole thing in Korea is hopeless. It's a pilot-light war. Ignorant Americans and ignorant Orientals are just butchering each other.

I.B. MAILER: I don't know where an intelligent boy like you picks up such idiotic rubbish.

FAN MAILER (the mother): Don't call him an idiot.

NORMAN MAILER: Well, he's not so smart himself.

I.B. MAILER: I never talked to my father the way you talk to me.

The charge was dropped without a hearing and Barney continued his position with the War Department.

X ✓ A few weeks later on his 30th birthday, January 31, 1953, Mailer was in a black mood. He and Adele had just returned from two weeks of skiing in Canada. He was unsure how to respond to the calls for revision from Rinehart. He had written his Gen. MacArthur letter to Aldridge before the trip, but had many afterthoughts during the vacation. Bernard DeVoto's evaluation of *Naked* had convinced him to fill out the characterizations of Gen. Cummings and Lt. Hearn, and now

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✓ Aldridge's critique was making him reconsider the lineaments of Eitel, the protagonist of ^{novels} ~~the~~

✓ ~~Deer Park~~. In a flurry of letters to friends and family over the next few months, he laid out the problems: Eitel verged on being a flat character; his narrator was somewhat unfocused; the story was too tightly focused on sex. The eight-novel scheme, he concluded, would have to be scrapped because he wished to add material planned for the later novels in the first one, material about business, corruption, the media, and the blacklisting and Red-baiting rife in Hollywood. To accomplish this, he would have to write a new draft, not just improve the old one. That, he told Bea, was something that required "precisely the courage I could never get up on Barbary." *The Deer Park* would have to be redone from "top to bottom, made much bigger, much rounder, more story." He also felt an inner pressure to introduce "some sort of evil genius," as he later put it, who could challenge Eitel, and bring him into greater relief.

The idea for such a character came to him when he read the reports of the Manhattan trial of 22-year old Minot "Mickey" Jelke, a high society procurer, which dominated the New York media during the first half of the year. Jelke was the son of John Faris Jelke, whose family had become enormously wealthy selling Good Luck Dutch Girl Oleomargarine. Short of ready money until he inherited a fortune on his 25th birthday, Jelke turned to pandering and was tried as a "common pimp." What intrigued Mailer was that Jelke took up his line of work not merely for the income and the pretty girls, but because he relished the excitement. He was tried twice. The first conviction was thrown out because the judge ^{had} cleared the court at the start of the proceedings, saying it would be "steeped in filth." Reporters and the public were kept out of the courtroom because, as the judge stated, the judiciary was not required "to satisfy a widespread and avid appetite for 'lurid and salacious details.'" A higher court ordered a new trial after

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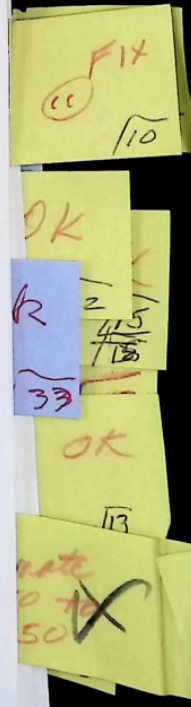
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virtually every newspaper in New York City joined in a brief protesting the abridgement of the defendant's constitutional right to an open trial. Such secrecy would lead to Star Chamber proceedings, the papers argued piously, but the public's "avid appetite" was obviously the root motivation.

Like everyone else, Mailer was eager to get a glimpse of the café society pimp, as the press called him. He tried to attend the first trial, but the courtroom was sealed. Two years later, Jelke was convicted at a new trial and served 21 months in Sing Sing. Mailer kept a clip file on the story, and Jelke became the rough model for the philosopher pimp, Marion Faye, the "evil genius" of *The Deer Park*. Faye, however, would prove to be much more complex. He makes his living the same way as Jelke did, but he also detests sham, false piety and knee-jerk patriotism. Before he plunges into near-terminal sadomasochism, Faye's chief purpose in the novel is to serve as Eitel's conscience, shaming him into not naming names when he is called before a House of Representatives Red-hunting committee. He tells Eitel that giving the names of former or current Communists to the House Un-American Activities Committee would only grant him the license to make more trashy sentimental movies. Like most of the dark characters in Mailer's fiction, there is an enclave of virtue in his evil, and future redemption is possible.

Finding his "evil genius" was an important advance, but Mailer had a more fundamental problem: should Sergius O'Shaugnessey, a former Air force pilot in Korea, be a first-person narrator, similar in many ways to Nick Carraway in *The Great Gatsby* (1925), or should he be depicted by an omniscient, anonymous narrator, such as he used in *Naked*? All through April, as he explained to Styron, "I've been rushing virtually on alternate days from third person and back again, disgusted in first person by the artificial barriers I set up on a book which shouldn't have



them." With Sergius telling the story, there was no way to detail the complex affair between Eitel and Elena Esposito, a fiery flamenco dancer who is patently modeled on Adele. Eitel is a "boudoir Pygmalion" and his fascinating affair with her is at the heart of the novel. Yet when Mailer switched to the third person to gain access to their thoughts and their bedroom, another problem arose: "I find that when I write in the third person I'm so bound, so constipated, that I can't seem to enter people's heads—I write as if the damn thing were a play, scene, dialogue, entrance, exit."

Hobbled by both perspectives, Mailer told Styron that the third person had the additional misery of possibly revealing what he feared might be a "fundamental poverty of imagination." The impasse persisted until the summer when he returned to the first person draft that Rinehart and Aldridge so disliked. For the length of his career, Mailer would be hypersensitive to the challenges and opportunities of point of view. In 1963 he said, "The most powerful leverage in fiction comes from point of view." He wrestled with how to employ this leverage for over a decade before finding a way, in *The Armies of the Night*, to escape from the subjective-objective dilemma, to gain the advantages of first person immediacy without relinquishing the detachment, the aesthetic distance, provided by the third. But in the spring and early summer of 1953, he was nearly paralyzed with the problem. So he wrote the first chapter of *The Deer Park* over and over and over.

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A summer trip to Mexico to see Suzy had been planned for some time; the unavoidable break from writing would be a boon. He and Adele made the long drive in a new Studebaker convertible, stopping in Marshall, Illinois where Jones lived. Jones and his mentor and lover, Lowney Handy, ran a writers colony in the small town not far from the Indiana border. She and her husband Harry had supported Jones while he wrote *From Here to Eternity*, and he had repaid them by putting up the lion's share of the money into the colony. The colonists lived in small cabins and earned their keep by doing manual labor under Lowney, who was a tough taskmaster. Everyone had to copy, word for word, passages from Hemingway, Dos Passos, Fitzgerald and other writers in the morning before turning to their own work, a pump-priming technique that Mailer thought might have some benefits. Jones had invited Mailer to see the place, meet the Handys and talk shop. He was now embarked on writing a novel about a returning G.I. and a postwar society moving into commercial overdrive. It was titled *Some Came Running*, and when it appeared in 1958, it was, at 1266 pages, the longest novel by a major U.S. novelist ever published.

The film version of *Eternity*, starring Montgomery Clift, Deborah Kerr, Frank Sinatra, Burt Lancaster and Donna Reed, was due to be released in the fall. Jones had been paid \$85,000 for the rights to his novel by MGM, and had learned just before Mailer's visit that he would receive \$100,000 from New American Library for the paperback rights to the novel, a larger sum than Mailer had received from the same publisher for *Naked*. Mailer was slightly in awe of all this, as he wrote to Styron:

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grad countenance. I couldn't imagine him stopping along the highway for an Eskimo pie; and when he got gas somewhere, it must have been in such a holy manner that the attendants were left faint. At the *ramada* entrance I caught a glimpse of dark curls, a sharp boyish profile, and someone with hands confidently on hips like a general. He was talking to Jones—not listening, *talking*.

Adele and Jones, who had met in New York, had uneasy relations; Adele sensed that they were competing for Mailer's attention. Lowney and Jones were polite enough, but she felt ignored. It was hot and she remembered walking around "in as little as possible, a tiny bra and a pair of brief shorts. I don't think Lowney was too pleased by my seminakedness tempt monks." Mailer and Jones, she said, got drunk every night and then arm-wrestled and contests. Jones, in better shape than Mailer, won the latter. During the day, they spent talking about writing and the pluses and minuses of celebrity.

After three days, they left and drove to New Orleans, where they fell in with some local literary bohemians. One night at a party they both drank ^{SP.}peyotl, made from peyote cactus buttons and used in religious ceremonies by Southwestern Indians. Afterwards, they went to hear Max Roach and Charlie Parker play at a jazz club. Adele got nauseous and vomited violently. She had a synesthesia experience and saw beautiful colors as "the music ripped into my open mouth, down my throat through my stomach to my groin pressing against the silken crotch of my panties, pressing against the fabric of my dress, and against the chair seat. I felt like the cat, I thought, who nibbled the cheese that was on the plate that lay on the table that was in the house that Norman built." Mailer, who remembers getting very sick, had a vision of an Aztec sacrifice

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with Indians atop a pyramid holding ceremonial knives, followed by hallucinogenic Disney cartoons. The drugs took a long while to wear off.

They arrived in Mexico City in early July. Susan was happy to see them and Mailer wrote to Wolf that “deep down, I feel that in ten years I’ll love her more than anyone or anything else. Except perhaps Adele.” There were difficult moments on the trip, he continued, times when “I could have murdered her for infantile relapses,” but “she’s in my flesh, and to be extravagant I’ve got my cross and my salvation—for she keeps me alive, dumb little Mo with her amoeba heart that pushes like a tentacle into everything I say, and feel.” By the end of the month, they were settled in a place just outside Mexico City called the Turf Club, a former country club that wealthy Mexicans, he told Styron, formerly used “as boffing huts for their mistresses.” Here Mailer settled down for the next ten weeks to revise the novel.

He worked steadily, with breaks to tour Cuernavaca, see some bullfights and watch jai-alai matches. Jones’ successful sale of *Eternity* to Hollywood remained on his mind and he wrote Cy at the end of August that he wanted to restart the process of selling *Naked*, even though he thought that advance publicity for *The Deer Park* might have put him on the blacklist. Cy was instructed to ask for \$200,000, but be willing to accept \$100,000, the amount paid for *Eternity*. Selling it for less, “what with the income tax and other deductions, plus Dad’s go-ahead to gamble a little more will mean that I’ll be very little richer a year or two from now.” If the novel was going to be “crapped up” by Hollywood, then a big paycheck and financial independence would be requisite compensation. “It’s the old business of if you’re going to be a whore, you ought to be the most expensive one in the land.” Mailer also expressed concern about Stan

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Rinehart trying to get out of the contract, and the necessity of a lawsuit to get the \$10,000 advance. His apprehensions were exactly correct.

As he was preparing to leave Mexico at the end of September, feeling somewhat relieved at having made some progress, he wrote a long letter to Bourjaily in which he looked back at his career to date and gave what amounted to his novelistic credo at age 30. He adhered to it, more or less, for the rest of his life.

