

I'm not sure it can work this way.
Functionaries like Waterston can turn
off the spiggot easily - at least from
my experience. Usually those who fire
the system ^{do so} by soft-scrapping the
bureaucrats, not the opposite. Also,
the Church laundry rule applies
("No tickle, no laundry"); you've
got to have a receipt.

Porringer saw Capablanca as a careerist with one aim--keep President Luis Batlle happy. Gomez was not only a high official in the Foreign Ministry but a protegee of Batlle's. Capablanca's private reading, argued Porringer, was that Batlle would not look upon the passing of Uruguayan secrets over to the Russians as a mortal sin. Ergo, Porringer wouldn't count on the Chief of Police to arrest Gomez.

Sonderstrom admitted that this did bother him to a degree. "Still, you learn something about a man while playing golf. Capablanca keeps a clean score card, and hates missing any shots he ought to be able to make. I see Salvador Capablanca as a professional, and I never discount that. When it's a choice between opportunism and professionalism, a serious man tends to come down on the side of his formal function." An interesting observation, I decide.

"This is South America," says Porringer in reply. "My instinct tells me to go slow."

"I don't know that we can," says Sonderstrom. "A decision not to move next Tuesday is going to put a hell of a lot of congestion into the cable traffic."

"You bet," says Porringer, "but I^d still like a few weeks to get to Peones. I think he'll let us tap the Chief's telephone line."

NOV. 21, 1956

SPLENDID NEWS. GODFATHER BEWITCHED.

HARRY

I raided my checking account and ordered two hundred long-stemmed red roses to be sent to Walter Reed by way of the Agency Commissary in Washington. Then I went home early from work, stretched out on my mattress (which reeked of insect repellent) and stayed in bed at the hotel Cervantes from six in the evening to six in the morning feeling as if I had been stomped on by a platoon of Marines.

Indeed, I did not get around to writing to Kittredge until a letter came from her about a month after the birth of Christopher. I no longer knew--if I ever did!--what she wanted from my letters, and I did not recognize the calm, hard-working knowledgeable young man who stepped forth in my handwriting. He seemed to be some fulfillment of how I might like to be seen by others--cool and knowledgeable about the ins and outs of Station work. I had wanted, however, to send letters that demonstrated what fine intelligence resided in me. I had planned to write to her as if she were not only my heart, but my eyes, and the wit we shared in those happy moments when we knew that everything divine comes in little leaps and bounds.

I don't
see the
opposition

but the letters are intelligent

To be a critic of the small but fatal social flaws of others,
used to give such flavor to our perceptions. I had hoped to
show the equivalent in my letters, but had not. I had rattled
on instead about my work as if I knew it inside out when,
indeed, I only pretended to. How much I had wanted to surprise
her with the sophistication of my aperçus. Now, the birth of
Christopher laid such vanity low.

*can't
recall*

*The above seems
confused (and
unnecessary)*

December 20, 1956

Harry dearest,

Christopher is a month old today and I, who was raised by
my father to believe that iambic pentameter is the only
suitable meter for the passions of murder and love, have
decided to throw over his dictates, and become a devotee of the
one-step. Thirty days old, Christopher weighs eight pounds,
two ounces. Is fed every four hours. Is as beautiful as the
heavens. Like a fixated witch, I stare at this blue-eyed
creature with his miniscule hams of hands, pink and succulent.
Watch! They seek his mouth. I examine his incomparable
alabaster skin. My ears dwell on his gurgle of innocence. But
I know better. All these corny palimpsests of infantitude hide

its mediocre sleazy contacts and its tedium and frustration, still seems more sensible than all those highly slanted endeavors with which Hugh keeps himself and his helpmate, me, busy. So, don't stop writing. I love the details. Some of your items nourish me through the worst of the p.p.d.'s. Yes, dear friend, the p.p.d.'s. You, male lummoX, probably don't know that I am speaking of post-partum depression. You don't conceive of how ill-equipped a new mother is at shaping up for the daily grind until you go through these aforesaid doldrums. Result: I read and re-read your epistolary gifts. To my far-off delight, I actually feel a stirring of jealousy. How dare you look at another woman? Who is this Sally porringer? Then, I weep at how the world offers nothing to grasp. There is just the smooth surface of the disappearing relationship between yourself and the ones you love. Now, I go to pick up my baby out of the crib, and when this little warm tenderness of God is in my arms, I certainly do cry. For I begin to realize the cost and the beauty of motherhood. Everything in me is now being rebuilt on new terms. Who knows how stern and exacting they will prove? Hugh comes in from some twelve-hour flap at Technical Services, sees me in the teary mopes, claps his hands, says, "Dammit, Kittredge, Christopher is thirty days

I also thank you for my Christmas present. It's summer here now, but the gloves will be most useful come July. I'm glad the roses got to Walter Reed. Did the brooch arrive, however, at the Stable? Don't tell me I was extravagant. Perhaps I was, but so soon as I looked into the antique shop window, I had to buy it for you. The ornament spoke to me of heavy old Uruguayan gentility, and yet, I don't know why, it reminded me of some inaccessible part of you. Can you possibly comprehend what I mean? In any event, don't count me extravagant. In truth, I wasn't. My mother, to my amazement, had just sent me a fulsome check, nay, it even felt plump and lustful in my bone-dry wallet. (Since I sympathize with your passion-to-know, I will not torture you needlessly.) Five hundred smackers! I opened her envelope to find a check with a one-line note--"It's Christmas, so do it up properly, darling." She didn't even bother to sign. Her stationery is her signature. I must say I feel uncharacteristically full of love for her yet still angrily disposed--well, I always am casa d'ella. Just as one grows to resign oneself one more time to her basic stinginess of spiritual sentiment, lo, she knows what you are thinking, and comes across with a flashing stroke. Some day I will write a Charles Lamb-like essay on The Multitudinous Vagaries of the Bitch.

doesn't
ring
true

Hard to believe
from a knee breather
no struggle, no wrestling
with conscience?

There was no question in my mind that I was going to tell, but I wanted Kittredge to appreciate the size of my offering. Her Christmas gift, those aforementioned woolly gloves for the South American summer, showed an unhappy lack of concentration on what my needs might be. Christopher, of course, could excuse much, and would have to, but even so! Even so, said my heart.

I was also not telling the truth about Sally Porringer. I had begun an affair with Sally, and it was already in its second week on the night I invited my good Agency associates to dinner. So, the sadness I felt on watching Mrs. Porringer flatten her napkin, was more complex than simple sorrow, and not without a keen tinge of fear. Were all the cat-calls to bang juice but a piece of innocent serendipity, or was the word out? I lived among trained observers, after all.

Then I had to consider how much of my sorrow was genuine for Sherman Porringer? Oatsie, having helped me get an important assignment, had been given a set of horns by me for Christmas.

Nonetheless, I fell asleep with no difficulty. Encountering the cold center of myself was not un reassuring. It suggested that my career owed as much to personal choice as family heritage. I knew a bond once more with Harlot, and

(Only agreed to marry his wife after he came back.) She is apparently a whole-hearted party-liner who has already risen high in the local Party. Everyone, including her husband, expects her to be one of the PCU's national leaders in ten years. She's a lawyer, polemicist, functionary, and her family has, as I say, an old radical tradition.

Eusebius is the problem. Even his nickname, "Chevi," suggests it, I expect. A debrouillard, if ever there was one. He pretends to be a loyal party member but secretly can't bear whole aspects of the Party, the discipline, the self-sacrifice, the patience required to obtain power. The year he spent in New York seems to have affected him powerfully. He came back to Uruguay loving America and hating it, and somewhat bashed-in from the experience. It seems among his other stints as dishwasher and short order cook and waiter, he was also some kind of unwilling consort--"never a pimp," he assures Roger--to a Harlem whore.

Yes, all this has been learned by Clarkson and passed on to us. It seems he and Eusebius get along famously. They have even double-dated a couple of the ladies in the Montevideo Players. To use a phrase I've recently learned--they run together. Roger, who remains agreeably modest concerning his cachet with the local actresses, explained that studs (speaking

Read to believe that H. would know this phrase

satisfactorily," Gus says to me at the end of the meeting.
"With a new case officer in place, AV/OCADO could actually
shape up more quickly. He'll know he has to deliver. A
stranger can be more effective in situations like this than a
friend. AV/OCADO obviously likes to torture his friends."

Succinct enough, but I'm the one in the passenger seat
next week.

This time I won't tell you how late it is. Will just sign
off. My new cryptonym, specially crafted for the new job,
is--I must say they save the tasty ones for me--AV/AILABLE.

Humbly yours,

Available Hubbard

P.S. Did you ever get the brooch?

*I like the situation,
but the conversation
between Clark Kent and
seemed off somehow, a
bit too precious, perhaps*

previously arranged. Of course, now we would not meet at the Montevideo Players, but at this safe-house.

Chevi smiled. He said to Roger, "I do not believe your story."

Roger waved his hand ambiguously as if to blend all that was false with all that was true. "He is here," he said, pointing to me. "This is the fact."

"I," said Chevi, "do not believe you are returning to the United States."

"But I am."

"No," said Chevi, "you are going to Europe to work with Hungarian refugees whom your people are calculating to send back to Budapest for works of sabotage."

"I cannot go affirmative on that," Roger replied. His powers of improvisation are obviously in fine shape. "But you ought to know, Chevi, that they could never put me onto those Hungarians. I can't manage Magyar diphthongs." He gave Chevi a wink. It carried the day. Given his crisis of self-respect, Fuertes needed to believe that something--his acumen, at least--might be on the mark. Roger took care of that with the wink. Yes, it said, you may be right, but I can't tell you. Aloud, he said, "Why don't we deal with the here and now of the transfer?"

dit
we
used
all
this

"I wish you to ignore every conception Roger has implanted in you about the lineaments of my character and nature. I would prefer that you come to know me by yourself."

We shook hands on that.

"Good," he said. "It need not be laborious. Roger had much difficulty because he did not trust the explanations I was ready to give him of myself. That is a grave insult. When I offer a means of comprehending my person, that is equal to saying I have opened a passage into myself. If that is not respected, my dignity is bruised."

"I comprehend," I said.

"I would hope you do. I would say you do."

Well, that was a couple of weeks ago. Since then I've seen him twice. We make progress slowly which is entirely by design. He may have told me that it would not prove laborious to get to know him, but no one at the Station or up in the Groogs (which has become our exasperated name for our overseers at the Argentina-Uruguay Desk) is ready to buy such an avowal. The Arg-Urg are making us check out everything from Chevi^S'A legal probity to his hemorrhoids. For fact. Sonderstrom has Gatsby and me looking up police, medical, and school records. We discover that Eusabio Fuertes was an honor student, but was also arrested, when seventeen, for riding around with friends

party in his well-appointed house, filled with career mementoes and local hacienda-type furniture (armchairs with steer's horns), paid for, no doubt, with his stock market profits, did improve once he sat down to the piano. "Every man I know," my father told me once, "has some unexpected skill." Mayhew's is to sing and play. He led us through all the expected. We did "Deck the Halls," and "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing," "Noel," "Noel," "Jingle Bells," "Silent Night," of course, and then somewhere in "O Come, All Ye Faithful," there was Sally Porringer next to me, her arm around my waist, and swaying in rhythm as we and thirty other people sang along with Mayhew.