[M]y experience with all three novels now has been one of starting with characters, finding things for them to do, and then sometimes after I've finished, as with *Naked*, or else at the $\frac{3}{4}$ point as with *Barbary* and *Deer Park*, I discover what my damn theme is. And to hell with the theme in a way, for I always know even before I start something what the connected theme is between all the books, the thing which makes us write I suppose, and for me it's probably never been anything more profound than, 'Itch, you bastards, I hope I make you uncomfortable to the death.' In that sense, perhaps all I write is political (short stories excepted) and my themes are political.

In his letter, Bourjaily had made the point that he wrote from a set of well-considered principles. Mailer countered with the primacy of experience.

Maybe you're right, probably you're right—I've had the argument with Malaquais many times—but to me the fact remains that the more experience the

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better the chance to come up with something fortunate. I don't even know quite how, but at its best experience can give you ideas for other things, so that maybe working as a stevedore for a year might help one write a novel about priests. There's something somewhere about proportion, and seeing everything in its place. Besides, one can go after experience consciously, determinedly, and in a funny way not disqualify oneself for writing about the material. [. . .] I think it can almost be put that one feels the need to say certain large things and takes for the purpose whatever world one is capable of throwing up at the moment, and the theme rides as a kind of bridge, an afterthought, between the two. Therefore, the better the world one can throw up at the moment, the better the book. I didn't write *Naked* because I wanted to say war was horrible, or that history is complex, resistant, and almost inscrutable, or because I wanted to say that the coming battle between the naked fanatics and the dead mass was approaching, but because really what I wanted to say was, 'Look at me, Norman Mailer, I'm alive, I'm a genius, I want people to know that; I'm a cripple, I want to hide that,' and so forth.

While Mailer felt some disquiet about what Stan Rinehart and his mother might say about the next draft of *Deer Park*, he knew that Amussen, who had returned to Rinehart as vice president, was on his side. Mailer had charmed and cajoled Rinehart's editors into approving his first two novels without making any major concessions, and felt fairly confident he could do it again, although he was certainly upping the ante with his description of his Hollywood producer, Herman Teppis, getting a blowjob. But the publishing world was now much less prudish than in 1948; the walls had cracked with "fug," and were breached three years later when Jones used

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"fuck" repeatedly in *Eternity*. Trail-blazing writers and wily editors could usually find ways to undercut the last bulwarks of Comstockery. Mailer was feeling something close to these sentiments when he returned to New York with Adele and Susan in mid-October. He was anxious to get back to work and the last day on the road, they arose at three a.m. and drove 800 miles. Susan remembers sitting in her little car seat in the front, peering at the stars, watching the sun come up, and then stopping for breakfast at a diner.

For the next eight months, Mailer regularly predicted that he was close to finishing the novel, only to find that there was more to be done. A re-write of one section created problems elsewhere; change begat change and the manuscript began to resemble Penelope's shroud: finished here, unraveled there, always in progress, never completed. When Howe asked him for a contribution to *Dissent*, he replied that he was no socialist scholar and only had time for *The Deer Park*. "I'm sick of writing it, I want to be quit of the thing," he told him. Writing to Styron, he reported that *New World Writing* had put out a new issue that contained a piece by Gore Vidal written under the pseudonym "Libra." Titled "Ladders to Heaven: Novelists and Critics," the essay names and praises the greatest living U.S. writers: Paul Bowles, Tennessee Williams and Carson McCullers. "We don't even get mentioned," he told Styron. "Another small delicious victory for the fag axis," Mailer concluded, "but I boiled that they get away with it by pseudonyms." When Styron replied, he called Vidal "that talentless, self-promoting, spineless slob."

Styron had met Vidal in 1951, but had little contact with him over the years. Mailer and Vidal intersected regularly, not only because they were East Coast novelists of the same

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generation, but also because they were gregarious, ambitious, ornery and permanently critical of the imperialistic streak in American foreign policy. The two met at Millie Brower's apartment on East 27th Street in 1952. In slightly different ways, they both recalled that at their first meeting Vidal was eager to know at what age Mailer's grandparents had died. Mailer said around 70. Vidal announced that his grandparents had died at a much older age and, therefore, he told Mailer, "I've got you." He went on, saying that the one who lived the longest would have the best purchase on literary fame. Brower remembered that Mailer told her that Vidal was "gornisht," the Yiddish word for nothing. According to Vidal, years later Mailer told him that when they first met he thought Vidal was the devil. Mailer apparently remembered what he had said because in 1993, and again in 2002, Mailer directed and acted in George Bernard Shaw's *Don Juan in Hell*. Mailer was the Commodore in the first performance and Don Juan in the second. Vidal, wearing a wine-red vest, played the Devil and stole the show both times.

Two things, not unrelated, were on Mailer's mind as 1953 drew to a close: his unfinished novel and his relationship with Adele. He was telling everyone that the novel was done, but that he needed to redo "fifty pages in the middle (the central chapters on Eitel and Elena) which are fairly tepid and too expository." He knew that delineating their intense, guilt-ridden relationship from the inside was imperative, even if he had to temporarily resort to omniscience and marginalize Serguis as a narrator. He called this work the "half third draft" and thought it would take him the first three or four months of 1954 to complete it. Susan was living with his mother now, and he and Adele saw her every day. She and Adele got along well and this had temporarily reconciled Fanny to Adele. Susan remembers feeling that she had two sets of parents and loved them both. The upshot, he told Adelaine, was that he and Adele would probably marry in a few

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months. He went on in greater length about the marriage situation in a letter to Devlin, saying he was definitely getting domesticated. Although he was ready to tie the knot, he had reservations. "I go off dreaming of all the women I will never enter," he said, "all the adventures I will never have, all the . . . ah, we were meant to end by cutting the family turkey." Adele, he adds, is leery about getting married after pressuring him earlier. "[S]he knows that the guilt which holds me so faithful will change to the gallant bucko the moment we're legally stitched." It is a prescient statement, for henceforth Mailer will swing irregularly between sexual adventuring and family responsibilities, the gallant bucko alternating with the serious *pater* carving the bird at Thanksgiving.

Mailer got involved in a literary group in the fall of that year, one that Vance Bourjaily established. It met on Sunday afternoons at a place chosen by Mailer or Dan Wolf, ["]the White ^{" needed 3 min 134} Horse Tavern on the corner of Hudson and West 11th Streets in the West Village. ["] According to Wolf, "Norman found that if you invited people to your house, it was not that easy to get rid of them," ^{m/m 134} a problem avoided by going to the White Horse, which was a quiet OK LX CK frequented by local Irish. ~~John~~ Aldridge, who was co-editing *Discovery* with some of the meetings, as did Herman Wouk, whose novel of the U.S. Navy *The Caine Mutiny*, along with Jones' *Eternity*, was one of the leading best sellers of 1951. Calder Willingham, whose southern accent Mailer would sometimes imitate, came, as did Styron. Dan Wolf, attended, and Lewis Allen, who Mailer later saw a lot of in Mexico. Bourjaily brought his wife Tina, but Mailer—who generally presided—always came alone. Louis Auchincloss, an uptown lawyer who published a string of best-selling novels about the legal world in the 1960s, as well as the archetypal prep school novel, *The Rector of Justin* (1964), came to several of the

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gatherings, although he said he felt somewhat uncomfortable at first because of his Wall Street and Republican affiliations. Mailer welcomed him, however, and then told him that he admired a story, "The Gem-like Flame," which Auchincloss had recently published, saying he would have been happy to have written the story. Auchincloss beamed. "I was so pleased," he said, "that I went right home. I wanted to leave one such assembly with a happy impression." Part of Mailer's welcoming attitude towards Auchincloss was his inveterate refusal to st [redacted] was his curiosity about the wealthy. He said more than once that he agreed with Fitzgerald that the rich are indeed different from the other classes. The White Horse group lasted through the early spring of 1955.

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Excepting Jones, Mailer's most important friendship during this period was with Robert Lindner, a psychoanalyst who had written a sharp critique of psychoanalytic practice. After their initial exchange of letters, they got together in New York after Mailer returned from Mexico. Three months before he died, Mailer remembered his first meeting with Lindner, a tall, handsome man with a "rusty, soft moustache." He was, Mailer said, "a guy I could *talk* to. His head was fertile, full of ideas. I was full of ideas. We just yakked, which I needed." They continued their correspondence and for a time talked almost every day on the telephone. Initially drawn together by their disgust with Sen. McCarthy's hunt for Communists in government, and the dull fog of conformity rolling over the country, as well as distaste for its leader, President

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Eisenhower, their relationship deepened when they recognized the depth of each other's ambition and how they might help each other. Both recognized Freud's genius, but chafed under the yoke of repression, renunciation and compromise that he believed made civilization possible. Lindner was an establishmentarian and worked from within; Mailer was a rebel with a cause: the spontaneous expression of feelings, including the violent and the sexual. Kindred spirits, they were joined by their belief that people could transform themselves, become bolder and more creative, and that society itself could be renovated. Both were tremendously ambitious and competitive, but their spheres of interest were adjacent, partially overlapping, and thus neither had to worry about being outshined.

Earlier, Mailer had read Lindner's sharp critique of psychoanalytic practice, *Prescription to Rebellion*. Lindner was convinced that most of Freud's theories were sound, but he parted company with his peers on the merits of getting along by conforming. It has "become axiomatic with our culture and in our society that adjustment is the highest good and the absolute right," he said. "A way has to be found to unbind the Prometheus within each one of us, to unloose the rebelliousness of our natures, and to give full sway to that instinct upon which our survival as free individuals depends." Lindner made this same point a variety of ways in several others books: *Rebel without a Cause* (1944); *Fifty-minute Hour* (1955); *Must You Conform* (1956). The gist of his argument is simple: "The alternative to adjustment is rebellion." Although Mailer was eight years younger than Lindner, his relationship with him was nothing like the one he had with Malraux, whose views were secure and settled.

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Mailer had also been reading the work of Wilhelm Reich and was much taken with his ideas about the pernicious effects of repression on sexual potency. The following passage, taken from Charles Rycroft's brief study of Reich, are apposite, if not identical with Mailer's ideas. Reich was "surely right," Rycroft states, "in asserting that no neurotics are orgasmically potent and that the great majority of human beings suffer from a character neurosis. His theories of character armor and orgasm constitute, therefore, a sweeping indictment of the sexual life of civilized man, an indictment similar in many ways to that made by D. H. Lawrence." Mailer's infatuation with Reich would grow throughout the 1950s, and he would later build his own version of Reich's infamous box, a telephone-booth-sized chamber where one repaired to replenish or accumulate orgonic, or life energy, but also rumored to promote erections. But at this point, Reich was only one of several theorists that interested him.

His friendship with Lidner grew to the point where they discussed their own sexuality. Lindner, like Mailer, had extra-marital affairs and was sympathetic to Mailer's mixed feelings about Adele.

He thought she was very sexy. He understood that entirely. He also thought she was kind of—how to put it—that spiritually speaking she was a very expensive wife for me. Not because she cost me money, but because—he understood my social ambitions, which were high. I wanted to be feted as the number one writer in America, and there were new sprouts coming up all over the place. The torch was being handed over in other places and that had me irritated. And Adele was no help socially to me. In fact, she was a drawback. She knew it and I knew it and there was a tension between us.

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Mailer confided his most private feelings to Lindner and although he believed that undergoing psychoanalysis would harm his work, he asked Lindner if he would take him on. Lindner said it would ruin their friendship and that was the end of it. Mailer later said that one of the things he was most proud of in his life was that he had never gone into analysis. Nevertheless, he still talked to Lindner about his problems. "One of them," Mailer said, "was a buried fear that under everything I'm a homosexual. That was always a fear. He would just say, 'Look, On the basis of my experience, you're not. What you're suffering is latent homosexual anxiety, which is common to all of us.' And so forth and so forth. Occasionally, I had an episode when I couldn't get it up and that bothered me." Lindner listened and told him to shrug it off.

Another matter Mailer brought up with Lindner was his friend "Bernard" (his pseudonym for Barney), a compulsive gambler. Lindner responded by sending Mailer his article, "The Psychodynamics of Gambling." It argues that gamblers are compelled to both win and lose, suffering either way. Mailer told Lindner that he was struck by how well it explained his father's addiction. "While I read your monograph a fund of rare compassion for him began to form in me—I understood how terribly compulsively neurotic Bernard is, how helpless he is, and I felt more tender toward him." Recalling Barney's 1949 English-colonel letter, Mailer went on to recount how "Bernard" had asked to borrow three thousand dollars and how after he had chastised him, "Bernard succeeded in punishing me by running the debt up to five thousand dollars" and then wrote him a highly abusive letter, the only one of its kind he had ever received from his "friend."

Chipping away at the novel four days a week, Mailer also found time to demonstrate bullfighting in his loft. Writing to Lew Allen in Mexico, he announced that he has become a

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"renowned toreros de salon" with sufficient dexterity "to pass a young lady carrying the horns without sweeping a single highball glass from the coffee table which serves as barrera." Mailer also began experimenting, quite seriously, with the Tarot deck, and came up with his own interpretations. He wrote them out, giving plus and minus characteristics for each of the 21 Trump cards (the oppositions intrigued him), and noting that the meanings were dynamic and "always dependent upon the constellation of the cards." He revamped the rules slightly—as he was wont to do with all the games he played.

Jonathan Cape, whose firm of the same name had published *Barbary Shore*, wrote to Mailer in January 1954 for a progress report on *The Deer Park*. Mailer replied that he was only four or five weeks away from finishing the new draft, but didn't want to rush the conclusion. He had done that on his first two novels, he said, and now regretted it. He also said that no one had seen the new draft. That changed on the weekend of January 16-17, when Mailer took the train to see Lindner in Baltimore. Adele did not join him; there was friction between her and Lindner's wife, Johnnie. Mailer described her as "a sort of pepper pot blonde, pepper pot fire. WASP, very strong in a breakable way, in other words vulnerable, vulnerable as hell. She was in the best sense of the word, a dame. She was full of strong feelings, full of love, full of lust, full of fire, full of the inability to pardon." Mailer brought the manuscript along and Lindner read it, as did Johnnie. They both gave him warm feedback. Lindner was intrigued with Marion Faye, who he called the novel's "evil principle," a description that Mailer said was close to his own feelings about the pimp.

Lindner was the staff psychiatrist at the local women's prison and, had a collateral interest in criminology. He and Mailer discussed the gamut of mental illnesses, especially

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schizophrenia and the range of behaviors linked with criminal psychopaths. Lindner was the adept and Mailer the catechumen, questioning, parsing his answers and challenging Lindner, who was to psychology what Malraux had been to politics. But Mailer was more willing to challenge Lindner—he had after all studied abnormal psychology at Harvard under the redoubtable Professor Murray, read Freud, Reich, Karen Horney and Theodore Reik, and spent most of his adult life observing and writing about human personality, its structure and fault lines, how it cohered, developed and disintegrated. Creating memorable characters was the *raison d'être* of his writing life. Recently, with Marion Faye, he had opened up a new line of inquiry. He had begun reading Kierkegaard's *Fear and Trembling* (1843) and it helped him decide that the psychopath and the saint were more alike than different. Dostoevsky had charted the path from sinner to saint, and Marion Faye, after plumbing the depths of sadomasochism, could become as selfless as Dorothy Day. Sin was not an end, but a beginning, a cathartic experience. This emerging belief was sharpened when he accompanied Lindner to the prison during his visit to Baltimore.

Mailer sat in on Lindner's brief interviews with 15 inmates and took notes. "The experience was just fantastic," he said. "I left there boiling with rage at the injustice of a sort I haven't felt since I was eighteen," referring to his experience at the Boston State Hospital. Observing the woman inmates, Mailer said, was one of the great discoveries of his life during this period. They were, he said in an interview in his final year, "not only much like you and me, but in a certain sense had a little touch of intensity that was more than you and me, because they'd been through the prison experience." Mailer asked one woman what she was in for, and

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she said she almost killed her husband with a knife, and went on to tell him about it. Her statements, he said, gave him a profound sense of

how deep, *how deep* were the roots of what was commonly called crime. And how human they were, and how *natural*. And for people who were not living as I was, gussied by all sorts of protection, ah, crime was very easy, it was instinctive; it was something you did, it was one of the arrows in your quiver; it was one of your answers to your environment; it was a way of continuing to live. And so very early in life, my thinking life was shaped by the notion that no crime is ever too bad not to be explored, that no judgment is to be made on a criminal for too little. And that stayed with me always, and it was invaluable, absolutely invaluable.

The whole idea of prison, he concluded, was "absolute idiocy." His visit and subsequent conversations with Lindner reawakened the idea of getting a non-literary job after *The Deer Park* was published, a job in a prison. He thought he would like to write a book on convicts and prison life.

Adele accompanied him to see the Lindners only every third time because of her lack of ease in social situations, Mailer said.

Adele could never have entertained the people, at that point—later Adele could—that Johnnie had over for dinner. So Adele stood out like a sore thumb. You know, "There's Mailer with his slum kid," was almost the attitude. But Adele wasn't from the slums; she was from the lower middle class, working class, but she was seen that way. It was awkward. You know, "You've brought the wrong

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person into the room," sort of. And she was very aware of that and Adele's worse fault was that when things got bad, she got worse. She did not respond to crises; she fell apart. And so if somebody handed her a drink and she received it with the wrong hand or something—I'm making this up—it would be something of that sort, whatever the code was, she'd broken it. Sure enough, she'd drop the glass a minute later.

Lindner and his wife had two young children and for this reason rarely came to visit the Mailers in New York. They did, however, attend the Mailers' wedding reception a week after the April 19 ceremony at City Hall.

According to Adele, "I didn't exactly nag Norman about getting married, but I would introduce the subject at every opportunity." Yet, Mailer felt she had reservations, as did he.

Similar in age, New York City backgrounds and hair-trigger tempers, they were education, and worlds apart in ambition. Before their children were born, sex was a bond. Finally, they took the leap. Mailer arose late on the morning of his wedding

naked on the bed making notes in his notebook. She stifled her annoyance, thinking, "after all, I was in love with a great writer, and living with genius had its price." At the City Hall ceremony, witnessed by Barney and Fan, Mailer gave Adele a \$13 ring, later replaced by a gold band. After the wedding, Mailer carried Adele over the threshold, and said: "Well, Mrs. Mailer, it's the beginning of a new chapter." The next day he went to work at his studio in Brooklyn.

Several days later, Dan Wolf and another First Avenue neighbor, Toby Schneebaum, planned a party back at the flat. Besides the Lindners, a number of literary friends came: the

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 Rinehart crowd, Lillian Hellman, Harvey Breit, who wrote about literary matters for the *New York Times* and summered in Provincetown, Ed Fancher, ~~Bar Wolf~~ ^{Lazare} and Rhoda (who would soon ~~marry~~) and James Jones. Jones got drunk, as did Toby, who took a bath in the tub Mailer had installed in the kitchen. Adele, "happy to be Mrs. Norman Mailer," cut the cake with Toby's machete.

At the time of the wedding, *The Caine Mutiny Court-Martial*, adapted from Herman Wouk's novel was an enormous hit on Broadway. It was produced by Charles Laughton and Paul Gregory and starred Henry Fonda. Tickets for the show, which ran for over a year, were difficult to obtain. Hoping to capitalize on its success, Gregory got in touch with Mailer to see if he would be interested in dramatizing *Naked*. Mailer was dubious for three reasons: Lillian Hellman had taken him down this road, and it had gone nowhere; he didn't want to take the time to work on the adaptation; and Gregory had praised *Naked* as "an extraordinary story of the Marines," adding that he'd read it five times. Lying was bad enough, but mixing up the two service branches nearly destroyed Gregory's credibility. But the opportunity to work with Laughton, whose acting and acumen Mailer admired, was tempting. If the deal went forward and made anything close to the huge sums Wouk was earning from *The Caine Mutiny*, that would be splendid, but whatever happened, Mailer wanted to try another line of work, perhaps as some sort of factotum in prison administration. But first, he had to finish *The Deer Park*.

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X / Writing on April 30, Mailer told a Hollywood friend, Chester Aaron that "by dint of pushing, nudging, sandpapering, worrying, and as my ex mother in law used to say—gidgying,"

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the novel would be ready in two weeks for final typing, which he planned to do himself. Aaron was thinking about getting married and Mailer gave his friend some advice on what he called "a monster of an institution." Live together, not just sleep together, for at least six months, he said, because a good part of marriage is "the whole business of congenial room-mates." He went on to fault himself for being "old Polonius Mailer," especially because "I'm often convinced I'll be married six times in my life." Adele didn't like to hear her new husband talk about future marriages, he said, although neither of them could have known that ^{his} Mailer's prediction would prove accurate 26 years later.

By this time, Mailer had shown the novel in near-final form to someone at Rinehart, probably Amussen, because he told Fig and Ecey that "they" liked it, but it is clear that the manuscript had not yet reached Stan Rinehart's desk. He repeated his news to Lew Allen and for the first time in months sounded upbeat, in part because Jones was back in town. Mailer was unequivocal: "[L]ife with Jonesie has been great," he wrote; "with that loud brawling animal quality of his which loves life so instinctively and so warmly, I begin to feel a little warmer myself." When Jones is around, he continued, "you have the feeling that things are going to happen, as indeed often they do." He gave this example:

There was a party at Styron's last night, and we all got drunk and decided to send a telegram to [Senator] Joe McCarthy. So here's how it went:

DEAR JOE, WE DIG YOU, BUT GET THE BROWN OUT OF YOUR NOSE!

VANCE BOURJAILY, JAMES JONES, NORMAN MAILER, JOHN

PHILLIPS, WILLIAM STYRON.

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Despite our mirth and our drunkenness, I think deep down we were a little aghast. It's exactly the sort of thing you go to a concentration camp for three years later.