I'm no great vocalist, you know. There are all too many inhibiting influences ravaging my impulse to utter golden notes, but I have a little bass in me, I suppose--product of the husky-voiced emergences of adolescence--and so I get along.

Sally, ~~however~~, elucidated something better out of my voice. I don't know if it was due to the fact that I had never swayed rhythmically before while singing, and so was missing a natural enhancement, but I heard my voice coming forth, and sounding much less like a foghorn, thank you, and this freedom to sing and feel the beauty--not of the words, so much, but all the nuances and timbre of an ice-cold rose-sweet time of year, was going through me again. I felt as if it were really Christmas,

Good
King
Wenceslaus
would
be
a
good
substitute
for
one
of
the

about that!) I took a second look at her then. She's pretty enough, if in no striking way, small turned-up nose, freckles, pale green eyes, sandy hair, a slightly harried housewife in her present cast, but I could see how it must have been ten or twelve years ago. She was probably healthy and vivacious then, and was having, as she now indicated, some kind of all-out affair with one of the football players. I expect he ditched her, since in Senior Year, Sherman and she found each other and were married after graduation.

I knew I was now expected to reply in kind, but I didn't feel like raiding my own meagre cupboard. So I sat there, and smiled, and knew I had to come up with something. Will you believe it? I went on and on about discovering Skeats at Yale--being careful not to mention Hugh's name (Lord, how we even protect his shadow!)--and I expect she did her best to keep herself from falling asleep in disappointment. A minute later, just as we were about to move away from one another, Sherman came up. He was duty officer tonight at the Embassy, a job we each catch once in eighteen days, since for such purposes Agency operatives are in the same tarn as honest-to-God State Department folk. That meant he had to take his car to work and was leaving now. She wanted to stay on. I, being equipped for the evening with a Chevrolet two-door

He brings "tarn"
but not "your
with" or "stud"
?

used to have years ago at the Keep playing kissing games with the neighbors' girls; there was that awful silence as you marched out of the room with a girl. I remember that I always felt then as if I were passing through the woods during a nocturnal thaw and every sound of melting water fell on your ear with the composure of a far-seeing purpose.

So soon as I parked in front of her house, she said, "Drive around the block."

I did. The Porringers were living in what they could afford, which was a small stucco house on one of the medium-income, medium-horizon, only-slightly-crumbling streets in that anonymous area you find back of the Legislative Palace, a neighborhood I spent some of my first couple of days in Uruguay walking through. Now, even in summer, it was still relatively deserted. The block behind her house was distinguished by several empty lots. We parked, and she waited, and I did nothing. Then she reached around to lock the doors and close the windows. I still did nothing. I think my heart was beating loud enough for her to hear it. I did not really want to make love to her, and I did not want to cuckold Sherman Porringer. (At least all of Omega and half of Alpha didn't, but there was, I admit, some dirty little rise somewhere down there at the thought.) Then she said,

pitfall for everyone. They start to see it that way sooner or later. Two burlap bags. Put part of your experience into one bag, other part into the other.

Nothing to do with it. I am saying: multiply by two, the complexities of human personality. Postulate two complete and different persons in each of us. Each of these characters are more or less equally well developed. Trickier to grasp, is that each one of them is as complex and wholly elaborated as what we usually think of as a complete personality. So, Alpha and Omega can not only be neurotic, each of them, but possess the power to form vastly different neuroses. (That dire situation is, of course, reserved for terribly sick people.)

All right, I next postulate that one of them, Omega, originated in the psychic field of the ovum and so knows more about the mysteries--conception, birth, death, night, the moon, eternity, karma, ghosts, divinities, myths, magic, our primitive past, so on. The other, Alpha, creature of the forward swimming energies of sperm, motile, ambitious, blind like the sun to all but its own purpose, is, of course, more oriented about enterprise, technology, grinding the corn, repairing the mill, laying out the logical and/or mechanical endeavors, building the bridges between money and power (even as Omega, the more mystical, would be drawn to the interior

Recall:
a radical
bridge
between
Marx
+
Freud

as two people at a play for an evening can sit side by side, and come away with separately detailed critical reactions (and enthusiasms, if there are any.) And somewhat different memories of what they saw. When you claim, therefore, that Omega was not in the act, you reveal merely that when it comes to sexual matters, Alpha is ruling your ship with an iron hand. Alpha has refused to accept or listen to any of Omega's variant interpretation of the experience. Thereby, Omega is walled off. This is analogous to fascism. Your smug acceptance of a full half of sexual indifference in yourself is a way of stating you are, unbeknownst to yourself, a sexual fascist. There, it's true, and I'm glad I said it, and you be glad as well because I've finally paid you back for the brooch.

Do you find me vengeful? I'm a mother now. Each time Christopher begins to scream in the middle of the night, and this has happened on several inexplicable occasions since your gift popped up in the mail, I have been ready to curse you, and once almost did, but then didn't--curses are a serious matter with me.

An hour later--I've just fed
Christopher

*this explanation
is marvelous,
it enriches
the stark
framework
given
earlier*

"Considering the prodigious size of our dining room, we always invite people over by twos and fours," I say in reply as if he's ^{Ralph Kramden} ~~the Jackie Gleason half of the Honeymooners~~, and I'm Alice.

"I'm not referring to friends, or people who amuse us," he tells me back, "I'm suggesting we employ some focus."

In consequence, a group of worthies whom Hugh labels, by his all-too-self-delighted standards of nuance as imams, caciques, nabobs, mere moguls or emirs -- I confess to not perceiving any lovely small differences; they're all, more or less, GS-18--have been arriving in twos and fours for dinners twice weekly ever since you've been gone. Don't fret, however, little social lion. If you'd been here, the best you could have hoped for was to be the hired-in cook-waiter, and that's beyond you, because the cook-waiter is a cook-waitress, and sixty years old, a nice plump colored lady who was born knowing more about cooking and serving than I will take to the grainy grave. My mother was an abominable cook, and I've only made up half the distance! How I rattle on tonight. I feel so relaxed that we can speak again as two dear friends.

Hugh's passion is to find someone in the line of succession who will be reasonably sympathetic to his purposes. By now he has been able to take a look at just about all of the

away on this. Hundred year old sherry makes me love the very wood of the table I'm writing on. So there we have Hugh and Allen with GHOUL--both boys got their wish. A club for two. Their own sanctum sanctorum. It is not some Jules Verne engine of destruction steered by Captain Nemo, but rather, an office or two (or three or four) containing scores of super-equipped specialty people with super-secret files all working for Hugh, one non-attributable step removed from Allen. They are ferreting out, and, for all I can discern, initiating little trouble spots all over our far flung intelligence universe. Enough to give nightmares, if you ever started to think about it, which I won't. I merely wish to explain why we've been having people to dinner. Allen's successor must prove worthy of the value of GHOUL. Hugh doesn't invite people to query them, but to size them up. Helms is, as I say, his present choice, but, not a wholly happy one. Helms will never come down with two feet on one side of a dividing line until he's located all the shoes on either side. On the other hand, Helms, as a putative duke, is prepared to take vows. Will vow, I expect, to support the continued existence of GHOUL. Did you know, Harry, that dukes take vows? But do they become buddy-0 with bishops? Oh, dear God, it has to be the sherry.

Just as
hard to
believe
that
K. would
tell this,
harder,
as Helms
telling
about
his
operations
in a
letter

Pound was still in St. Elizabeth in 1956 - would K. see him as a great American?

Christopher will snore like a longshoreman if I dare to breast-feed him tonight.

I shall go on. After we used up every likely in-town GS-18, Hugh still had a taste for the game. So, we started inviting some second-rank people to cast new lights on the old familiar top-drawer faces. That was when I decided to put some of this up for use by my team. "Let's have Howard Hunt," I told Hugh.

"E. Howard Hunt," he told me. "How do you address him? E? E Howard. How Eee?" This is Hugh's private humor. That is why you never see public signs of it. He's about as funny as a hee-haw cowboy. Don't forget -- Hugh, along with all else, could ride a mustang before his legs were long enough to reach the pedals on his kiddie bike. Just a Colorado cowboy. (In the same way that Ezra Pound was an Idaho cowboy.) How would we know how to look at our great Americans without the helping hand of Alpha and Omega?

I talked Hugh into inviting How Eee. Pointed out to my beau that Hunt was in on the Guatemala move. Hugh thinks that may yet prove to be the most catastrophic American victory of all. Smash an oxymoron, and you will encounter the Light! Yes, darling, catastrophic victory. Hugh feels it has pointed us in the wrong direction for decades to come. He wouldn't speak to

-45-

January 28th, 1957

Harry Dear,

I didn't mail yesterday's letter until I could re-read it. It's not as bad as I feared. Indiscreet, but didn't we agree to be just that? These letters are a safety valve, and doubtless enable us to continue to slave away for flag and family. Pietistic, aren't we?

This
sounds
defensive
as hell

would say he did, it was as a virtuous, if not wholly manageable, emotion.

I saw it then. Forgive me, Harry, for going on at length and pretending to offer their actual speeches, but I do remember them. I could swear to that. It's burned into my brain. You see, I fear that our lovely country has become a religion. Joe McCarthy only dipped his finger into the bowl of the new piety. It's no longer the cross but the flag that is going to stir all the larger feelings people can't live without.

you
protest
too
much
no need
to
apologize
for a
good
memory

In any event, Hugh had heard enough by now to decide that Hunt could not be bent to any of his uses. So, my husband now diverted the conversation over to real-estate values in Georgetown, about which Howard and Dorothy, as one might expect, knew a lot.

I keep thinking of you working with this odd, semi-inspired man as your future boss. (Of course, he's really not the one who's odd--it's Hugh and I. Odd and certainly inspired.) But, all right, do your best with the fellow. I still think Hunt is going to love you. Snobs on the slope always will. Before the evening was done, he let us know that Dorothy was not only one-eighth Oglala Sioux, but descended from the John Quincy Adams family on mother's side, and the

June 1940
Fall 1940
Feb 1941

graduation
V-7 program

-997-

commissioned ensign?

(8 more is too long -
it only takes 18 weeks now

There was no combat
in the Atlantic (for the U.S.)
in 1941, was there?