The Jewish catastrophe theory of history, learned first at his mother's knee, was never far from his mind, especially when things were going well.

The Mailers had hoped to leave for Mexico on June 1, as soon as he typed and submitted the final manuscript to Rinehart for copy-editing. But before he began, he learned that the rough manuscript submitted earlier, and carrying the unambiguously glowing endorsement of Amussen, was read by his boss. "Something in the sex has gotten a neurotic hair up Stan Rinehart's ass," Mailer wrote to Devlin. He met with Stan and they had an argument, but a decision on the novel's fate was postponed until Rinehart saw how Mailer had handled his objections. Mailer figured it would take him about two weeks. Then he would leave on his long-planned vacation in Mexico. By May 28 he had starting typing, about the same time he learned that he had "a lousy liver," an after-effect of his wartime yellow jaundice. The doctor said no alcohol—Mailer had been drinking too much anyway—or fried foods for 30 days. No prohibition against marijuana was mentioned, and it became his substitute for scotch. It would soon become his drug of choice and, within two years, his secret weapon in his war against "the shits" running the country.

As the struggle with Rinehart was unfolding, Mailer heard from Lois Wilson. She would be passing through New York in early June. Could he suggest places and methods for "fancy indiscretions"? She was eager to see him again because "when I think of quality I think of

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Norman," adding that among her colleagues "there's not a decent piece of ass." Mailer wrote back immediately to say that he was borrowing a friend's apartment for their reunion. Bring along the Polaroid photos you took last time, he said, because "as the years go by, I just get dirtier and dirtier." At loggerheads with his publisher, weakened by a bad liver, and preparing for a four-month trip to Mexico with his bride of a month, Mailer was nevertheless eager to "put both my arms around your big white moon." As he had foreseen, marriage would not interfere with the desires of this "gallant bucko."

Around June 10, Mailer placed the novel in the hands of Amussen. It had taken Mailer 13 consecutive days to type, and was the last time he would type a long manuscript. The fellatio scene remained intact but, but as he explained to Lindner, "I took the descriptive edge off it so the reader will have no more than a sense that something perverted happened." Even a few years later, certainly by 1960, the scene would hardly arch an eyebrow.

Tentatively, she reached out a hand to caress his hair, and at that moment Herman Teppis opened his legs and let Bobby slip to the floor. At the expression of surprise on her face, he began to laugh. 'Just like that sweetie,' he said, and down he looked at that frightened female mouth, facsimile of all those smiling lips he had seen so ready to be nourished at the fount of power and with a shudder he started to talk. 'That's a good girlie, that's a good girlie, that's a good girlie,' he said in a mild little voice, 'you're just an angel darling, and I like you, and you understand, you're my darling darling, oh, that's the ticket,' said Teppis.

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Mailer had his reunion with Lois Wilson on June 13, and four days later left for Mexico. "Things at Rinehart turned out beautifully," as he wrote to Lindner in mid-July. All the young editors had given enthusiastic reports on the manuscript, and there was no showdown with Stan, who apparently did not want to buck the entire editorial department. Instead, he "retired into sulky silence." *The Deer Park* was accepted as submitted. A publication date of February 1955 was set. Except for reading galleys, nothing remained to do on the novel, and Mailer again asked Lindner about helping him get a prison job. He was looking ahead and feeling good enough to have a few drinks and relax the strict diet he had been on for six weeks. He was smoking "tea," as he referred to it, almost every day.

✕ / They settled in a fortress-like colonial house surrounded by 300-year old trees. There was an interior garden with orchards and a large patio. He wrote his Japanese translator, Eiichi Yamanishi, that Adele painted and he studied Spanish and read books about crime and prison. Bea dropped Susan off regularly to visit and she was "a bright spot" in his day, although he worried that his anxieties might make her neurotic.

Stan Rinehart's distaste for the novel was mildly unsettling, but the silence of friends was painful. Mailer had yet to receive any response from Adeline, Malaquais, Styron, Jones or Devlin, all of whom had been sent copies, nor from his publishers in England, Germany or Japan. In an anxious mid-July letter to Styron and his wife, he said he had "an uneasy feeling" that they had not commented because they surmised that doing so "would alter our friendship." A few days later, a four-page, handwritten letter from Styron arrived. After stating straightaway that the novel was "honest and brilliant," and agreeing with Bob Loomis, his editor, that it had "a deep sense of morality," Styron shifted gears and worked his way painstakingly through a run of

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qualifications and small beer praise, noting, for example, that the novel was “depressing in its magnificent candor,” and that it was brimming with “unalleviated and leaden anxiety.” He concluded: “I don’t like the book, but I admire the hell out of it.” Styron also thought that O’Shaughnessy didn’t come off well as a narrator.

When Mailer replied, he said that he “truly appreciated” the critique, and that his own reaction would probably be the same “if hypothetically someone else had written it.” Mailer’s tone in a number of letters during this period was muted and agreeable; he would raise no passionate defense of the novel. I was attempting to write a great novel, he said to Styron, one that had the same kind of dry irony found in *The Red and the Black*, but “my imagination and my daring and my day to day improvisation dried up.” Nevertheless, he said, my vocation as a writer has been confirmed by surviving the “progressively more depressing” process of writing his second and third novels over the previous five years.

Besides his parents and sister, his main supports were Lindner, Wolf and Adele. The Gwaltneys read it when the Mailers stopped on the way to Mexico, and were enthusiastic in their praise. Wolf was a staunch admirer. Lindner—the first person outside the family to read it—offered to write a preface and later wrote a glowing review in the *Village Voice*. Until his untimely death, he maintained a rich dialogue with Mailer and deeply influenced his conception of the rebel hipster Mailer would call “the white negro.” Adele, Mailer’s sister, loved everything that he wrote. “Because I loved him,” she wrote in her memoir, “I handed everything over, my heart, my body, and my talent.” Mailer said that she was a sensitive reader and he always valued her opinion. “She had instinctive good taste and she could spot all that was phony in a novel as fast as I could.” The novel is dedicated to Adele and Dan Wolf.

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In August, more reports appeared noting that *Naked* had been sold to Paul Gregory's film company, and that filming would begin in July 1955. Robert Mitchum was slated for a starring role, the articles stated. In fact, the contract for the sale was not signed for another three months, and when the film was finally made in 1958, Mitchum was committed elsewhere. Mailer communicated with Cy Rembar about the contract while he was in Mexico, but with scant enthusiasm. His hunch was that the film would be much less powerful than the magnificent film version of *From Here to Eternity*, and he was right. Nevertheless, he wanted the sale to go through because his income from *Naked* was noticeably diminishing and, if Stan Rinehart's gorge rose again, he might be forced to pay for the private printing of *The Deer Park*. A part of him almost hoped this would be the case.

One of the things he had put off for the previous two years was reading the work of his contemporaries. So, in addition to reading crime books and going to bullfights, he began reading books "by the cartload." He found little to admire. He began with *The Gallery* (1944), John Horn Burns' novel about the American occupation of Naples, and deemed it "minor," saying he couldn't finish it. James Gould Cozzens' novel of the stateside Army Air Force, *Guard of Honor*, which beat out *Naked* for the Pulitzer Prize in 1948, he found to be "essentially slick and worse than dull as compared to say *The Caine Mutiny*." He read *The Ballad of the Sad Café* (1951) and said, "I can't understand how people got so wild about Carson McCullers." The only book that he liked was Saul Bellow's *The Adventures of Augie March* (1953), which had just won the National Book Award. "I found it impressive but somehow unexciting. Really the damndest book—I have to admire his courage, his ambition, his 'openness' to try anything and everything, but the pieces are more exciting than the whole, and nothing in it really disturbs one." For the

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next thirty years, Mailer had good and bad things to say about Bellow. The negative comments usually echoed the one voiced here, namely, that Bellow did not make his readers itch, and was too easily pleased by his ability to elegantly repeat the pieties and paradoxes of high culture figures such as Freud, Proust and Henry James.

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Mailer did some writing in Mexico, namely a short piece he had agreed to write for *One: The Homosexual Magazine*, after a telephone conversation with the New York secretary for the sponsoring organization. Mailer turned him down at first, and the man countered by asking if Mr. Mailer would prefer to write anonymously, shielding his reputation, but still showing support for the aims of the magazine. Mailer wrote, "my pride was that I would say in print anything that I believed, but I was not ready to say a word in public defense of homosexuals." He feared that his article would not be read widely, he said in a letter to the secretary, and that gossip-columnist "maggots like [Walter] Winchell and [Lee] Mortimer will print a line—'Norman Mailer writing articles for the limp-wrist set magazine One'." It would then be taken for granted that he was homosexual, a disagreeable prospect. But he agreed to write the essay. The secretary clinched his approval by saying that if he did, perhaps he could be the movement's first congressman. The man knew "the way to me," Mailer wrote in a preface to the piece when he reprinted it: "[M]ate the absurd with the apocalyptic, and I was a captive." In mid-September, after approving the galley proofs of *The Deer Park* with only a few minor corrections, he sat down to write the essay.

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The turning point in his views on gays came after he read Toby Schneebaum's copy of *The Homosexual in America: A Subjective Approach* (1951) by Donald Webster Cory. He resisted it as he read, but could not escape the recognition of his bias ~~that~~ it provided. In the essay, which he titled "The Homosexual Villain," he wrote, "I had been acting a bigot in this matter." As a libertarian socialist, he had always insisted that "sexual relations, above everything else, demand their liberty." But he had been unwilling to grant this freedom to homosexuals. Wilhelm Reich in *The Sexual Revolution: Toward a Self-Governing Character Structure* (1945) had first shown him the link, he said, between political and sexual repression, and now Mailer was "properly ashamed." He explained that he had consciously attributed "unpleasant, ridiculous, or sinister connotations" to gay or bi-sexual characters in his novels, most notably, Gen. Cummings in *Naked* and Leroy Hollingsworth in *Barbary Shore*. "I had no conscious homosexual desires," Mailer wrote, but he was suspicious about his dislike of gays, wondering if it might be an unconscious cover for such feelings. Once he had admitted, and corrected, his bias, and begun to enjoy his friendships with men like Schneebaum, he found he was no longer worried about latent homosexuality. Lindner's assurances also played a role.

X ✓ Dotson Rader, the writer and anti-war activist, met Mailer in 1967 and became a close friend, ~~Mailer's best gay friend~~. He had many conversations with him about homosexuality over the years, and said Mailer was deeply curious about the mechanics of gay sex, "the moist specifics," as Rader put it. When Rader first came to New York, older gay men such as Andy Warhol and Tennessee Williams (with whom Rader had a long affair) warned him about Mailer. Capote thought Mailer was a latent homosexual, and told Rader, with fingers crossed, that he

was afraid Mailer would rape him. ~~Rader recalled his~~ "So when I was first with Norman," Rader recalled,

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So, when I was first with Norman I would sort of bait him. And he never responded in a way that was negative. He always responded with humor. By baiting him, I mean, I'd lean over and say to him, "Did anyone ever tell you that you have beautiful blue eyes." That kind of stuff; I would tease him as if I was coming on to him. Most homophobes would say, "Keep your hands to yourself," which was kind of funny because bigots, when they react instinctively, in a bigoted way, usually get angry, but they're really angry at themselves because they reveal their cards. Norman was never that way.

A little over a week after he sent off the essay to *One*, Mailer heard from Amussen: The galleys were in hand and production was about to begin. There was nothing to fret about, he said, everything was "under control." Mailer wrote to Styron the same day to congratulate him on buying a house in Connecticut and thank him for the invitation to visit. In all of his correspondence during his last few weeks in Mexico, he recites his uncertainty about selling *Naked* to Hollywood. Being poor and having new experience foisted on him was his preference, yet the prospect of cashing his biggest paycheck since *Naked* was published—\$110,000 plus a cut of the profits—had obvious appeal; he thought he could write three or four more books on the proceeds. Nothing was said about *The Deer Park*. It was in the finished, Mailer thought, and time to move on.

Before they left Mexico, Mailer had an extraordinary experience on marijuana. He told the story more than once in his later years.

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When the marijuana really hit, I went to the bathroom—I remember this—and vomited. Some of the most incredible vomiting I ever had. It was like an apocalyptic purge, the most unbelievable orgasm of your life except it wasn't agreeable because it was vomiting. But it had the power of an apocalyptic orgasm. And when I came out of it, I was on pot for the first time of my life, really on. Up to that point, I just had intimations of what was on. Now I was on. Light deepened, things changed. I remember lying down, getting dizzy, looking at Adele who was sleeping off her pot on another couch; there were two parallel couches, and I could seem to make her face whoever I wanted her to be, just lying there. Her face would change from this person to that person. Probably could change her into an animal if I wished. And that was just the beginning. After that every night for a few weeks, I went down to the car, turned on the radio, listened to it, smoked pot, breathed it in in the car and got into jazz for the first time. For the first time in my life, I could really understand jazz.

He began buying bags of marijuana at a dollar apiece and carefully removing the twigs and seeds. Anticipating his luggage being searched when he and Adele and Susan reached the border, he hid his cache in Adele's Kotex tampons, which were then put in condoms.

I had the feeling that this was the way to get it through customs. And sure enough, when the time came and we were crossing the border—I remember Susie, by then, was about five and turned to me and said, 'Daddy,'—she had a wonderful sort of Spanish accent—'Why are you so nervous?' I was ready to clout the kid—anyway, the customs guy sort of went through our bags very carefully and when

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he got to Adele's bag and he opened it, I had put some black lace panties on top of the Kotex box. He lifted them very gingerly, saw the Kotex box, slapped back the panties, closed her bag and that was it.

Mailer had the supplies he needed for his upcoming campaign.

Chapter 6

General Marijuana and the Navigator

"Calculation never made a hero." John Henry Cardinal Newman,

The sale of *Naked* to Gregory and Laughton went through in November 1954. Feeling financially secure, and perhaps weary of looking out their bathroom window on a cemetery, the Mailers decided to move and rented a duplex in a four-story brownstone at 320 East 55th Street, not far from Sutton Place, one of the wealthiest enclaves in New York, where they would remain for the next two years. Susan, who was spending the fall with them, had her own bedroom. Speaking of the move, Mailer told Vance and Tina Bourjaily that he wanted his gravestone to read, "He wished to live only at the bottom or the top." Adele bought new modern furniture and hung her paintings on the wall; he busied himself catching up on his correspondence and trying to place "The Man Who Studied Yoga." He purchased hi-fi equipment, but felt guilty about the expense. "When the revolution comes," he wrote to the Bourjailys, "the workers will put me on a

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spit." He wrote to Gregory to say that Robert Mitchum was too big physically to play Sgt. Croft in the film version of *Naked*. He wanted Brando, whose recent performance in *The Wild One* (1953) as the leader of a motorcycle gang impressed him for its subtle combination of repressed violence and "a certain spirituality." In several letters to friends, he cited continental writers who had influenced *The Deer Park*: Stendhal, Gide, Proust and Moravia. Writing to his uncle Louis in South Africa on November 17, he said that "it meant something to me to get off the floor" after the failure of *Barbary Shore*. A day or two later, with a *Publishers' Weekly* advertisement for the novel already in print, Stan Rinehart insisted on deletion of the fellatio scene. Mailer refused; Rinehart broke the contract and halted production. *The Deer Park* was adrift, and although Mailer didn't know it, unfinished.

The story of what happened over the next two months, as the novel moved from publisher to publisher, picking up rejection slips like barnacles, is told in a long essay, "The Mind of an Outlaw," published in *Esquire* four years later. It is, Mailer told Manso, "the most accurate account I've ever written of myself," as well his declaration of independence from the New York literary world of "cliques, fashions, vogues, snobs, snots, and fools, not to mention a dozen bureaucracies of criticism." The era of magisterial editors and publishers like Maxwell Perkins, Robert Linscott and Charles Scribner was gone, he lamented, and "there was no room for the old literary idea of oneself as a major writer, a figure in the landscape." From November 1954 to January 1955 *The Deer Park* was considered by Random House, Knopf, Simon and Schuster, Harper's, Scribner's and Harcourt Brace. Styron was enlisted to help at Random House, although he told Hiram Haydn, the top editor there, that he had mixed feelings about it, something Mailer already knew. Haydn also didn't like it, finding it to be "gray and dreary."

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Mailer was always urging his friends who had reservations about the novel to read it a second time, and when Haydn did, he reversed himself and saw a "convincing strain of compassion for his unlovely and unhappy characters." But this came too late to help him at Random House. Jones may have tried to help at Scribner's, his (and Hemingway's) publisher, but the editors there detested it. Mailer soon learned that Jones felt the same way. He wrote to Mailer that the novel was "a pretty bad book," and compared it unfavorably to *Barbary Shore*. He added, "I still believe there are great books in you. Great books. If you can ever get them out." On some days, Mailer thought that *The Deer Park* was, if not great, close to it, and Jones' dismissal of it, on top of Styron's lukewarm praise, dealt a blow to the esprit of the trio.

The novel got the lengthiest consideration from the firm of Alfred A. Knopf, and Mailer would have been elated to see its elegant Borzoi wolfhound logo on its title page, given the firm's commitment to high literary endeavor, and several of Mailer's literary heroes—Spengler, Mann, Maugham, and Pound—on its rolls. Working with the firm's lawyers for three weeks, he said, "I took out sentence after sentence which might be construed as sexually gratuitous," agreeing to these excisions because they were willing to leave the fellatio scene intact. But when the lawyers pressed for more cuts, he bridled and negotiations ceased. He blamed Blanche Knopf, the founder's wife, for being "almost irrationally terrified" about the book being prosecuted. But he was wrong; she was "eager" for the firm to take it, as her husband explained in his memoirs. It was Knopf himself, and his top lawyer, Harry Buchman, who were opposed. Shortly after it was turned down, the Knopfs invited the Mailers to a cocktail party. When they were leaving, Alfred went to the door with them. Mailer, he recalled, "immediately offered to bet me that the book would sell over a hundred thousand copies." Mailer repeated the offer a day or

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two later in a letter, saying he would wager "hard cash" on his instinct, and that if Knopf did not reply, "the impression I obtained of your character when we exchanged 40 words at Blanche's party will be confirmed." Knopf wrote back a terse note, declining the bet and saying he had "no reason to care one whit whether your book sells 250 or 250,000 copies."

Adele remembers that during this period he would "just sit staring at nothing," all the while ^{the} drinking scotch and chewing the ice cubes. ^{LP 214} "Sometimes in the middle of a conversation, he would seem to be distracted. It was as if he was out of his body. He would smile to himself, as if I weren't there, his lips moving soundlessly, having a dialogue with himself." As the rejections piled up, Mailer stayed as close to the manuscript "as a stage-struck mother pushing her child forward at every producer's office. I was amateur agent for it, messenger boy, editorial consultant, Machiavelli of the luncheon table, fool of the five o'clock drinks, I was learning publishing business in a hurry, and I made a hundred mistakes and paid for each one by wasting a new bout of energy." His exposure to the manners and mores of the publishing world was the kind of experience, he said, that "was likely to return some day as good work."

"The Mind of an Outlaw" is that good work. It can be compared, with some justice, to F. Scott Fitzgerald's 1936 essay, "The Crack-Up," an anguished account of his descent from renown to obscurity. Arresting as it is, Fitzgerald's piece (also published in *Esquire*) reeks of self-pity. Mailer's essay is not without it, but he is considerably feistier, funnier, caustic in some places, self-lacerating in others, and captures perfectly his jangled mood after Rinehart's rejection. Exaggerated descriptions of his novel's obscenity were sloshing around publishers row in New York, and each new rumor, Mailer believed, narrowed the novel's chances at the next publishing house to which it was sent. To get the \$5,000 due him upon submission, he had to

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mount a costly legal effort. The novel he had started about a concentration camp, "The City of God," was another casualty, he said. Given his sea of troubles, beginning a new novel was inconceivable. Finally, the sum of his frustrations "drove a spike into my cast-iron mind," forcing the recognition that he had become "the sort of comic figure I would have cooked to a turn in one of my books, a radical who had the nineteenth-century naïveté to believe that the people with whom he did business were 1) gentlemen, 2) fond of him, and 3) respectful of his ideas even if in disagreement with them." The man who ultimately took the novel, Walter Minton, the ~~new~~ president of Putnam's, was more to Mailer's liking; he reminded him of a general. He paid Mailer \$10,000, the highest advance in the history of Putnam's. Minton would live up to his reputation a few years later when he would publish another controversial novel, Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita* (1958). Ted Purdy, editor-in-chief, was also high on the novel, and Minton later told Mills that it was "the best novel that's ever been written about Hollywood." Minton asked for no changes, yet Mailer was still unhappy, savoring his disappointed that he would not be self-publishing *The Deer Park*.

His use of marijuana had accelerated in Mexico; he was also drinking again, his liver having recovered, but "tea" was his drug of choice, opening his senses and his passion for jazz, "intricate music that spoke of the complexity of life," as he later described it. The Mailers went to clubs in Harlem and the Village where they heard Dizzy Gillespie and Sonny Rollins, and another great jazz musician of the era, Miles Davis. He was also engaged in regular, energetic discussions with Lindner, discussing matters such as the heroic character of the psychopaths of the Wild West and the id as a healthy animal, not a monster to be chained. The combined effects of this stimulation—his colloquies with Lindner, jazz, marijuana (and the liquor and sleeping

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pills with which he tempered it), the raucous, disenthralled culture of Harlem, and the adrenalin that Rinehart's betrayal pumped into his system—led to something bursting within his deepest self.

I do not know if it was so much a loving heart, as a cyst of the weak, the unreal and the needy, and I was finally open to my anger. I turned within my psyche I can almost believe, for I felt something shift to murder in me. I finally had the simple sense to understand that if I wanted my work to travel further than others, the life of my talent depended on fighting a little more, and looking for help a little less. But I deny the sequence in putting it this way, for it took me years to come to this fine point. All I felt then was that I was an outlaw, a psychic outlaw, and I liked it, I liked it a good night better than trying to be a gentleman.