C
O
N
F
J
S
E
D
altogether qualified and I will lay out why. On graduation from Brown University in June 1940, I was accepted as a playwriting student at Yale Drama School, but chose to enlist instead in the U.S. Naval Reserve, V-7 program. That, speeded-up program put me in Annapolis as a midshipman in February 1941, ten months before Pearl Harbor. Assigned almost immediately to the destroyer Mayo, I suffered a combat-related injury climbing an ice-coated turret ladder during a General Quarters alarm in the North Atlantic in early December 1941. The injury was serious enough at the time to give me an honorable medical discharge. Since I can see by your faces that you are ready for more intelligence, I will state that the injury was groin-related, but had no permanent effects. Praise the Lord, I can still pass the ammunition."

We laughed. It might have been a small joke to others, but it was a large one to us. We already knew more about Hunt than we had ever learned about Mayhew.

"While recuperating, I wrote a novel, 'East of Farewell,' which was accepted by Alfred A. Knopf, Publishers. Since then, I have always been able to wear two hats, and will accept no jokes I do not originate myself, on the size of my cranium. I mention this literary detail because soon enough, inter alia, Life Magazine named me their South Pacific war correspondent to

replace John Hersey. I was fortunate enough to have many adventures on that assignment, some decidedly military in such places as Bougainville and Guadalcanal, but others in Honolulu, and Sydney that owe more to the groin-related area of experience. Back in New York in 1943, I enlisted in OCS, was *again?* commissioned and sent to the Air Force Intelligence School at Orlando, Florida. From there I went into OSS training.

Assigned to China, I flew over the Hump, and was right there in Kunming with OSS when the war ended. We of OSS were also among the first to enter Shanghai. Early postwar years were spent in novel-writing, then a stint of screenwriting in Hollywood, and all the collateral activity accessible. Gentlemen, the young ladies of Beverly Hills and the starlets of Hollywood are accessible."

He went on. He had worked on Averell Harriman's staff in Paris for the Marshall Plan, before being recruited by Frank Wisner to join the Office of Policy Coordination. "I took over the OPC desk in Mexico in the summer of 1950, and served there for three years. Have any of you heard of a brilliant fellow named William F. Buckley, Junior, who's now chief editor of a magazine he founded himself, The National Review?"

We nodded.

promise to subvert, sabotage, and destroy our enemies," one of us would begin, "by more clever, more sophisticated, and more effective methods," the second would take up, "than those used against us," would solemnly conclude the third. After which, Porringer, Kearns and myself would solemnly recite, "why ell are why ell--eks dee eff dee en--be why ee are why," which are how the letters in the last three five-letter groups do sound. I know this has to seem barbarically collegiate, but we were having fun. I even liked Porringer. He is an incisive type. He told me, "Sonderstrom is looking to get relocated."

"How do you know?"

"I know."

That was over two months ago--oh, Kittredge, I see now how long it's been!--and I can only tell you that Porringer was absolutely right. Four weeks after Hunt came down to us from the Great White North, Sonderstrom managed to get himself transferred to Angola. It was tough on his wife, a fat Irish lady who hates hot climates and loves to sit on stuffed sofas--the wicker of cool African furniture is going to leave a checkerboard on her bland buttocks, I fear--but Angola was the only place which could use a Deputy COS immediately, and Sonderstrom has, he tells us, a real shot to move up to COS at the same Station after a year. Poor Sonderstrom. I'm not sure

Markman

It's late, and I can't possibly send a letter off which ends on a note like this. so will hold, and write more tomorrow, and mail you that.

Your indentured servant,

H2

April 11, 1957

I can't imagine why I told the awful egg story, except I do know. For even as I write this, the reason comes home. It was the sound of the egg striking their tile floor. Being just an empty shell, it made the softest saddest little sound as it broke. I can't get that out of my head. Hugh once told us on a High Thursday of an ancient Egyptian saying that the difference between the truth and a lie weighs no more than a feather. The small collapse of that breaking egg must have touched my ear in such fashion.

Enough! I banish all this. The exciting news is that we now have an Observation Post right next to the Russian Embassy, and this is as major-league as we have been able to get. Once again, the credit will be routed to Porringer since the OP comes to us by way of Peones, but I attribute it to Howard's

I'm not sure the above letter worked - I think the piece has to pick up

*is this -
Maat -
the name
for the
previous
letter?*

but we already know this from Berlin chapters of course K. -1025- doesn't necessarily prove what a rabbi is, but...

To my surprise, the biggest impediment is Havana Station.

We find out via the Groogs that Caribbean Desk has been using Libertad for specific assignments. In-depth queries between Montevideo, Headquarters, and our people in Havana circulate to see who will be able to use her better, and Howard pulls a few strings. "I called on my rabbi again," he said. (I learn that "rabbi" is a Mafia word for a high protector. I suppose, by such phrasing, Hugh Montague is my rabbi. Kittredge--I'm curious--see if my good godfather smiles when you tell him.)

It's good that Howard could pull a few strings. Havana won't tell us what they are using Libertad specifically for, and we certainly can't tip them off to our plans. Howard's rabbi, whom I gather is a pretty impressive bang-juice paramilitary has the clout to get Havana to answer his questions, and Libertad, we learn, is merely being used to make a few of Batista's minor henchmen happy; God knows, there are enough ladies with such talent in Havana. So the impasse is adjudicated, and we get her. Much of what goes wrong with our work is due, I believe, to simple human obfuscation. Why did Havana have to throw all that sand into the gears?

Anyway, Pedro is so happy that we now have a new term around the Station for high emotional states: it is Delirium Peones. In successive fits of generosity--since the girl has

-47-

April 14, 1957

Dearest Kittredge,

The garden party is tomorrow and Hunt has decided that I'm the one to go with him. No doubt about it, he's bold, and I'm sure his detractors label him as rash. He says, however, that I'm the choice. I know the terrain, yes, I do, I've done the chores, and now I'm entitled to the reward. Of course, I'll have to be three times as cautious in future when dropping in

These letters are
bizarre - doesn't
Hartford suspect
that the Uruguayan
Post Office is on
the take from
HA President
and his
turnip-thick
letters are
being
intercepted?

on the Bosqueverdes, or else turn the visits over to Kearns or Gatsby (who are incidentally becoming jealous of Hunt's growing fondness for me--you were certainly right about that) but, on balance, I'm pleased to go. To sip cocktails behind the enemy's garden walls--how many can speak of such an experience?

As a result, work hung heavy today, and I left early, and now find an urge to write to you again. These letters must be a form of psychic housecleaning. There are so many sides to my job that I feel as if I'm only giving you the most partial glimpses. From the day he came in, for instance, Hunt was fascinated by my work with AV/ALANCHE. Before long, he was giving me slogans to pass on to the gang on their lettering expeditions. Since some of these jobs go five feet high on our more visible showcase walls, Howard's contributions reveal a heavy hand--not to say tht AV/ALANCHE's slogans are all that light-footed, but at least they are thought up by our young sign painters. Now, Howard wants them to go for such declarations as MARXISMO ES ODIOSO, or--a real blockbuster--MARXISMO Y MIERDA.

"Howard," I tell him, "I don't believe those kids will want to put mierda up. They may be slum-children, but they're strait-laced about such stuff."

→ just
like
that?

had been wary of before. And didn't do badly--at least, according to them. The pellets apparently did the job. Reporting for the next sally, they now intend to paint MARXISMO Y MIERDA on a warehouse wall near the center of town.

The next sally. That reminds me. The Porringers are also going to the Soviet garden party. I feel like Anthony Trollope. Will Herrick Hubbard convince Sally Porringer to dance with the Russians?

Your own Harry

April 15, 1957

Kittredge,

I wish I hadn't mailed that letter yesterday. I know it put you on the qui vive for news I now can't offer. The Russians, for reasons we have been discussing all day, have called off their late-afternoon garden party. The news came in this morning on the excuse that their residentura, Samoilov, is ill with flu. That's nonsense. We know better. A quick check with the Bosqueverdes confirmed that Samoilov has been in and out of the Embassy several times this morning.

Worst Hubbard
knows Trollope?
Doubtful

Mailman

when I expect information and don't receive it, I have to hold
on to a temper so terrible that I am convinced my father and
all his Gardiner forbears own a touch of Druid's blood. I hate
you right now. Your last letter, to put it kindly, reads like
dribble and drool from Fathead Lane. What do I care about your
third-rate Chief of Station and his Napoleonic urinations into
the pea-pot of Uruguay? His cables are equal to his mentality.
Fatuuous, sophomoric, and self-seeking. Your appreciation of
such mediocrity inspires me with the horror that your talents,
skimpy as they have always been, are now gone half-over.

As I write this, I am sitting at Harlot's desk looking at
your brooch. Note that this is the first time I have ever
called Hugh by the name for which he is famous. I wonder what
Christopher's proud cryptonym is yet to be? STRUMPET?
TOMBSTONE?

The baby is crying. Again. Again. It is because I
called him TOMBSTONE. His life is part of my future death.

Brooch

Your brooch

did not dare to tell him how candid we were about Agency matters. That he would never comprehend and never forgive.

I did lie to him, therefore, and lied again when I told him that the letters were destroyed by me on the night I took the LSD. Even in the midst of my madness, you see, I knew enough to lie.

How can I
comprehend it:
It violates the
deepest values of
both (and that)
is (the one who won't)
die for the CIA!
and it is
so foolhardy
as to be
suicidal

Disproportion was enough to dilate Dorothy's nostrils. Gatsby and his wife were, however, presentable, or just about. Jay had graduated from The Citadel and Theodora, his bride--for so he termed her--came out of some good Southern ladies' emporium of education (not college precisely) called Atkins Emory or an equivalent concatenation of consonants. Theodora's chiffon, revealing sweetly haunted shadows between her breasts, may have been enough to elicit a second invitation to dinner from Hunt, but that was that.

The worst afternoon I spent with Sally was the day preceeding Howard and Dorothy's arrival at her house for a pay-back dinner. Sally's most formidable asset, the ability to say farewell to her mind for thirty wholly concupiscent minutes, was subverted. I made love to a woman with a rigid body and a mind teeming with social fear. Hunt could throw himself into MARXISM Y MIERDA and ship cartons of pelleted Who-Me's up to the front without a backward look, but he could not enjoy a repast with people who did not know how to serve the damn thing. And Dorothy was worse. To the stern blood standards of her one-eighth of Oglala Sioux and the Harrison ancestors, and the John Quincy Adams descendants, could be added Mrs. Hunt's relinquished title. Dorothy had been married to the Marquis de Goutière, and had kept house with him in

thoughts. I rarely had to reply. He would worry whether Gatsby was equipped to handle the Paraguayan emigré groups in Montevideo; and speaking of Gatsby, what did I think of the quality of the letter intercepts at the Central Post Office? Gatsby might have recruited these people, but was he developing them? An awful lot of valuable correspondence could be slipping by. Soviet Russia Division thought so; they were always on our Station ass, muttered Howard, and asked himself: Should Porringer be emplaced over Gatsby at the Post Office?