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On December 1, 1954, Mailer began setting down the ideas that came in wake of the Rinehart rupture. He called it "Lipton's Journal," a not-so-veiled reference to the "tea" he smoked before he sat at his typewriter. He wrote fast, in bursts of ten or more pages every few days, and over the course of three months, until March 4, 1955, typed 248 pages containing approximately 110,000 words. The entries are numbered, 1 to 689; each is a stand-alone pensée. As he proceeded, he entertained the possibility that his insights could challenge some of the ruling ideas of Western thought, specifically, Freud's theories on the merits of sublimation and repression.

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But at a dozen points he faltered, questioning the wisdom of naked soul bearing, much as Whitman did in "Song of Myself."

As was evident in the notes yesterday, I was moving toward a depression, and it came on me during the evening. I felt very tired, and rather disgusted with myself. It seemed to me as if I'd been indulging in mental masturbation for quite a few days, playing word games, playing at being a genius, playing at being at the edge of psychotic . . .

Last night taking my secondals I thought—'A pill for the swill.' And I was flat (stunned) by the recognition. How I hate this journal, hate myself, hate Adele, hate my wild kick, hate the garbage I release, how I cling to society to knock me out, to stun my rebellion. If I ever go insane I'll not be a schizo. I'll be manic depressive.

His recoveries are just as fervent; he sometimes sounds like Kerouac:

I am manic, alive, filled every day with the excitement and revelation of everything I see.

I'm a synthesizer, just as a crook is. I cannot make the original discovery, but I can add the fabulous jewel to it at my best. So I dip into other books and other men's styles, take the ideas I wish, throw away the others, understand one facet of a person to the exclusion of the rest because what I want is the jewel in the suitcase—fuck the rest, fuck the furs and the bonds.

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My mind is like a tiger.

The journal jumps over a wide arc of heterogeneous material, making it hard at times to find a filament of continuity, yet it hangs together. One reason is that "Lipton's" is a psychoanalytic act. Lindner wouldn't analyze him, so he does the job himself. He looks at his childhood, his wives, his family and friends, his ambitions and his failures, his writings, all with an eye to clarifying the basic lineaments and conflicts of his psyche so that he can move forward and claim his genius, which he boldly asserts. Another claim to coherence is that the journal is a dictionary of dualisms. The indubitable doubleness of all nature, all phenomena, is the centrifugal belief that supports every exploration in the journal. All the antinomies that Mailer had pondered since his youth come tumbling out. He works through a range of commonplace oppositions such as sun-moon, conscious-unconscious, heaven-hell, as well as bodily functions—orgasms and vomiting, weeping and laughter, intercourse as giving and taking—and dozens of others: choice-habit, antacid-analgesic (which he proposes as the title of a one thousand-page novel), and energetic repetitions of the saint-psychopath dualism. He considers his sexuality, his addictions, and like Hawthorne's Rev. Dimmesdale, practices vigils of self-examination.

Looking at myself in the mirror, high on Lipton's, I saw myself as follows: The left side of my face is comparatively heavy, sensual, possessor of hard masculine knowledge, strong, proud, and vain. Seen front-face I appear nervous, irresolute, tender, anxious, vulnerable, earnest, and Jewish middle-class. The right side of my face is boyish, saintly, bisexual, psychopathic, and suggests the victim.

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For Mailer at this time it was incontestable that two people—not two halves of one—lived inside every human. As he put it, “Every man is a marriage within himself.” The two people inhabiting him, referred to over and over as the saint and the psychopath, are linked by “the apparently silly compromise of an over-friendly anxious boyish Jewish intellectual, ‘seductive’ and inhibited by turns.” This front-face construct, a “social image,” is close to being a “despised image,” he says, but one necessary for fruitful relations with those he is too much in awe of to disclose his real self, or selves. He names as authority figures Amussen, Stan Rinehart and John Aldridge, but says there are many others. Lindner is not one of them. He is Mailer’s audience of one, a source of psychoanalytic practice and insight and, in a real way, his collaborator on the journal. They are utterly candid.

The inter-fecundation is starting. A letter from Bob says, ‘Occasionally, . . . I find myself leaping ahead in my mind—or arguing fiercely as if you were present.’ It has to be. So many of my ideas are expansions of Bob’s ideas—in turn many of mine will be expanded by Bob. Yet, I’m ashamed to say that I was not entirely pleased when I read the above. There’s a part of me which is such a holder. I really hate to give with a part of me, and I usually give best when I will not be totally accepted. (Bob was right about this.) I’m so afraid things will be stolen—which of course is the way of saying things will be improved. What causes the rich man so much anguish when his joint is looted is that deep in him he suspects that the thief will enjoy his property more than he did. There is one other fear about Bob which is justifiable perhaps. I’m not at all sure he’s the revolutionary—he is so capable of turning back to be the mere reformer.

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When Mailer became rampant and arrogant during a December visit to Baltimore, Lindner called him "a pint-sized Hitler." "It's so true," Mailer acknowledged in the journal. He could be just as frank: "Lindner gave me a pain in the ass last weekend," he wrote. "He acted like a shy sexy teasing society bitch who gave you the sexual come-on when you'd given up, and threw her manners at you when you advanced." When Lindner said that Mailer was "blindly paranoid," Mailer countered with a list of his friend's lacks: "his shlumperness, his sly (but heavy) manipulations, his hang-dogness, his fear of authority, his half-works, his games with Johnny, his guilt about it, his guilt about every fucking thing." Yet they were close enough for Mailer to compare their relationship to that of Marx and Engels, and concluded, "If I didn't like him so much, if I didn't feel so psychically [sic] close, as if we were the two talented Jewish sons of the same family, the older brother I never had, I really would be tempted to slug that sly stealing cocksucker." As he completed portions of the journal, he would mail the carbon to Lindner, who responded with long letters.

Mailer knew the writings of Marx better than he did those of Freud; the converse was true of Lindner, but both felt the ideas of the two great thinkers needed irrigation. He laid it out:

So, modestly, I see my mission. It is to put Freud into Marx, and Marx into Freud. Put Tolstoy into Dostoyevsky and Dostoyevsky into Tolstoy. Open anarchism with its soul-sense to the understanding of complexity, and infuse complex gloom with the radiance of anarchism. As Jenny Silverman said of me once, 'The little pisherke with the big ideas.' Pint-sized Hitler. Yes.

In another entry, Mailer fleshed out the reciprocal, developing nature of their missions.

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I who was one of the worst soldiers ever to go into an Army, one of the people who had the least feeling for Army life, nonetheless was the one who had to capture the psychology inside and out of the Army. I, who am timid, cowardly, and wish only friendship and security, am the one who must take on the whole world. I, whose sexual nature is to cling to one woman like a child embracing the universe, am driven by my destiny to be the orgiast, or at least the intellectual mentor of orgasm. I, who find it essentially easier to love than to hate; I who could probably find more people to love in the world than anyone I know, am destined to write about characters who are conventionally 'unlovable.'

Mailer's Marxist mentor, Malaquais, receives a few comments and it is clear that their friendship will continue, although slightly altered. Mailer is grateful to Malaquais, but no longer stands in complete awe of him. This can be seen in an early entry, a reflection on the "square blunt building-brick quality" that Mailer found to characterize most socialist analyses. His emerging style can be seen in the extended metaphor with which he reveals the evolution of their relationship.

His thought of course has the nobility of a cathedral, but he's filled every square inch of the cathedral with a tile, and so his new thought can consist merely of improving the total design. He can replace one tile by another. But he will never build a cathedral which dissolves into light. For all the beauty of his conceptions, a dank oppressive gloom breathes out of the doors and no one wants to enter Malaquais' cathedral. He is left the gloomy caretaker of it. One reason he cannot chase me away entirely is that I'm the village boy who wandered in one evening

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and stayed to admire the cathedral for many years, asking the caretaker every day, 'Don Malaquais, tell me about the saints, and why this stone is this color?' I was a naughty boy and I was forever quitting his lessons to throw stones at the bats, but what he cannot bear, dear Malaquais, is the silence now that I am gone. Timidly, terrified, like a shy old miser, he is making endless preparations necessary to go out and buy a new hat. He has no real hope he'll be detained in the village and find a place to build a new cathedral, he knows he'll go back to the old one and watch the bats multiply.

If there is any doubt about the shift in Mailer's feelings, his list of desired literary executors in the journal makes it clear. He names his sister, Cy Rembar, Dan Wolf and, as chief executor, Lindner. Malaquais is not on the list. Barney is.

In late January, Mailer spent most of day with his father. It was, he wrote, the first real talk they had ever had, and he told his father that he loved him, "instead of hitting him with all kinds of shit and making him feel like a piece of dirt." For the first time, he had the conviction that he understood Barney from Barney's perspective. He saw that his father's gambling was not just a neurotic condition, but also "an expression of his artistry," not only an aberration but also a source of deep pleasure for Barney, however much it aggrieved the conventional sensibilities of his mother. He repeated that Barney understood him better than his mother, and what appeared to be his father's pompousness was really a burlesque of Fan's bourgeois sentiments.

He overdid it. Unconsciously, he made her sound ridiculous. It was his private way of encouraging me to be a rebel. Her dictums made a certain practical

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common-sense. To rebel against them would have made me feel too guilty. But there was my father, repeating what she said, exaggerating it, multiplying it, until the sheer human nonsense of bourgeois human values rang in my head From deep within him, he was warning me, he was saying, 'Go out, son, be a rebel, because if you're not a rebel you'll end up a pompous fool, ignored, and the subject of people's contempt. So I loved him today.

Mailer would soon enough overtop Barney's transgressions, although he would never cut himself off from his mother's family values. If Fan was a bourgeois "saint," Barney, as Mailer's sister put it, "was probably a bit psychopathic."

On his thirty-second birthday, Mailer wrote over 10,000 words in "Lipton's," a record. He was preparing himself, anointing himself. In his thirty-third, Christological year, he would begin his public mission as prophet and culture hero. The journal's ruminations and meditations, the postscripts to his first three novels, the brutally honest self-analysis, and the candid portraits of family members and friends comprise a web of carefully considered calibrations of his relationships with people, events and ideas, set down in preparation for this mission. We can in fairness call the journal an examination of conscience and consciousness, but perhaps more than anything else it is an urgent summoning of his powers. Mailer termed it a "great adventure," adding "I don't think I have ever been so frightened in my life."

He wrote long passages in the journal exploring the relations between the saint and the psychopath, often sounding like D.H. Lawrence, whose continuing influence on Mailer cannot be

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gainsaid. Here is Lawrence, commenting on Tolstoy's espousal of Christianity in his late works, followed by Mailer.

And this is Tolstoi, the philosopher with a very nauseating Christian-brotherhood idea of himself. Why limit man to a Christian brotherhood? I myself, I could belong to the sweetest Christian-brotherhood one day, and ride after Attila with a raw beefsteak for my saddle-cloth, to see the red cock crow in flame over all Christendom, next day.

One must love disorder and love order, hate order and hate disorder. Yet, here is where I disagree with the Greeks and all the other Golden Meaners—there is no such thing as a Golden Mean in Life. It is only by welcoming the extremes of one's personality, tempering those extremes only—assuming of which I'm not certain that life here is better than life-after-death—tempering those extremes only by the knowledge that one must not be destroyed by them, that one goes on, one grows, one finds creative-destroying fulfillment.

The journal is also a testament of his love for Adele.

Adele's qualities. She hated the portrait of Elena, it hurt her terribly, she felt it was the way I saw her, yet she accepted it, she loves the book. Part of it of course is her despised image of herself, but more important still is the terrific woman in her who accepts my work no matter how painful it is to her, who is even capable of wishing only the best for it.

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Near the end of the journal, Mailer states explicitly what until then he had held back:

"[T]oday I can know that I love her because the thought of losing her, through death, through the army [he feared being recalled if war with the Soviet Union broke out], through jail, through whatever, is unbearable to me. A void opens. I know that without her I would be a cripple." Their relationship was far from settled; there was rough ground ahead. But they had reached a plateau.

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Adele recalled his mood swings in early 1955, and the extremes of his personality. At parties, she said, he took pains to include her in conversations, while holding her hand and smiling. "I never felt pushed into the background," she said, "because I was essentially not competitive with him. If anything, I was proud of my darling when he was at his sober, intelligent, funny, best in public." But when he was drinking heavily, he flirted with other women, and got into arguments. Adele says she began to find telephone numbers written on matchbooks, and wondered why he had to prove to himself that women liked him wrote, when they had an argument in the presence of Dan Wolf, he slapped her. She often drank heavily at parties, trying to drown the "nagging voice in my head that whispered, 'You're an imposter. You're not this cool, beautiful wife of a famous writer.'" The booze freed her, she said to play opposite Mailer's repertoire of roles, including "Rocky Marciano, Jesse James, Miles Davis the Cool and Scott Fitzgerald the Drunk."

Mailer's experimentation with personas in "Lipton's" contains extended characterological theories and ruminations arising from his new identity as saint-psychopath. He

planned to deploy his ideas in at least three novels: the recently aborted concentration camp novel, "The City of God"; "Antacid-Analgesic," a mammoth novel about sex; a third is a continuation of the stories of Marion Faye and Sergius O'Shaugnessy. None of these came to pass, but their themes would be examined in the essay that established Mailer's reputation as a philosopher of Hip, "The White Negro." The first idea came to him on December 31, 1954: "Wild thought. The atom bomb may naturally have kicked off hipsterism." The link persisted in memory and in the early spring of 1957, he wrote the first sentence of the essay: "Probably, we will never be able to determine the psychic havoc of the concentration camps and the atom bomb upon the unconscious mind of almost everyone alive in these years." The hipster, the American existentialist, Mailer wrote, appeared on "this bleak scene," determined to live in the "enormous present" under the overhang of past totalitarian liquidation and potential nuclear destruction. The prime model for the hipster, Mailer avers, is the urban Negro (Black or African-American were not the accepted terms until the mid-1960s). He may have been the first writer to point to the links between the restless energies and suffering of American Blacks, the atom bomb and the German crematoria.

On January 27, 1955, he introduced a new topic in the journal: the sexual potency of Blacks. He says that "Southern rage" at Negro progress is due to the "unconscious belief in the myth—which may well be right—that the nigger has a happy sex life, happier than the white, and the Negro is recompensed for his low state in society by his high state in the fuck. The scales are balanced." Two years later, Mailer told his idea to a journalist, Lyle Stuart, and Stuart sent it to William Faulkner, Eleanor Roosevelt and several others for comment. The mainly negative responses that came back, and Faulkner's curt dismissal, prompted Mailer to begin "The White

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Negro." "Lipton's" would be his source book for the essay, and many passages have their origin there. The idea of the existential "enormous present," for example, is found in the journal, and the following passage, written on February 1, undergirds the entire essay.

Generally speaking we have come to the point in history—in this country anyway—where the middle class and upper middle class is composed primarily of the neurotic-conformists, and the saint-psychos are found in some of the activities of the workingclass (as opposed to the workingclass itself), in the Negro people, in Bohemians, in the illiterates, among the reactionaries, a few of the radicals, some of the prison population, and of course in the mass communication media.

When Mailer realized that he would have to immerse himself in the Putnam's galleys, he realized that he would have to end the journal, and this led to several final recognitions. The regular use of marijuana, followed by sleeping pills and/or scotch and then a lot of coffee would have to stop. If he wanted to write another long work—the journal being "quite unpublishable in its present form"—he would have to plod along without drugs. "Now," he wrote, "I have to take an enormous step, and my capacities may not be equal to it. Still, I don't regret the too-quick opening, the great take of these past few months. I had to, for my health, and besides one should also try for more, not for less. That's the only real health."

X / Although he was still focused on the novel, for the first time he began to see that he wanted to try other genres and forms. "I must desert my old obsession" about only writing one thing at a time and take on a variety of projects, "and whenever I feel bored or worn out with one, I must leave it for the next." ~~He was prescient.~~ For the remainder of his career, he would

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move with little strain from the novel to the essay, newspaper and magazine columns to poetry, plays to biographies, and also glide effortlessly from private labor to public activity—rotating his crops, as he once put it.

Toward the end of the journal, Mailer reflects on several of his salient mental faculties, which, as they developed, resembled Emerson's.

My capacity to do something exceptional comes from the peculiar combination of powerful instincts face to face with my exceptional detachment. I am one of the few people I know who can feel a genuinely powerful emotion, and yet be able to observe it. That is what I must depend on, instead of violating my capacities by trying to make the rational scholarly effort to illumine my understanding of other men's jargons. Instead of ~~pouring~~ ^{pouring} over all the relevant books, and there are five hundred I "ought" to start studying tomorrow, I do better to "waste" time and discover things for myself. The only things I've ever learned have been the things I've discovered for myself.

An exception to his rule of self-discovery came one night in June 1953 when he was at the Handy Colony in Illinois. Jones had just given him a brief tutorial in Eastern religions, karma and reincarnation. Mailer, then a hard-shell atheist, was somewhat incredulous. "You believe in that?" Mailer asked. Jones answered, "Oh, sure. That's the only thing that makes sense." answer, Mailer said, "rang in my head for years." It opened a shaft to deep water been the foundation for what happened on February 25, 1955. In a long entry at the very end of

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"Lipton's," Mailer describes how on that night he smoked marijuana when he was "already in a state of super-excitation."

I had nothing less than a vision of the universe which it would take me forever to explain. I also knew I was smack on the edge of insanity, that I was wandering through all the mountain craters of schizophrenia. I knew I could come back, I was like an explorer who still had a life-line out of the caverns, but I understood also that it would not be all that difficult to cut the life line. Insanity comes from obeying a hunch—it is a premature freezing of perceptions—one takes off into cloud seven before one has properly prepared the ground, and one gives all to an 'unrealistic' appreciation of one's genius.

This was Mailer's road-to-Damascus experience. His atheism withered and belief took hold, belief in a God who was not all-powerful, an existential God. Writing in 1970, he remembered being "terrified" in that hour when he "first encountered the thought around one of the bends of marijuana fifteen years ago." All of his later ideas had their roots in that moment, he said, although it would be three years before he was able to fully articulate his beliefs.

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The galleys had arrived in early February, but the novel had a June publication date and Mailer doesn't seem to have looked at them except in a cursory way. Accompanying the galleys was Ted Purdy's letter with some suggestions for improving the novel, but ruling out a major rewrite. The new deadline for turning in the corrected galleys was April 15, but Mailer had given one of his sets with marginal notes to Charles Laughton with the hope of interesting him in a film

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version of *Naked*. Laughton had been in New York in connection with his film *The Night of the Hunter*, and from February 23 to March 2, 1955 they met every day at the Saint Moritz Hotel to discuss *Naked*. Mailer remembered the experience fondly in a 1968 letter to Laughton's widow, Elsa Lanchester. He told her that he had never met a more intelligent or learned actor. "He gave me a marvelous brief education in the problems of a movie director," Mailer said, "as he would explain to me, sometimes patiently, sometimes at the edge of his monumental impatience, how certain scenes which worked in the book just weren't feasible for the movie." When Laughton was having trouble visualizing the characters, he asked him to draw pictures of them. Mailer protested that he lacked the skill, whereupon Laughton said, "Nonsense, Mailer, anybody can draw. You go ahead and do it and that will give me some idea of what you have in your mind that you can't express." Laughton was correct, and Mailer got many new insights about his characters. After a week of work, Laughton said, "'Mailer, let's get the hell out of here, I feel like seeing some art.' And we went over to the Oriental Room of the Metropolitan where he was, of course, well-known, and I was introduced that day to [the Japanese artists] Hiroshige and Hokusai, a pleasure for which I'm still in debt."

Mailer wrote to Laughton at the end of March asking for the return of the galleys. Laughton replied by telephone and promised that they would be sent shortly. When the galleys arrived nearly three weeks later, he went to work, assuming he would have them done in a few weeks. He dearly wanted to put *The Deer Park* behind him. But what he discovered as he began was that the voice of his narrator, Sergius O'Shaugnessy, did not match his experience. He sounded more like Fitzgerald's Nick Carraway, a Princeton graduate, than a young man who had been brought up in an orphan asylum, scuffled through adolescence and early manhood, and

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earned his first lieutenant's silver bars flying a score of combat missions over Korea. The only course was to begin "ripping up the silk of the original syntax" and give O'Shaugnessy a more aggressive tone, a more colloquial voice, one that matched his hardscrabble background.

When planning *The Deer Park* four years earlier, Mailer was a different person. At that time, before suffering through the reviews of *Barbary Shore* and the ensuing doubts about his vocation; before meeting Adele and Lindner; before beginning to seriously smoke marijuana while conducting a self-analysis in "Lipton's"; before jettisoning lingering pieties about the literary establishment and catching a glimpse of a vertiginous universe; before identifying more closely with his father's rebellious ways; prior, in short, to his rebirth as a psychic outlaw, Mailer resembled in more ways than one a sensitive young man. Now he was stronger, more cynical and belligerent, and his new narrator, as he came into focus, was not only a shrewder, more credible observer of Elena's love affair with Eitel and his slow, tragic corruption by Hollywood, he was, Mailer recognized, "an implicit portrait of myself as well." He didn't like the notion of using his own divided psyche as the armature for O'Shaugnessy's. Doing so, he wrote, "was a psychological violation." But there was no alternative. His editors were getting anxious. They were not happy when he asked that his submission date be pushed back to June 1.