Next: AV/EMARIA. Too limited. Needed beefing up. Two more surveillance cars at least. Could Peones get us off-duty cops? A lot tougher in the crunch than taxi drivers. Vis-a-vis surveillance, here is new Station concept. We get the bodywork done in Urugo garages. Put an unobtrusive periscope on the roof of the surveillance cab. Add a camera. Ideal for photographing targets of opportunity. But, Harry, the hardware has to be worked up right here. They'll kill us in the Groogs if we request. Who can I call? Old Gordy Morewood is the only one. Has to route us onto two good metal-workers able to button their fat Spanish lip. By the way, I'm not done with Gatsby yet. He's not cinching up our telegraph people. More complaints out of Soviet Russia Div concerning the Soviet Bloc telegraph take, too small, damn it.

✓
cable,
Harry's
letters
to K.
It
intercepted?

spent more time writing for the Montevideo periodicals than reading them. "Khrushchev: Butcher of the Ukraine," went the lead in our pieces.

written
in
Spanish
translated?
by
Whom?

So I saw the new job to which I would now be harnessed. While Porringer's journalistic contacts were as sacrosanct to him as an Oklahoma dirt farmer's forty acres, I was obviously going to get a heavy share of the writing and editing. Hunt's litany of sad and imperfect execution of projects by Gatsby and Kearns was, I knew, the mirror image of their complaints to him that I was not taking on my proper share of duties. The oldest game at every Station, I had begun to learn, was to slough dull jobs onto the new man at the next desk, and Hunt, who could hardly be unaware of what it would cost at the Embassy wing to be his favorite, had decided I must take on even more shop work. When I agreed, therefore, to put my hand in daily on the material Porringer sent over to his best three journalists, AV/ARICE, AV/ENGE and AV/IATOR, Hunt had obtained his purpose.

"Harry, when all is said and done," he told me now, "propaganda is half of what we do. Sometimes I think it's the best half." He opened his desk drawer and shut it as if to take a spot check on whether the Sovs might have left a sneaky there just so recently as this afternoon. "Hate to tell you," he said with his hand to the side of his mouth as if to hold

I was thinking that if I were a Russian, I would look for a bright Uruguayan woman who understood English and was ready to cook on this street and house in Carrasco, but it was only a passing thought. Even Dorothy seemed oblivious to the possible danger of uttering a little too much in front of the servants.

We got very drunk that night. Long after Dorothy had gone to bed, Howard kept talking to me. I had never had an older brother, but Hunt was beginning to present some notion of one.

Back in the paneled wood study after dinner, he took out Hennessy Four Star. We honed our after-dinner sentiments on brandy, coffee and Churchills. But for the move from Courvoisier to Hennessy, it could have been Harlot's post-dinner routine. Taking account of that, all other similarities cease. Hunt's study, for instance, must have had fifty photographs on the wall. There were silver-framed shots of himself and Dorothy in their separate childhoods, then together in Paris; pictures of their children, Lisa Tiffany, Kevan and Howard St. John; pictures of Howard playing the saxophone in a college band; Ensign Howard Hunt, USNR; Correspondent Hunt at Guadalcanal; Hunt in Sydney, Australia; Hunt with the Army Air Force in Miami; Hunt at the typewriter for one of his novels; Hunt in a Chinese dugout with a sniper's gun; Hunt ensconced on a ten-foot statue of Confucius seated on

over

you note earlier that Hatt
was a Navy officer, got
discharged and then commissioned
into the Army. On those days,
one kept a commission, even
if discharged; indeed, he
would not have been discharged
(that's for E.M.) but transferred
into the inactive reserve. Then
later, a transfer of commission
from one branch to another.

talented.' When you come up for promotion, there will be a natural assumption by any examiner that Harvey's change of heart could have been motivated more ways than one. That does you no good."

"Yessir."

"You need a firm unequivocal yes from me."

"I would think so."

"I believe you're going to get it. I see something in you that a lot of good young officers don't have, good as they are. You anticipate. You invest yourself. You have, I believe, something extra. I am going to say that while still inexperienced, you show potential for high echelon. 'Worth keeping an eye on,' is the plus I intend to put in for you."

"Thank you, Howard."

"I believe you have ambition."

Did I? Knowledge versus power had never seemed a painful choice for me. I preferred the first. Did he see something I did not perceive in myself? I do not know if it was the Hennessey, or Hunt's large assessment of my qualities, but I knew the warmth of flattery in all my limbs.

"The key thing, Hub--sorry! Harry!--is not to kid oneself. We all want to become Director of Central Intelligence. To me, that means more than being President. Do you feel that way?"

→ I saw it earlier - at the Fama at Yale (graduating early) in Berlin

write to you of all that's happened to me. So little shows on the surface; so much has shifted within. I will not rush to call it wisdom, or the grim reaper of resignation, but will let you, for once, decide.

Of course, I am breaking a promise. (I refuse to call it a vow, since Hugh extorted it from me. To give one's word when at one's weakest is not to give the heartfelt word.) On the dubious logic of this, I decided not to tell Hugh that I am ready to correspond with you again. He would not agree, and my life with him would, as a result, grow intolerable. I will not submit to his force; he would never accept my rebellion. Our marriage, which has moved equably, and in all honesty, happily, on the foundation of his prodigious care of me when I needed it most, could be thrown into the doldrums again.

I have obviously learned much. One lives with what works, but the spirit looks for what needs to be added. By this logic, I need your letters. In consequence, deception commences once more. My mind grows practical. Put the envelope that contains your next letter inside still another envelope, and stick the two together on the inside with a piece of scotch tape gummed on both faces. Do you remember that technique? They taught that at the Farm. Should you or I discover that any of our letters happen to be opened, cable me

more than a
day late
and a
dollar
short

immediately. One word is sufficient: JAMBOREE. That's the alert. You can reach me via my cryptonym, MK/ULTRA-17. I know yours.

Once our new link is happily in place, I'm going to tell you considerably more about myself than you may expect. In the interim, I hope you have contracted none of the venereal diseases that the eye of heaven might decide you deserve. Ha, ha, or is it, ho, ho?

Guess Who

Her sense of precaution was about as dilatory as mine. It might be a little late in the day, but I was beginning to brood about Uruguayan postal clerks. Gatsby's project had two men working daily at unsealing letters that passed between Montevideo and the Soviet bloc. Now, it occurred to me that the KGB might have its own people in the Central Post Office. (Indeed, it could even be our people!) The Russians might be going through mail that travelled from Montevideo to Washington. Why not? Would I not try to do that if I were a KGB man?

This proved to be one hell of a thought. Photographed copies of the whole of my correspondence to Kittredge could now

to son
HA!
Jest.

be sitting in the Soviet Embassy on Bulevar Espana. My synapses received enough of a jolt to have been sitting in the electric chair. Indeed, the shock was so complete that it passed through me, shivered my cells, and was gone. If permanently altered by the experience, it was by the width of a hair. As a practical matter, I could not proceed on the assumption that anything so catastrophic had occurred. I would have had to turn myself in, and Mrs. Montague as well.

I decided, therefore, not to put Kittredge through any belated comedy now of aliases or shifts of occupation. I could, of course, re-name Fuertes, call him something like Secuestrado whenever I chose to write about him. I could even cease to refer to him as a working member of the PCU. I might give him a fictitious job with a meat company. But, no, such a practice would take over the letters. Our best hope if the KGB by some thousand-to-one shot was now on to Kittredge and myself had to rest in the thought that the Sovietskys would thereby waste thousands, then ten thousands of man-hours over what they would have to assume was the obvious provocation of our letters. How, after all, could two responsible intelligence officers correspond with such unconcealed candor and offer such verifiable facts? The KGB would not believe any of it at face value. The better our letters checked out with their other

Very
very
very
I will
to
believe
that he
just
thought
of this
Did he
not
graduate
from a
course
in
"Flaps
+
Seals
?

sources, the more they would be convinced that we were engaged in a long-term campaign of disinformation.

Besides, I did not really believe our mail had been picked up. The more I contemplated the volume of postal material passing between Montevideo and the U.S., the more did our peril seem reduced. I knew the calibre of clerks at the Central Post Office. Hopelessly bored with their task, they were too proud to take criticism. The few times I had filled in for Gatsby, I could see that the only envelopes which caught their attention were addressed in colored inks. Monotony had stultified their eyes.

over

After a few more basic precautions, I would proceed then as if our correspondence were absolutely safe. I would prevail upon Kittredge to take a postal box on the other side of the D.C. line. Maryland or Virginia was only a twenty-minute ride from her canal house. Uruguayan postal clerks enlisted by the KGB would be looking for letters with a Washington postmark. Doubtless they would not know that Maryland was any nearer to the capitol than Missouri. Of course, the KGB could have Communist postal clerks. They might be motivated and intelligent, but, no, I would not be panicked by such thoughts. Suffice it that using white envelopes, inconspicuous inks, and

But all this postal
 anxiety (not to mention
 the anxiety felt by the
 reader over N's failure to
 set it right) is unnecessary.

Why not just tell the
 story, instead of situating
 it, seating it so firmly
 in epistolary possibility?

I had only one doubt about the translatability of this note. Would she read Virginia from Leesville? The rest, I thought, should offer no confusion to Kittredge, and more than some to the KGB. In my mind, however, I was already estimating the force of as if. For now that I had taken these basic precautions, would I have the inner discipline to proceed as if our letters would never be read by anyone but ourselves? The risk might be infinitesimal; but could it be ignored?

Still, espionage would not exist if some vital part of the human psyche could not rest until able to play a double role. In taking this one microscopic chance of betraying the Agency, I had to believe I was cleansing myself for greater commitment to daily tasks.

Besides, correspondence with Kittredge offered invaluable insight into living with a well-developed lie. That had practical value. I could feel closer to Chevi. Some transparent caul of the mind may enclose the double life. One sees oneself from within and without.

January 5, 1958

Dear Harry,

Christopher will soon be fourteen months old. What a

cheer it
beem
microscopic -
same
000001

in the closet. While he says that he's eschewed all sex since he's come into the Company, I don't believe him. All the same, he swears to it. I suppose he must. Apparently, he was a bit of a young queen in high school. Hard to imagine. There he must have been, funny looking with eyeglasses, school valedictorian, all summa grades, of course, but had an addiction to "debasement," as he puts it. He says it like a black man, not one word but two, "dee basement." He is, when you get to know him (and he drops that awful lap dog admiration which he used to put on for Hugh and all people he respects) a wicked and incredibly funny gossip. A propensity to dish the dirt is, he assures me, "sublimation of that shame which cannot say its name." When I asked him how he managed to get through the wings of the flutter bird in the entrance tests, he said, "Darling, gay people know how to pass a lie detector. That's part of our lore."

"Well, how do you?" I asked.

"I can't possibly tell you. It would offend your proprieties."

"I have none," I said.

"Kittredge, you are the most innocent and locked-up person I know."

"Tell me," I said.

*doesn't sound
like the Annie I
remember*

variations. The words become more and more Latinate, first with Anglo-Saxon and Latin pairings, such as loose-virginal or mix-isolate, then entirely Latinate: Spiritual-material, concupiscent-celibate, intuition-exposition, conclusion-commence.

X I won't try to tell you how we weight our results. I can promise that all twenty sheets with their total of five hundred opposites were carefully chosen. God, you may be certain they were carefully chosen. We ended with all sorts of spin-offs.

The test has fine ability to detect paranoid schizophrenics and manic depressives. Anal-retentive neurotics just leap out from the results. (A high number of Agency analysts are in this category, I fear.) At such testing levels we were about as

good as predicting mental disorders as a Szondi test or a Rohrschach.

Extracting a reliable Alpha-Omega profile, however, is backbreaking. I won't go into the more complex aspects, but we have a few dazzlers buried within. We employed the two rivers of English to good effect. Since our tongue derives from Anglo-Saxon roots and Latin roots we are able to delineate whole structures of Alpha and Omega. Dependably, either A or O gravitates to Anglo-Saxon, the other to Latin. Of course, you have to find out which is which. Executives and

6/1
what
criteria?

which isn't much good at all -
follow out
of use,
I believe

jargon-purveyors are easy. Almost always their Alpha sits on their Omega and such types of Alpha love the long Latinate words.

We learned to our horror, however, and we did anticipate this horror, that Long Tom (our in-house term for the 500 pairings) has to be taken a minimum of five times in order to pick up crucial variations and fluctuations in A and O. A key factor, you see, is the style of transition from Alpha to Omega. Actors and psychopaths can go back and forth twenty times a day. Certain kinds of bureaucrats keep the two personae wholly separate for years, and usually only one is visible to the world at large. The test has to be administered, therefore, at different hours of the day. Dawn and midnight, so to speak. Drunk and sober. Administering Long Tom was more difficult than raising orchids. (There's also a short test with 50 pairings, but it proves much less reliable.)

We did end with results that could be employed. We even had a pretty fool-proof set of vectors to spot a putative agent, or even better, a putative double-agent. Of course, how does one give such a test in Moscow, Warsaw or Prague? There was no way we could simplify the architecture of Long Tom without gelding him. Not to speak of losing our separate

Do you
know that
the Latin/
Anglo-Saxon
dichotomy
has long
been
seen as
a source
of
Shakespeare!
prints of
language.
K's
talking
and
know
this
well

Mailman

"As a ~~species~~ of final contribution."

"Very well." He looked into the whorls of his fingertips.

"Kittredge, the cognoscenti have decided that your concept of Alpha and Omega is a whole-cloth projection of what can only be your latent schizophrenia. I am sorry."

He got up, he extended his hand, and, do you know, I took it. We shook hands limply. I think we were mourning the end of our work together. Despite all. Since then, I've only seen him in the cafeteria and the corridor. I miss his wit, I will testify to that.

Now, Harry, I'm holding off the worst. I couldn't keep this last blow to myself. I told it all to Hugh and he set up a meeting with Dulles, Helms and Gottlieb. It was not easy. I think, as a professional matter, Hugh thought I should pull my own potatoes out of the fire, but there it was for him to do. I, obviously, could not plead my own case if I were being accused of schizophrenia. Well, Helms and Gottlieb did show up. Dulles was most significantly absent. The other two worked splendidly together. No, they told Hugh, they did not for a moment believe that my conception was any kind of self-projection of putative schizophrenia. What a shocking notion. No, Kittredge's theory remained, as always, profound. "I would even," said Helms, "call it sacrosanct."

re-examine each move of our actors, the indefinite can crystallize into the concrete. By such methods are we provided with a 75% certainty that Zenia Masarov and Georgi Varkhov are having a liaison. It is considered no more than 50% certain that Boris Gennadyevitch Masarov is aware of the situation.

I hate to terminate this letter at just this place but an urgent phone call involving my work has just come in. I will go downstairs and post this letter and do my best to bring it up to date tomorrow. Perhaps that is just as well. We should take the standard precaution of putting no more than six or eight sheets of flimsy into one envelope. On that reductive note, my salutations.

Love,

Herrick

defensive

Well, I can still hear one instructor at the Farm saying, "Expatiate!" What an exhortation! The-space-you-ate, Hubbard, bring-forth-the-space-you-ate--as if memory were a mighty maw. Hark to wings of metaphor! I feel giddy writing to you again. Can it be the altitude? A joke. If I haven't told you, Uruguay, after Luxembourg, is the flattest country in the world. And at sea level, too. Do you know I've had four drinks with an avocado in them. Tonight.

I apologize. I feel just a little too much vertigo to go on.

Sunday morning

It's now January 12th, and I will not tear up the above. I believe, despite all medical evidence to the contrary, that my wits show their own gait when I'm drunk.

Now to the Masarovs. Samoilov, the former Resident, invited a few American Embassy folk to a spring garden party given in farewell to himself, and welcome for the new Resident, Varkhov. After fair amounts of cable exchange, we decided not to go, not yet, and sent polite regrets. Three weeks later, Varkhov now installed, invited us to a larger party. This time, we accepted. Hunt led the State Department delegation,

too
Maslovian

would not wish to stir any half-buried cerebrations, but I have to tell you this much: The one Black answer which always puts my King's pawn opening into trouble is the Sicilian Defense. It seems to take a different turn every time, and I never get to play my game. I'm White, but I'm reacting all the while to what Black is up to. It was uncanny of Boris to look me over so carefully, then pick the Sicilian.

Well, that's all you need to know. By the sixth move, I was uncomfortable; by the eighth, I was beginning to glimpse future defeat; and by the tenth move he had gotten up from his chair in impatience at how long it was taking me--we employed no clock--and came back with a book, and was impolite enough, or superior enough, or maybe it is elegant enough, to sit there reading while I cogitated over my next move. Then, as soon as I had come to a decision, he would look up, pull his upper teeth over his lower lip with the gentlest sound of tasteful appreciation, reach forward, make his move, which always took immediate account of whatever small scheme I was hoping to cook, and then without a by-your-leave, go back to his book, which happened to be--do you believe this?--the Modern Library Giant of Moby Dick. He was, incidentally, well into it.

Masarov took a knight on the fourteenth move, and I gave up on the fifteenth. He had all the position by then and his

rocks were ready to go. I never succeeded in castling. He kept me too busy.

Now, Zenia brings out the tea. There is, in the wake left by the game, nothing to talk about. I comment that she does not use the samovars, but a tea-pot. "English tea," she replies. I ask for her patronymic. "My father's name--Arkady. I am Zenia Arkadyova."

"The sounds are beautiful," I say. "Zenia Arkadyova."

We make a little game of getting the accent right. "Many sounds in Russian," she tells me, "woods, earth, small animals in forest, rivers. English coming from roads, hills, beaches. Surf of sea."

The largest generalizations are always begging to be adopted by me, but this is too basic.

"I'm sure you are right," I say.

She stares at me. It is disconcerting. She seems to be searching for some person in hiding just behind me. "May I look at your library?" I ask Boris.

He pulls himself out of the deep depression in which he has sat since the end of the game. He passes with a wave of his hand over three quarters of his books. They are in Cyrillic, and for all I know, some may be in Arabic. He brings me to his American section. In English text, is all of

*all this
seems to
be
going on
for
long*

Hemingway and most of Faulkner. Also Mary McCarthy, Tennessee Williams, Arthur Miller, William Inge, Sidney Howard, Elmer Rice, all of O'Neill, Clifford Odets, and T.S.Eliot--"The Cocktail Party."

What is
Jack
London
and
Dos Passos?

"Do you have ambitions to be a playwright?" I asked.

He grunted. It is the saddest grunt I ever heard, as if made by some half-wild, half-domesticated animal who had come to realize that his stomach would never be at peace again and so every meal for the rest of his life was going to cause distress.

"A playwright?" he replied. "I would not know how to talk to actors."

"Nonsense," said Zenia.

He shrugged. "Hemingway I like," he said. "'Tis the essence of pre-war America, would you agree?" ("'Tis!") We had taken another step along the bookcase and were passing the works of Henry James. "Much studied by Lenin and Dzherzhinsky," said Masarov tapping the binding of "The Golden Bowl."

"Is that really true?" I asked. I was overcome by such news.

"No," said Zenia. "Brishka makes jokes."

together any sense of these two people as KGB, whether together or apart. Yet, he has gone out of his way to mention Dzherzhinsky--that is obliged to be some sort of signal.

We sit down and chat about cultural matters American. He is interested in Jack Kerouac and William Burroughs, in Thelonius Monk, in Sonny Rollins whom I have never heard of. He has a record of Sonny Rollins and plays it for me and beams when I say that I have never heard a better tenor saxophone, and feel indebted to him for introducing me.

This opens a new direction. "Zenia was telling untruth," he says.

"Zenia Arkadyova was lying?" I ask,

He smiles at my use of the patronymic. "She has, actually, written one poem in last two years."

"No, is awful. Do not show," says Zenia.

"In English," says Masarov. "This year, in Russian tongue, Zenia cannot express herself. Not this year. It's total block. So, in your language, she has essayed. . . attempted a. . .a. . ."

"Zakushki. Little poem. Appetizer," says Zenia. She is wholly flushed now, and her ample bosom is, I could swear, surging. Inner emotion is like physical resonance for her. "Nugatory," she says. "Trivial." (Sounds like Tree-vee- owl.)

in 1957?
Bu Ha
Kend
was first published in 1957

Incidentally, I am concerned that the time involved in getting to your Maryland post office box may add up to forty minutes each way, not twenty. Is that true? I feel as if my letters pile up in a box you never have time to visit, not with Hugh, Christopher, and your job to take care of. Ah, well, interrogated often enough by the Sourballs, there is no drear contingency that will not raise its paranoid head.

I will try to keep an orderly chronicle. You may recollect how modest was my meeting with the Masarovs. Well, let me inform you: The Soviet Russia Division did not think so. After I sent off a lengthy cable to Washington concerning my little get-together with the new Soviet friends, I received by return cable, a questionnaire about as long as my last letter to you. Answering it kept me busy for a day and a half. Then, a man flew down to us, care of Soviet Russia Division, to interrogate me personally. By accent and appearance, he has to be another Finnish Mick. He calls himself Omaley. (Pronounced like homily without the "h.") He is not too tall, and very thin, and has horns, yes, horns of hair on an otherwise near-bald head. He also has a profusion of what I am tempted to call reverse-whiskers. His chest thatch is apparently so thick that it grows out of his shirt and half up his neck. It gives him a ruff above his collar. He looks like a

too much detail?

thought you were the most attractive young man I had ever met, so solemn, so shy, so intensely filled with purpose, and best of all, not yet wholly formed. It is your salvation that you didn't know how nifty you were to women in those days or you would have gone hog belly up, as I fear you have in the year and a half, is it, you've spent in your Uruguay brothels? I don't like the evil in you--it's snide. But then, I am attacking again suddenly and outrageously, which is a danger sign I have come to recognize. This time, I can not only name the cause but feel it rising in me--I have an implicit dread of what I am going to tell you next. You see, I had a fearful experience that same Easter night at the Keep. Augustus Farr, or his incubus, or whatever creature it may have been, visited me in my bed, and submitted me to horrors. I felt like the dark and dirty midwife to Shakespeare's bloody foils and foul deeds. I was in the filthiest transport of ugly carnality, oh, I tell you, if that incubus was no more than the integument of a dream, then who were those little beasts of the underworld inhabiting my mouth? Do you recall how earlier that afternoon I had spoken so prettily of how Hugh and I had our Italian Solution? In sleep, however, Augustus Farr became the sexual guide into those dark and stinking depths where beauty and desire do germinate the colors of the orchid, the same mad

overused

appear in the sixth month of my pregnancy, during Hugh's and my summer vacation in '56 at the Keep, yes, showed up on a night when we had sexual congress. That is what it felt like by the sixth month since I could sense that Hugh was just a little backed-up before my large belly. A pregnant woman told me once that she made love with her husband right up to the day before the baby was born, but this was hardly true for Hugh and me--we had sexual congress. On that particular night of which I speak, however, desires commenced in me of a labyrinthine if oily nature--I felt as if I were the plumpest concubine in a seraglio of Ingres' Turkish odalisques. Unlike those sweet ladies, however, I felt wholly depraved. I remember wishing that someone could watch Hugh and me, and such subterranean stirrings must have communicated themselves to my dear partner, because now there was nothing collegial any longer about our congress, we were mad for one another all over again, and I felt the baby stirring in the center of us and very much a part of it, one concupiscent family of lovers until, oh, we were suddenly more than that. The integument, or the evil ectoplasmic presence--call the incubus what you will--was also with us now in the full silence of the night. I could feel all the libidinous resonance that evil alone knows how to deliver. I felt--and I find it not at all easy to relate even now--I

Easter madness, I used to feel as if I could hear those victims screaming in rage, and I began to brood on the possibility that when a death is monstrously unfair, it can incite a curse upon human existence from which we do not necessarily recover. Not altogether. Some days when the smog in Washington is inhumanly bilious I wonder if we are not breathing some baleful message from the beyond. You can see how disturbed I am still.

Maslov

Well, last summer, Hugh was man enough, and husband enough, to enter my horrors. When he finally came to understand, against all his cautions, and his veritable filigree of paranoia, that by closing me out of his professional life, he was helping to lacerate my spirit and unbalance my mind, he began to reveal to me just a little bit about the sort of pieces he sets up for his playing board. So I know more now about your situation than you may. I wish to give you a warning. The KGB, according to Hugh, has taken great strides in these last few years since Stalin's death. The all-out reign of Stalinist terror is over, and they have begun to get fearfully skillful again. You might try worrying about them in serious respectful fashion. Hugh's estimate of the Masarov picnic is as follows: the KGB has a mole in the Soviet Russia Division. The best way to protect said mole is to insinuate the notion among us that the fellow is to be found

more impressive than good spy novels and movies. We want, secretly, to act as protagonists in such ventures. Then we go to work for the Company, and discover that, whatever we are, we are never protagonists. We pop into the spy novel at Chapter Six, but rarely find out what was going on in Chapter Five, let alone earlier times. Just as seldom are we privy to what happens in the rest of the book. I offered this once to Hugh, and he said, "If you must feel sorry for yourself, read a book on the Calculus of Partial Derivatives. That will give you paradigmatic solace, darling." The key to our lives, Harry, is in the drear word patience.

OVER
LSCA

As a test for you, I have news, but it is not for this letter. To whet your appetite to a slather, I will only say that I have changed my slot in TSS. I am now behind one of the doors that Arnie Rosen used to call "Dracula's Lair." Yes, I am being trained for what we might as well term heavier work. I've decided it's time to stop being a nice Radcliffe girl and step onto the dance floor with the barbarian in me who, breathing in great secret, does get somewhat short of wind over Lavinia's stumps.

You had better tell me what you are up to, or you simply won't get the next letter.

Love (patience)

Kittredge

into all those close places in oneself where you chart the rise and fall of your ego. (Query: We've never talked about Alpha Ego and Omega Ego and their inner relations. That's a whole study, I know.) Chevi, I suspect, is treating me like a younger brother all the while I am trying to treat him like one. As one example of how he attempts to keep me in place, he loves to speak of his two years in New York when he lived with that Negress in Harlem. She turned tricks, and was on drugs, and encouraged him to be her pimp. He tells me hair-raising tales about knife fights with other pimps. I don't know how much of it is true--I suspect he is exaggerating--indeed, I would guess he avoided knife fights, but I just can't swear to any of this. He does have a few facial scars. Be assured, however, his tales serve their purpose: I feel inferior to his sophistication. On the other hand, we are always in one or another spiritual contest to see who will end up the brother superior.

Lately, I've been having my troubles in this direction. Howard's concept of emblazoning Marxismo Es Mierda in six-foot letters on every available town wall has developed into a full program. It has also escalated into a small war. If Marxists have their own kind of religious feelings, then marrying Marxism and shit to the same phrase certainly awakens something

I ←
thought
it
was
one
year
?

totally cynical and manipulative Alpha, and you've got your high official. We work back to decide on the good young prospects by way of the old guard's test scores.

Well, of course, I don't lay it out for them like that, no, sir. Cynical becomes adaptive factor; manipulative alters into control-secure facility; patriotism is high loyalty cathexis vector, so forth. (Your own Howard Hunt, by the way, satisfies profile perfectly.) The actual way it works, however, does lead right to your query. You see, back in Radcliffe sophomore year, I learned by way of E.A. Wallis Budge's translation and commentary on The Egyptian Book of the Dead (a tome comparable in its impenetrability to The Critique of Pure Reason) that the Egyptian vision of death postulated a fearful trip through the underworld. This lit up, nonetheless, a few bright psychological lights for one young Kittredge Gardiner. The Pharaoh and temple priests believed in seven souls and spirits accumulated in each living person; at death that holy and/or unholy seven went off in different directions. I won't distract you with this now except to say that a spiritual eminence named the Khaibit was one of these souls and spirits, and seems to be nothing less than the dead person's memory. When you died, your double, the Ka, travelled through the underworld trying to find those long-advertised Elysian

15
H
wise
to
bury
in
Egypt?

number of colors it contains--God, what strength there is in vulgarity! There is a tapestry on the wall of a huge fleur-de-lis in white, gold, and silver. Her living room looks like a love nest in a furniture store window. Even the ash trays are as large as fruit bowls.

She is fixed on E. Howard Hunt. Whom does he visit in the estancias?

I protest that I do not accompany him.

Is there a man named Benito Nardone?

"Isn't he a politician?" I ask.

Chevi makes a sound of disgust. "You know very well that he is the emergent leader of the Ruralistas."

"Yes, I do know something of that," I admit.

Libertad now gives a large smile. I have not yet been able to calm myself the least bit. Her presence still seems an advance on payment in kind. If I will be nice to her, she will be nice to me. I am beginning to recognize that a courtesan is a powerful and single-minded force as concentrated on the value of itself as any important athlete. How thin-layered and complex we must seem in comparison.

It comes out that she would like to meet E. Howard Hunt in order to be introduced to Benito Nardone.

↓ getting far removed

I know why he chose to say those words in Spanish. They are not so hopelessly banal as "a soul-less woman."

Kittredge, I may be developing the instincts one needs for this work. Chevi finished his tale of woe, put his head on our good cheap safehouse shellac-orange maple dining table, and began to weep. I said, "Why don't you stop lying? We know where Libertad comes from. It is not La Teja." I was pretending to such factual confidence, but there was something askew in his story. It was full of South American pathos, which invariably depends on lovers who have known each other from childhood, an operatic conceit which is the core of most of the local sentimentality. Or perhaps, deeper than any explanation, I knew he was lying.

"All right," he said, "I will tell you the truth."

Kittredge, I am going to end this letter right here. I did learn the truth, and I promise you, it was not ordinary. Still, I think you will do well to wait a day or two. I confess to being more annoyed than I realized over the games you play with Dracula's Lair.

Cheerfully yours,

Harry

✓
not
sure
of
this

description. Suffice it to say that I was fortunate or
unfortunate enough to be treated to such sensitivity to my
state of tumescence that like the fabled King of France in the
old drinking song who "marched his troops up the hill and
marched them down again," we did not get to her final reception
of my pent-up offering until Chevi had splashed enough water in
bowl and washbasin to indicate he would soon be back with us,
no, she took me up and down a steeple chase, and through long
and languorous hoops. I might have been hers forever if some
residual Hubbard stubbornness, not about to hand over the
family keys to a stranger, had not also appeared ~~the~~ ^{at}
culmination like a mailed warder and slammed a gate in my soul;
I came, to my surprise, painfully. Alpha, taken in whole, must
have gone clear over the hurdle, but Omega shattered darkly
below. My loins ached when I was done. Myself, quickly
buttoned, she made a point of licking her plump lips as if seed
were cream, gave a squeeze of her hand to mine, and made
another point of kissing Chevi with considerable passion when
he came back to the room. I was not about to pass on such a
closely stitched scenario to Kittredge. Yet I hardly wished to
mislead her by too much. That would violate again the spirit
of our correspondence. So I had given a fulsome description of
Libertad's attractions, as if by that route to communicate the

Huh?
too
Marian

April 10, 1958.

Dearest Kittredge,

I had hoped in these five days that a letter would arrive. I've come to recognize it is not curiosity itself that unsettles me so much as anxiety concerning you. I fear that what you're being asked to do vis-a-vis Dracula's Lair may be onerous. Perhaps you cannot bear to tell me. You must! At the risk of being disloyal to Hugh, I have to say, and you may agree, that certain of your feelings are better communicated to me.

At any rate, I have held off writing, and now must confess that the real story I can tell--the secret of Libertad La Lengua--is so compelling that, letter or no from you, I won't hold off any longer. Let me then inform you that my night in the safehouse with Chevi went on for hours, and only ended when he promised me that his "fundamental relationship" had to be to the Agency. We are now his first and only one. He would give the lady up.

"If you don't," I told him, "we will find out soon enough. Termination will be inescapable. Toward those who betray us, our sense of justice is unstinting."

would a
Latin understand
this word
this Anglo
word?

9 | Actually, I hardly know what we would do--probably terminate the relationship, and that's about it. The use of such a word as unstinting, however, does strike fear into a compromised heart: They cannot believe it is only the job that will be terminated and not themselves.

"I will see her no more," he states. "I give her up as of this moment."

I am thinking that if he does not, we could turn him over to Pedro Peones. I am startled by how large my heart can feel when it is ice-cold. For the size of the fury I'm containing, I might as well have a boulder in my chest. Something in his lies disturbs me profoundly.

"You cannot begin to give her up," I say, "unless you tell the truth about her. Recognize that I am already in possession of this truth." All the while, the distant observer in myself is noting what a chameleon I am. My English when I am with him becomes so formal that it often sounds as if I am translating from Spanish.

He looks into my eyes. Our staring contest goes on for many moments and each of us takes turns at growing stronger than the other, or, should I say, more in control, or less of a liar--I do not know. It takes quite a while before he turns

away and says, "You do not know the truth, or you would not have accompanied me tonight."

"Until you tell me, I cannot compare it with mine."

He smiles at this evasion, but wanly. He is even more exhausted than myself. "I will tell you," he says, "because the objective reality is now clear to me. I must denude myself of her."

"Denude?"

"Desnudar. . .privar. . ." He finds it. "Divest myself of her. Indeed, I would not have supported her request to see you if I did not think it would be of aid to me in ending the relationship with Libertad. When all is said, she is too impossible a whore."

Now, he wraps his arms mournfully around me in a full abrazo as if we are brothers embracing at a wake, and says, "Libertad is not a woman, but the female transformation of what was once un hermafrodito." He sighs so audibly that I receive all of his breath, cognac, garlic, cigarillos, and whatever of her perfume is still left on his skin, as well as the dead smell one's breath will dependably offer when onerous responsibilities have been carried too long. Since I have shown little response--I think he is speaking in metaphors--he adds, "true and profound change. Surgical transformation."

brink. Alpha, our good manly case officer out in the world of desks and operations and paperwork now had to wonder after this dire descent into recognition, whether he was, himself, a homosexual. That stands out, doesn't it? To be so attracted to a transvestite, or whatever else you could call it, a transsexual. No woman has ever, but for your near divine exception, appealed to me so. I writhe in the bonds of embarrassment as I write this, and yet another part of me, yes, it could only be Omega, knows that Libertad, no matter what is low and sordid and conceivably evil about her, is nonetheless a creation of what I what I can only call, the female spirit.

How that creature out there somewhere between he and she has managed to absorb the quintessence of femininity! If she is not a woman, she has nonetheless become an avatar, yes, it is the word I used instinctively, an avatar of all the beauty of all the women in the world. In absorbing all the lovely manners of women, she has transcended them, she is a goddess. As this view of Libertad and myself passed through Omega, I realized that I was not homosexual, but rather a still inexperienced young man, wholly devoted to the idea and beauty of women. Can you conceive of feeling such opposed emotions at once, yes, of course you can, you are the only one who could.

Mailman

Poor Chevi. Now, I understood the depth of her appeal to him. She was an agent in the world of women, and he, an agent in the world of men. So he could assuage his loneliness--for who could be lonelier than Chevi?--by being close to her. I was now forbidding that.

I returned his abrazo, full of feeling for him, and we had a drink while he showed me the pictures of his wife and son that he carried in his wallet. Both are sturdy, both are dark, his wife a woman of olive eyes and raven hair. The gloom of the gargantuan tasks that lie upon the Communist world are fully in her expression. She has monumental breasts. A not wholly attractive shelf are the large breasts of a woman who would run heavy operations--whether in a factory, a family, or a Party cell. At least, such were Harry Hubbard's concealed editorial sentiments. Chevi sighed again while looking at her--she was all he was going to have for a while. I felt a shiver in my soul. For both of us. We had been living in No Man's Land.

I hope you do not find this excessively emotional. Be *Malenian*
certain I drove him home without further ado, and got ready for my next day at the office. The question was how much to divulge to Hunt. I was obviously in some kind of pickle. The real question is how much of AV/OCADO, our best operation in

He was an unlikely ally, but then, the virtue of a heavy hangover may be that it freshens old clichés. Any port in a storm! Porringer, whatever his personal flaws, is not stupid.

We went out to one of those giant ubiquitous sidewalk cafés that are becoming so prevalent now all over Europe and South America. Dusty metal chairs, coffee-sticky metal tables, ads for apertifs on the awnings, bored waiters, ill-dressed housewives eating gritty ice-cream, adolescents playing hooky from their lycée. I think the only place in the world where outdoor cafés really make sense is in Paris, to which my mother took me for a week when I was sixteen. Ours, right now, is, alas, not in Paris, but Montevideo, although it is named Café Trouville, no less, and must have seventy or eighty dingy little round white tables sitting on the sidewalk of the Bulevar General Artigas, which is, as you would expect, an artery of traffic. Arteries of traffic in South America do get named after generals. Avenida de General Aorta, Bulevar de General Carotida--for the record, Kittredge, I do but jest. I don't want you ever to make a wager that there is an Avenida Aorta in Montevideo. Sooner an Avenida del Almirante Cloaca. If this last, on reflection, is needlessly cruel to Montevideo, a city which has never done me any harm, I may be thinking of my state of hangover as I sat with Porringer over coffee.

cut

"I feel," I reply, "as if I'm holding something better for you."

Porringer shakes his head in the negative. "Buddy, let me have it."

I knew then that he will not go first. He too must be holding on to a loose cannon. On the other hand, if I prime him, he will pool his information. It is always difficult for Porringer to hold back his superior command of a subject.

I tell him, therefore, a good portion of what I set down in last night's letter to you. I did not say that I had visited Libertad, but did impart the knowledge that Chevi was often her visitor, and had told me about the sex-change.

"Yes," he said, "I picked up as much from my contacts in the whorehouse wards. I was going to warn you about Chevi."

"Why didn't you?"

He shifted his seat and threw one quick look at my expression. "Well, he's your agent. I don't leave my farts in every lark's nest."

I was thinking he may have been waiting for AV/OCADO to blow up in my face.

As if he had read my mind, he added, "I didn't want to get the Station in a stir about Libertad. Nor do you."

"Can you tell me what you know about her?"

doesn't
sound
like
OKlahoma

"Inside-out?"

"You mean you are not witting about Swedish chirurgery?"

"Can't say that I am."

"Live and learn. A Swedish sawbones doesn't just chop off dick and testicles and hold out his hand for payment. I was stationed in Sweden for two years. Those Olafs think they are virtuosos. The good surgeon removes the inside meat, but saves the outer skin of the sack and penis for the humanitarian reason that both swatches of epidermis are loaded with erogenous nerve endings. Then the surgical team cuts a new hole--which, I fear, leads nowhere--and lines it with all this premium erogenous tissue. Give me a Swedish social democrat every time. Got any questions?"

I nodded.

He was like a water buffalo. Impossible to get him moving; once under way, no reason to stop. "I had," he said, "a few questions of my own. Here we were with Hunt. A Station Chief whose idea of covert action is to own the local cops. Howard is in love with Peones, and Peones is in love with La Lengua. And I am in possession of information which is going to be about as popular as syphilis on a petri dish. But you know me. I still want more. So I ask around in the local bagnios, and, kid you not, brother, they knew all about

Oklahoma?

Malman

Libertad. Here in old Monte VD, they are ready to tell all. In the old pre-Havana days, Libertad used to be named Roderigo. Roderigo Durazno, no less. A specialty act. Full penis and testes which he couldn't use for much, and full set of breasts. Kind of a centerpiece for orgies. You know." He put down his cup and grimaced. "This coffee tastes like reconstituted blood. Awfully sour." He waved to the waiter, pointed to his empty espresso, and said, "Roderigo got depressed. Wanted a sea-change. Saved his pesos. Went to Sweden. Learned to take his female hormone injections by himself. Shit. He-she was a whore. All it took was changing the needle.

"Then, she went to Las Vegas to try out the new hole." (Kittredge, I can't help it. This is how he speaks. Just think of him as a technician in Carnal Engineering.) "Well, Hubbard, her plumbing didn't function like the mad Swedish social democrat scientists had advertised. The new hole was too delicate to take the guff. And her back-hole, which in days of yore in Montevideo had been the old reliable, now was improperly situated. Because of its proximity to the operation, the likelihood of tearing up the patch prohibited its use for anything but the evacuative function--which is what God intended in the first place until all us dirt farmers came along. Her days of taking it up the ass were done. How she

manages now, therefore, appears to be the question. The
whorehouse madams with whom she still pals around tell me she's
got a trick with her hands can fool any man. I find that hard
to believe, but there you are. She nailed her Texan in Las
Vegas, he took her to Havana, and she kept it secret from him
for many a month. He thought he had himself a dynamite blonde.
I don't care how much money a man makes, he can still be the
stupidest fuck alive, wouldn't you say? How about a sandwich
and a drink? This talk has made me hungry."

So we lunched at Café Trouville on tapas and cerveza and
watched traffic grind along while he concluded his tale.
Libertad's Texan was able to learn about her special parts by
way of Havana Station. "One of our case officers in Cuba had
lines out to the cat-houses just like me, and so he heard about
her. She was already a goddamn legend from Cape Horn to the
Caribbean. Any time a hooker can fool a john by oiling and
shaping her fingers to simulate a vagina--you can count on
it--she will brag. And other whores will brag on her. An old
biddy madam friend of Libertad's in Montevideo wrote to another
biddy madam in Havana, and the word was out. Our man from the
Havana Station picked it up. So now Havana Station had to tell
the American Ambassador that his Texas crony-joe was living
with a surgical bombshell scandal. After they all came up for

does
Porridge
Gelsin
or
NO.

air, the Texan prepared to divest himself. In consequence, Libertad decided to write a love letter to Pedro Peones. When in doubt, return to the old protector. Well, there we were, scouting around the fringes, trying to hook Pedro up with us, and all the shit was coming down in Havana. Too bad I only found this out after the fact. Needless to say, Libertad makes me nervous. Any man who is born half a woman and then gives his dick and nuts to the fishes, is not likely to say to the KGB, 'Please, go away, you are not a good Christian.'" He nodded. "That's my take."

"Does Howard know about Libertad?"

"You better get to understand Howard and the Agency. Know one, you're in position to view the other. They're both old ladies. Grand old ladies."

"I'm not sure if I follow you."

"Ever been in a room with a grand old lady when somebody farts? To tell the truth, I never have, but they say you would never know it. Grand old lady doesn't miss a stitch. The fart, oh, señor, he do not exist."

NOPE

"Come on, Porringer, Howard's no fool."

"I did not say he was dumb--I was suggesting he knows when to breathe. Lift your nose and inhale the upper atmosphere with Amilcar Redondo. Don't breathe down. Don't root around."

Let me conclude, then, with one odd remark of Sherman
Porringer's. On the way back to the office, he said, "Satisfy
one mystery for me?"

"Sure."

"Why doesn't my wife have a single decent word to say
about you?"

"She told me once that she didn't like my accent."

"Oh, that could bear improvement, but I still don't get
it. You may be nothing remarkable, but I guess you're half-ass
okay with me. Even if you can't hold an eggshell."

Can a noble society be founded on the judgement of one's
peers?

too
arch

Love to you, dear Kittredge,

Herrick

file material. He was no less than the Chief of Uruguayan Army Intelligence and had come to Hunt by way of Peones (whom I could hardly picture now without his melones gigantes.) FIREBOMB had copious lists of leftists, ultra-leftists, and sympathisers. Before long, I was overseeing the installation of new cabinets in a new room of the Embassy. Hunt had territorial ambitions. We did not yet inhabit all the chambers in our wing.

Operations came and went. Gatsby, of the blond hair and once dark mustache got lucky with our old nemesis in the Uruguayan Foreign Ministry, Gomez, the never forgotten Gomez, saved from arrest by the clamor of Police Chief Capablanca's sirens in the park--was it more than a year ago? Gomez was still a high official in the Foreign Ministry, and doubtless still delivering files over to the Russian embassy. Mayhew had been COS when the operation was botched, but Hunt took it personally. Not a week went by that he did not remind us of the state-of-freedom of one Plutarco Roballo Gomez, still laughing at us, still helping the Communists to undermine one of the last remaining democracies in South America. Hunt had an odd vein of venom about Communists. I say odd, because it was as immaculately personal as if he were speaking of his mother-in-law. I could see his mood go up or down in weekly

"Uriarte, you are young, successful, and enterprising,," said Gomez, "so why do you take up our time with these clerical procedures?"

"Tarco," said LEADPIPE, "it is easier to write down the numbers if you aid me, than if I have to do it by myself. My mind reverses numbers when I have no one to assist me. Do not ask why."

"You are mad," said Gomez.

"Inclined to madness," muttered Uriarte.

They bargained over the price. It was all captured on the tape recorder. Hunt mailed a duplicate of this tape to the editor of El Diario de Montevideo in a package which included the five numbered passports. To Gomez' boss, the Foreign Minister (whom Hunt distrusted) merely another copy of the recording was dispatched. Gomez had to resign his post in the wake of El Diario's front-page story, and Hunt wrote Gatsby up for a commendation.

Since the Foreign Minister leaned, as Hunt put it, "as far to the left as the Tower of Pisa," Gomez never went to trial. The word in good Montevidean circles, however, or at least so Hunt assured us, was that we were the force behind the fall of Plutarco Roballo Gomez.

Headquarters. The grocery store clerk became AV/GROUNDHOG. It became one of the Station jokes. He was sixteen years old.

What little we obtained from him was, on balance, probably worth it. We sifted out a few scratch portraits of petty personnel among the Soviets, but if there were potential defectors among them, they knew enough not to grumble in the grocery store.

On the heels of Varkhov's new activities, however, I did meet with AV/GROUNDHOG at a café midway between our Embassy and the Russians to buy him lunch and give him, for the first time, specific instructions. Since his Russian had a long way to go, it could prove counter-productive, the Finnish Micks assured me, to depend on GROUNDHOG for any reliable comprehension of what the Soviets might be saying, but, no matter, I told him to get Varkhov's chauffeur (an habituée of the grocery store, and always purchasing Pepsi-Cola) into some kind of conversation about Varkhov and his travelling habits lately. The chauffeur brought the subject up himself. Did the proprietor of the grocery store know of any deluxe apartments for rent in the area? Varkhov's mysterious trips out of the Embassy were explained. He had been going to see real estate agents.

Hunt loved this piece of news. He checked out his lists, and handed me a sheet of paper with twenty names on it. "These

We were having lunch at the Jockey Club, a choice which startled me, since it was not impossible for Varkhov to hear of such a meeting, but Hunt thought it unlikely. "Varkhov, Harry, is just not on the same circuit. In any event, to obtain what you want from Don Bosco, you have to feed him properly. He likes the Jockey Club because the waiters are going to make much of him today." Hunt winked. He had prepared the mulch.

"My difficulty," said Don Bosco soon enough, "is with the technical equipment you wish to install. You would have to drill many holes and thereby sully the walls. I believe in conserving the integrity of venerable walls. Do you not?"

"The answer," said Hunt, "lies in the importance of the game."

"If even an ordinary dwelling," said Don Bosco, "is kept in the same family for generation after generation, it becomes, should its walls be long enough respected, a sacred place, an integument. It possesses a condition of immanence."

Hunt threw me a look. Don Bosco's villa had been put up forty years ago, subdivided into two apartments twenty years later, and rented successfully ever since. Don Bosco's eyes opened a fraction, however, in warning. I could see that Hunt had just been advertised not to throw such facts into the pot. What it cost Don Bosco, however, was less calculable. He

two to
four to
make
winds

"Ho, ho," said Hunt.

"The Hiss case came up," said Pat Nixon.

"I remember," said the Vice President, "you congratulated me on what you called 'my indefatigable pursuit' of Alger Hiss, and I had to thank you. In those days, there was still concerning that matter a lot of division de opiniones, if I'm employing acceptable Spanish."

"You certainly are," said Hunt. He looked in danger of bouncing on his toes, he was thus excited. "I remember," he said, "we spent what turned out to be a particularly pleasant half-hour for me in a discussion of the foreign and domestic scene. Your memory is superb, sir."

"A most pleasurable meeting," concluded Nixon, and shifted his weight, a signal doubtless to Hunt, who now steered him down the hall to the Ambassador's office. I wish you could have seen the Vice President, Kittredge. Nixon's an ordinary man in appearance, and yet he's not. He must be as completely the instrument of his own will as Hugh Montague, and yet how could you find two people who are more different?

Hunt now comes back to say to us, "Gang, you have just met the next President of the United States." I wonder. Nixon is certainly on his way. There is no doubt that he is a consummate political machine. You can tell how to get ahead in

*not like Gen. Cummings! Nixon?
Also, isn't Nixon fatally divided?
His Dixie + Omega have no diplomatic relations*

I am going to break off for supper, and then write a longer than average letter (which I will, all the same, send out as always in several envelopes). I don't dare wait another day, or your Polly Galen Smith will be come and gone.

why
mention
this
now?

Later tonight, I will describe one not untypical visit to an estancia. I hope you'll find it worth your attention. No need to sign off here.

Now I'm back from steak, blood pudding, rice and beans, greens. Exactly the sort of grub they gave us at the estancias. You'd think if I saw another piece of barbequed meat, I'd flee, but it did have its own commemorative taste out in the fields. By which I mean that the moment I'm back in town I have a taste for such smoky chops again.

Actually, I don't know that there's volumes to tell you. I did meet Nardone. Ambassador Woodward, from what I hear, looks upon the man as a bit of a local fascist, but of course, that comes from Hunt who is not to be trusted on Woodward. In any event, Nardone is not a bad-looking man and seems surprisingly intellectual for a right-wing politician, although that is due, I'm told, to a different tradition in South America. I think politicos really learn how to discuss their

family manners I had been expecting, but still there are gardens around the house, and agreeable half wild copses of woods with laid-out paths, vineyards, arbors with trellises--it's easy to take a good afternoon of drinking into the evening. They imbibe prodigiously out here in the pampas, wine and Uruguayan cognac, rum, and--touch of class--Scotch. Don Jaime Saavedra Carbajal's house is one story, large and sprawling, with a good deal of the kind of décor that is put together out of the usable (for furniture, that is) hides of cows with splendid splotches of black and white in the chair covering, and steers' horns for arms and backs. Of course, there's also a plethora of dark Victorian stuff, long English hunting tables, mournful stuffed sofas, mahogany cabinets, and atrociously dark and second-rate family portraits. The carpets are old orientals topped with Brazilian jaguar skins, antique rifles are mounted above the fireplaces, the windows are small with many panes, and the ceilings are low. Yet, the house is kind of grand. I can't say how. It does sit ten miles back of its own gate, and you pass thousands of cattle in the endless meadows on the way from the gate to here. Besides, what with the gardens and sheds and barns and out-buildings, there's never a clear view of the whole. I suppose it feels like a

Isn't
this
mullioned
windows?

of love for the U.S.A. as in recognition of his good manners toward Don Jaime Carbajal's foreign guests. Nardone pointed to Hunt and added, "Perhaps the distinguished and true representative of our friends to the North will grace us with his thoughts. My friend and fellow horseman, Señor Howard Hunt."

Howard showed his own happy vein. I will not expatiate on his well-selected compliments to his hosts, but here is some of the rest:

"Señores, like many a North American before me, I love your language and the opportunity to speak in it more than is wise for me." He used sagaz for wise--sagacious was a nice choice, I thought, and his audience laughed encouragingly. "So I will restrict myself to a simple subject--the relation of a father to a son. It is a primary subject, and from it, much else depends. My father was an honorable man, a lawyer, and in later life, a judge, who taught me how to fish and to box, to ride a horse and to shoot. When I was ten, driving with him in a car in the Everglades of Florida, we came across a large rattlesnake lying in the middle of the road. My father encouraged me to step out of our vehicle with the repeating .22 rifle he had purchased for my birthday. That weapon, however, was still too large for me to hold, aim, and fire. Therefore,

DEMOPO? Hunt had to be consulted. DEMOPO, I learned, stood for Demolition Options: modes of wreaking mental or physical havoc on the opposition.

Hunt was in heaven. "This is the first recognition from your guy since he invited me to dinner two years ago. But why did he copy you?" Which, Kittredge, is Hunt-talk for send-you-a-copy.

"To motive-underline," I reply, returning Hunt nugget for nugget.

"Qua motive, Harry, what is Harlot up to? You know how to read him, don't you?"

"At times."

"Does he want to come in on this? Of course. But can we afford one more point of view?"

"He would never approach you directly if he wanted to take it over," I venture. It's amazing, Kittredge, how one becomes an expert. I, who have never understood Hugh for one moment, am now explaining him to others.

"Well, what is he saying?" asked Hunt.

"He's offering genuine felicitations, I believe. I would say he's truly impressed. After all, it is a nice operation."

"Hell and soda water if it isn't," Hunt exclaims. He can't quite trust me when it comes to Hugh Montague, but on the

hard to
believe
K. won't
understand
this

or two in the Stable. While I'm no carpenter, I can tell you that in the closet of the little bedroom where you slept over on occasion, there was a rough baseboard molding that could be pried off and re-nailed without any great show. Behind that board was a suitable space, and when your mail collected, I would get out my hammer. Of course, for short periods, it was nothing to spread the sheets of a letter between the pages of any book or magazine Hugh was likely never to pick up. Fashion magazines, or The ABC of Crochet. Of course, about the time a year-old edition of Vogue was looking a bit pregnant, I would carefully make sure I had recovered every one of your pages, and then I would pop off the trusty base-board in the closet and stash--can't say why, but I adore that word, oh, yes, now I do know why, it's the nickname in Polish for grand people named Stanislaus!--yes, I would stash your letters in the space and nail back the board.

but
pronounced
differently

Now, none of this was ever truly secure. Hugh has antennae that reach into God knows which occult cubbyholes, so he's given my heart a start now and again. Once he even picked up the very copy of Mademoiselle which had your latest letter interleaving model's faces, rolled it up in a cylinder, and kept rapping his thigh with said improvised phallic instrument until, to my relief, he dropped the magazine to the floor