Without drugs, Mailer couldn't write; he needed more than in the past. Along with marijuana, Seconal, booze, coffee and two packs of cigarettes a day, he began taking a tranquilizer, Miltown, and a type of amphetamine with the trade name of Benzedrine. Bennies, long used by long-haul truckers and pilots, were a favorite of various Beat Generation figures, Jack Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg, most notably. The trick was to find the point at which the drugs balanced out and he could write for an hour or two. "[B]ombed and sapped and charged

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and stoned," he lurched forward through May, feeling as tired as he had when on patrols in Luzon. He missed the June submission date and negotiated a final, drop-dead date of August 1, which pushed publication to mid-October. He knew that ~~any~~ further delay would destroy any chance of good fall sales. Somehow, working through a very hot summer in New York, he managed to meet the deadline. Then he drove up to Provincetown with Adele to unwind. There he slept, swam and shed some of the drugs while waiting for page proofs. He also began reading Thomas Mann's multi-layered, symbolic novel, *The Magic Mountain* (1924) which, he said, "lowered *The Deer Park* down to modest size in my brain." He finished revisions and sent them off on August 15. A week later, back in New York, he took one more look and decided on one more change. With the addition of still another drug—mescaline—to his pharmacopeia, he rewrote the last page of the novel, the conclusion of O'Shaugnessy's imagined conversation with God about the relationship of sex and time. The cryptic lines continue to puzzle readers: God tells him to "think of Sex as Time, and Time as the connection of new circuits." Mailer wrote to Lindner about the mystical effects of using mescaline. "Truly Bob," he said, "it was a little like entering paradise." In "The Mind of an Outlaw," Mailer says that the novel's ending is the only good writing he had ever done while stoned, although it has bewildered readers for 50 years.

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In a pattern that he would follow for the rest of his life, Mailer wrote to almost no one during the final sprint. But as soon as the novel was finished, he sent out a stream of letters to family and friends. Writing to Uncle Dave and Aunt Nan, he announced that it would be published on October 14. He added that they had purchased two standard poodles, Tibo (who "looks like the black sheep") and Zsa Zsa (who would be the mother of their 34 pups). Mailer

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X / became inordinately fond of Tibo ^{Is} ~~because of his~~ intelligence and verve. He once said that the variety of intelligent sounds made by Tibo convinced him that the dog was close to speaking. He included one more piece of information: he was a silent partner in a new weekly newspaper in Greenwich Village, the *Village Voice*. Ed Fancher was to be the publisher and Dan Wolf the editor.

It became clear by the end of August that Laughton had lost interest in the film version of *Naked*, and Paul Gregory would now be the lead producer. Mailer suspected that the script was already written. With time on his hands, and feeling somewhat rested, Mailer began dropping in at the *Voice*'s offices on Greenwich Avenue. Because of the sale of *Naked*, he was comparatively wealthy at the time. According to the 1955 financial statement prepared by Barney (the *Voice*'s first accountant), Mailer's net worth at the end of 1955 was \$108,270, most of it invested in stocks and bonds. He had put \$5,000 into the paper for a 30 percent share. Wolf and Fancher also had 30 percent shares; the remaining 10 percent was owned by Mailer's cousin Cy, who drew up the corporation papers. Mailer took credit for inventing the name, although others remembered that he had selected it from a list of proposed titles.

His focus in the early fall of that year was not the *Voice*, however. Advancing the fortunes of *The Deer Park* was his first priority. Around the beginning of September Mailer began sending out inscribed copies in the hope of reaping some responses that could be used, if not for the jacket, then for advertisements. He mailed off copies to Philip Rahv and Alberto Moravia, who he knew fairly well, and to Graham Greene, Cyril Connolly and Ernest Hemingway, who he didn't know at all. Brando got a copy and a note saying he had learned from his work and thought Brando could learn from the novel. Others went to friends: Malaquais,

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✓ Jones and Styron, Wolf and Fancher, Howe, ^{Lillian} Hellman, Ross, Harvey Breit ~~at the New York~~
 ✓ ~~Times~~, Dwight Macdonald, Bourjaily, and perhaps Vidal. He asked Knox, pointedly, to give his
 best wishes to Vidal in Hollywood.

He pinned his highest hopes on Hemingway, as he later wrote: "I could not keep myself from thinking that twenty good words from Ernest Hemingway would make the difference between half-success and a breakthrough. He would like the book, he would have to—it would be impossible for him not to see how much there was in it." But Mailer was angry at himself for begging, "for stealing a trick from the Hollywood I knew so well," and undercut himself with the inscription on the copy he mailed to Hemingway in Cuba. In *Advertisements*, he gives the disastrously qualified inscription.

To Ernest Hemingway

—because finally after all these years I am deeply curious to know what you think of this. But if you do not answer, or if you answer with the kind of crap you use to answer unprofessional writers, sycophants, brown-nosers, etc., then fuck you, and I will never attempt to communicate with you again.

—and since I suspect that you're even more vain than I am, I might as well warn you that there is a reference to you on page 353 which you may or may not like.

Norman Mailer

The reference concerns a bullfighting novel that O'Shaugnessy, having left California and now teaching bullfighting in the Village, is trying to write. It wasn't very good, he admits,

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because it “was inevitably imitative of that excellently exiguous mathematician, Mr. Ernest Hemingway.” The book came back ten days later, unopened. Mailer pondered the various possibilities: that it was a bad address; that all unsolicited books were returned; that Mary Hemingway interceded; that Hemingway read the novel but was uncertain what to say and punted; or that he had read the inscription and said to himself, “If you want to come on that hard, Buster, don’t write words like ‘deeply curious’,” mailed it back “and started to drink fifteen minutes early that day.” Four years later, probably at the urging of George Plimpton, Hemingway sent a hand-written letter to Mailer, thanking him for sending the novel. He said he had read it while laid up from an illness or injury and had liked it, even though it had “shitty reviews.” He went on to encourage Mailer and gave him this advice on reviews: “Try for Christ sake not to worry about it so much. All that is poison. Remember only suckers worry. You can’t write, fuck or fight if you worry. That doesn’t mean not to think. This [is] all that I can tell you that might be any use.” Hemingway’s encouragement would have been welcome in 1955; Mailer was indeed worried. His effort to gain encomia from established novelists and critics, and from Brando, “ended in fiasco,” he said.

The only one who answered him was Moravia, who said that it had Mailer’s “usual qualities of vitality, aggressiveness, sincerity and naiveness,” but it was too long. O’Shaughnessy, he said “has no function (I mean dramatic function) and therefore one feels that he is not necessary.” The novel, he says, would have been much improved if Mailer had written the book in the third person and focused on the affair of Elena and Eitel. Mailer’s narrator—“a duplicate of yourself,” he correctly surmises, could be cut out entirely.



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Mailer was not the first American writer, to be interviewed on the occasion of a book's publication. But few sought or embraced such publicity with the same avidity. Over the course of his career, he was interviewed over 700 times, surely a record. In 1955, however, interviews with writers were far less common than in the years following the revamping, by the editors of the *Paris Review*, of the form into a well-edited collaboration, rather than a confrontation, or a search for authorial gaffes. For *The Deer Park*, Mailer appears to have set up interviews with Martha MacGregor, the book editor of the *New York Post*, and with Lyle Stuart, editor of the muckraking monthly, *Exposé* (later called *The Independent*). He struck back at Stan Rinehart in the MacGregor interview, telling the story of how he responded when the publisher said he didn't feel he could put his name on *The Deer Park*. "I said, 'Why Stanley, I'm deeply shocked. How dare you say something like that after publishing *A House Is Not a Home*,'" a reference to Polly Adler's bestselling 1953 memoir about her career running Mafia-connected brothels in Manhattan and elsewhere. The Stuart interview, which Mailer gave "with a couple of drinks in me and a good drag or two of pot," appeared in late November when *The Deer Park* had climbed to number six on the bestseller list, is Mailer's first major interview, and his first conscious attempt to shape his public image. He states that he believes in God, but it is "a very personal faith," and he wants no connection with religious institutions; he defines himself as a "Man anarchist, a contradiction in terms," but one which gives breathing space to both ext. personality; he says he thinks "once in a while of becoming the president," but says that politics as politics interests me less today than politics as part of everything else." He is also blunt about his ambition to be "a really great writer," an artist whose role is "to be as disturbing, as adventurous, as penetrating as his energy and courage make possible," a line which will be

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quoted many times over the decades. Mailer qualifies, but never backs away from any of these aspirations, except running for president. He settles for mayor of New York.

By publication day, the novel was in its third printing. Mailer began sending advertising copy to Putnam's, quoting from the MacGregor interview and the early reviews. He suggests the same technique used for *Barbary Shore*: alternating positive reviews with negative ones, raves with stink bombs. The *New York Times*' Orville Prescott called it "a thoroughly nasty book," but Malcolm Cowley, a friend of Hemingway and chronicler of the "Lost Generation" said it was "the serious and reckless novel on the movie colony that we have been waiting for since Scott Fitzgerald failed to finish *The Last Tycoon*." Several newspaper ads and bookstore flyers quoted this comment, and the novel went into its fourth and fifth printings. As expected, *Time* panned it, comparing it to the sleazy scandal magazine, *Confidential*. Putnam's spent \$10,000 on advertising, a very high sum for the period. Overall, the reviews leaned toward the negative, especially outside of the biggest cities.

The most important advertisement for the novel, however, was not paid out of this budget. Appearing in the fourth weekly issue of the *Village Voice* on November 16 was a half-page ad designed and paid for (\$127.50) by Mailer. Under the headline: "All over America 'THE DEER PARK' is getting nothing but RAVES," Mailer arrayed 15 negative blasts, all attributed. A sample: "The year's worst snake pit in fiction," "sordid and crummy," "moronic mindlessness," "nasty," "unsavory," "dull," and in large letters at the bottom: "A BUNCH OF BUMS." It was my way of announcing, he said, "that I no longer gave a dog's drop for the wisdom, the reliability, and the authority of the public's literary mind, those creeps and old ladies of vested reviewing." He thought the ad might sell some books, and it may have, as the novel

remained in sixth place through the end of November. In the end, however, he would have lost his bet with Alfred Knopf. When all the returns were in, the novel had sold just under 50,000 copies, an estimable number, but an order of magnitude less than the number *Naked* sold.



In his memoir, *New York in the Fifties*, Dan Wakefield recalled the mood of the Village during the mid-fifties. "Our generation," he said,

needed the Village and all it stood for as much as the artists, writers, and rebels of preceding generations—maybe even more. If the mood of the country was to force everyone to conform, to look and dress like the man in the gray flannel suit, surely it was all the more important to have at least one haven where people were not only allowed but expected to dress, speak, and behave differently from the herd. This was a time when a beard might be regarded as a sign of subversion.

When Mailer saw that *The Deer Park* was not going to have extraordinary sales, he began "to feel the empty winds of a post-partum gloom." He was in no condition for the kind of monastic seclusion needed to write a thousand-page novel. His self-analysis was still underway and the ideas of his journal were still percolating. He wanted to vent, preach and howl. "At heart," he said, I wanted a war." The members of the generation described by Wakefield would be the recruits for his army. Mailer gave himself a new name: "General Marijuana," and for the first time, began referring to himself in the third person: