

accreditation for my cover-job, and a cryptonym: VQ/STARTER. Considerable time was left to spend in our once-grand and now cavernous apartment. The furnishings depressed me. The bed in which I slept had a monumentally heavy mattress as dank as an old cellar, and the pillow-bolster could have been mistaken for a log. I could see why Prussians had stiff necks. The substantial if leaky throne in the bathroom was two tiered, offering a flat shelf within the bowl. Not since infancy had one been obliged to pay so much attention to what one had just accomplished, a testament, I decided, to the love of civilized Germans for primitive studies.

My cover job proved so clerical I hesitate to describe it--I had a desk in a Department of Defense supply unit, and was expected to show up once a day to make certain that no papers requiring real administrative disposition, had by any mischance been routed through me. The quarters were cramped, not so cramped as the Snake Pit, but tight enough for my relatively empty desk to look inviting to more legitimate workers. Before long, they began to take squatter's rights on the drawers of my desk. By the second week, even my table-top was being appropriated. Warned in advance that CIA personnel working in State Department, or Department of Defense offices, would be resented, I was still not ready for the intimacy of

the irritations. By the end of the second week, I made a point of sweeping from my desk all the unauthorized paperwork, and dropping it into one large carton which I left in the aisle when I went out to lunch. There was a hush in the room as I returned.

That afternoon, a committee of three approached me. Following a twenty-minute conference on the merits of the situation, my desk was divided, by mutual agreement, into zones as fully demarcated as Berlin in the days of the four-power occupation.

Our treaty probably worked better than most, but no one in that office was ever at ease with me again. It hardly mattered. I needed no more than a place where people whom I could not inform of my real work might get in touch with me by phone or mail, yet what an education I had obtained in the sanctity of property and the powers of terrorism. Inwardly, I sighed--all this emotional work merely to provide me with a dodge for the outside world.

My more legitimate labors for the Company were performed Downtown, which was the name for a shed reminiscent of Cockroach Alley since it was surrounded by barbed wire fence, and a guardhouse. That, however, was only one of the numerous Company offices. The rest were located, by no particular logic

I could untangle, all over the city, including Chief Harvey's home, a large white stucco house which not only doubled as an office but was under heavy sentry guard. Fenced about and sand-bagged, I had heard of its machine-gun emplacements with their fields of fire down the neighboring streets. If not a fortress, it was certainly a redoubt, and might have kept the flag flying for a few hours if the Russians had come over from East Berlin.

I was yet to see it, however. I spent my first week in Berlin on the telephone, aspiring in my intensely crammed German to pick up surveillance reports from those of our Berliners on clandestine stipend who worked at leading hotels, to wit, the doorman, the bar-man, the head-waiter, the portiere, and other elements of the hotel staff. At the start, it had not been routine for me to step up to a phone after quick orientation by a colleague--at last, I had colleagues!--and begin true spy work. So, it was fun for a time. Yes, the doorman at the Bristol, or the Kempinski, or the Am Zoo would tell me (usually in English which was better than my German) yes, of the four people whose activities he had been asked to watch, Karl Zweig, for one, had stopped by in his Mercedes to pay a visit to room 232. The doorman would have the name of the occupant of room 232 when I called again that

afternoon. Heady stuff. I felt as if I had, at last, entered the Cold War.

The telephone is, however, the telephone. After a few days of checking off my long list of head-waiters and bar-men twice daily for their pieces of information (which were never connected to operations I knew anything about), the task brought my early enthusiasm down to the sober responses we give to a chore. Nor could I always divine whether Karl or Gottfried or Gunther or Johanna was even East German or West German, one of ours, or one of theirs. If the bar-man had overheard a conversation of interest, I was not to copy it down the phone. I had to dispatch a memo to the appropriate desk. Someone there would send out a case-officer with more experience than myself to debrief the bartender. Indeed, I did not even know yet whether they did it by way of a drink over the bar, or repaired to a safehouse. Be it said that Dix Butler was already doing such work. My next ambition, it will come as no surprise, was to get off the telephone (where I was beginning to feel like a man who sold space rates for classified advertising) and get out, be a street man like Dix, pick up some of that good Berlin equivalent of Parisian argot.

On I stayed, however, at my telephone for ten days, until a call came for me to report to FLORENCE at VQ/GIBLETS. This

cryptogram required considerably less work to translate than going to a Bridge-Archive. VQ/GIBLETS, as I learned by asking the colleague on the telephone next to me, was Base Chief William King Harvey's home, the white stucco fort I had heard so much about, and GIBLETS was its cryptonym. When I came to know Bill Harvey better, I realized he thought of this well-guarded house as Little Gibraltar or Giblets. Well, that was fine--now, I knew where to go--and FLORENCE, as my telephone mate informed me, should be asked for as "C.G." Clara Grace "C.G." Follich was her name. She was William King Harvey's new wife.

"Wonder what it's about?" I asked.

"Oh, you're on the Ivory soap trolley," he said. "C.G. gets around sooner or later to all the new people on base. Looks them over."

I learned quickly enough about the trolley. C.G. had been a Major in the WACS and administrative assistant to General Lucien Truscott. Now married and semi-retired, she watched over the maintenance of the safehouses. She and I took a tour of Berlin that day in a modest van with no identifying flag or marks, and I carried towels and sheets and toilet paper and caustic cleansers plus beer and wine and bread and sausage and cartons of cigarettes and boxes of cigars up flights of stairs,

"No, Ma'am."

"If you had, you would have noticed how old they are. I select them that way. Can you tell me why?"

"Well, if one of our agents has to hole up for a few days, and the chambermaid is young, he might get into a relationship."

"Please expand on that."

"Well, suppose one of the KGB agents who are trained lovers"--we had heard in training about such KGB agents--"was to exercise a hold on the chambermaid, why, the KGB could obtain all kinds of access to the safehouse."

"Believe it or not," she said, "you're one of the few juniors to understand that right from the get-go."

"Well, I think I've had more than the average background," I volunteered. "My father is an old OSS man."

"Hubbard? Not the Cal Hubbard."

"Yes, Major."

"My husband knows your father."

"My father has a lot of respect for your husband." All the while, I was wondering if Cal had sent a letter. I decided he had. There was something in the way she said, "Not the Cal Hubbard."

"I'm going to talk to my husband about you," C.G. added.

No call to visit the Chief came back, however, over the next week. In compensation, my work grew more interesting. Another Junior Officer came to us from the States. Since I was senior to him in Berlin, if by two weeks, he was soon on my telephone, and I was moved to agent traffic. Still at a desk, I could nonetheless spend time more interestingly trying to keep a log on which Communist officials were travelling back and forth from Poland, Czechoslovakia, and East Germany to East Berlin. This involved agents' reports, and so I had the intellectual pleasure of obtaining a good picture of our passive network in East Berlin, and could soon envision our taxi drivers working over there on the other side of the city, our newsstand operators off the Unter Den Linden, the Friedrichstrasse, and the Stalin Allee, our East Berlin police--how many Vopos were in our pay!--our East Berlin hotel personnel, even a towel boy in the one important East Berlin brothel. This Xinfofeed--as I'm afraid it was called--was much fortified by daily reports from just about every established madam in West Berlin (since officials from the Eastern Democracies--no Berlin wall in 1956--were notorious for crossing over for an evening of adventures in the West!)

These were, as I say, passive networks. Any recruiting of new agents that might develop out of Xinfofeed was beyond the

purlieu of my job: I could not even say whether the information we collected went back to Washington and the Document Room, or whether our people in West Berlin were even now implementing new actions because of what was learned that day. Intelligence is social exclusion, I was discovering. It was frustrating to realize that one would rarely have full grasp of a story. I had chosen this profession for the excitement of living with drama and here was I playing a walk-on in theatre whose beginning and end were not available to me. Intelligence, I was deciding, tended to be much too much like life.

Things, however, did pick up. A call came through. VQ/BOZO wished to see me. VQ/BOZO was William Harvey. As was VQ/GIBLETS-1. As was VQ/COLT. The cryptonym changed with the place where you were going to meet Mr. Harvey. VQ/GIBLETS-1 was the private office in his home; VQ/BOZO his main office off the Kurfürstendamm. (I expect everything was off the Kurfürstendamm in those years.) And VQ/COLT was the turnaround in back of his house. He had had the tennis court paved in asphalt to provide a quick turnaround for vehicles and limousines. Should the message be signed off as VQ/COLT, one had to be ready to tear up in one's jeep, jump out, and leap into Harvey's moving (and armored) Cadillac. Of course, that

did not invariably happen. I had heard stories about juniors like myself who dashed over to the tennis court on the call from COLT, whipped out of their vehicle on arrival, jumped into his Cadillac, and then waited forty-five minutes for Chief to saunter out of GIBLETS (which villa, I add, even bore a physical resemblance to him when he wore, as he usually did, his bullet-proof vest.) Of course there was always that one time in ten when you came roaring up twenty seconds late and Chief was not charitable about the delay.

Today, however, would be easier. BOZO, being Mr. Harvey's main office away from the villa, there would be many scheduled to see him. How many, was another matter. Installed in a private cubicle, the size of a walk-in closet, you waited in isolation until your call came; then you were led by a secretary down an empty corridor to his door. The idea, presumably, was that none of us, juniors, case officers, American officials and/or West German officials were supposed to get a look at one another.

Waiting in that cubbyhole, I tried to prepare myself. I had been warned that Mr. Harvey would probably be sitting behind his large desk with his coat off, the butts of his two revolvers poking from his shoulder holsters. It was also legend, however, that he would never appear in public without

his jacket no matter how hot the day. Sweat might lave his cheeks like water on a horse's belly, but FBI training gave you decorum forever; he was not about to expose those shoulder holsters to the public.

I had also been warned that soon after meeting him, he might take out either gun, spin the cylinder, remove the bullets, pull back the hammer, aim in your direction, and click the trigger. My father had remarked on what absurd behavior it was for a CIA Chief. Only an ex-FBI man could be party to such opera.

On the other hand, we were all, by Mr. Harvey's orders, obliged to carry firearms when out on an operation, no matter how minor. The Russians, it was estimated, had pulled off twenty kidnappings in West Berlin over the last year. Of course, the victims were Germans. The KGB had not abducted any Americans, no more than we had trafficked with them. If the Soviets were going to break this rule, however, it may have been Harvey's assumption that he was the man they would choose.

I was not old enough to know how pervasive such a fear could be. I had a smaller conception in those days of the creative powers of paranoia. What I felt, therefore, when led into his office, was his power to intimidate. The office was a large room and as dark as a chamber lined with books, but there

were no volumes here, rather, enough firearms on the wall to fill a gallery in a museum. I was in the presence of a cop. There he was, a phone to his ear, vest unbuttoned, the butts of two revolvers growing like horns out of his armpits. Wide in the middle, he looked heavy enough to waddle when he walked, and reeked of gin and sen-sen tablets clear across his desk.

Nonetheless, he gave an impression of strength. That was what Kittredge had left out of her description. Rage came off him. Chief, if he leaped to the attack, would not give warning whether he was going for your foot or your eye. His own eyes protruded as if he were reaching across this gap. He hung up the phone and looked at me with one full wad of suspicion. I had the instinct to guess that he looked at each new man who came to his office in the same way. We knew more than we were supposed to know, and he wanted to find out what it was.

Of course, he was right. A moment later, I knew exactly how much knowledge was too much. I had been told of the Berlin tunnel, and I knew about Guy Burgess' drawing of his ex-wife Libby. I had once been KU/CLOAKROOM. I have rarely felt so uncomfortable.

Harvey nodded. A cop has his preferences, and one of them is to meet people who are aware of his force. By looking uncomfortable, I had just passed the first test. From those

small, well-curved lips, advertised in advance by Kittredge, issued his voice, a low, resonant burble. I had to lean forward in my seat to hear Base Chief Harvey speak.

"My wife says you're okay," he stated.

"Oh, she's a fine lady," I answered quickly. Too quickly. His suspicion of me was in order: my instinctive reflex was to lie to William Harvey. C.G., I had already decided, was from the Mid-West, and there is a prejudice buried as deep in Hubbards as a tap root. Money, power, skill, know-how, integrity, fortitude--name such virtues, and Midwesterners can have their share of them, but all the fine ladies are accounted for by the time Western Massachusetts reaches New York State. There are even extremists in my family who wouldn't let you stake a claim twenty miles out of Boston. (That half of the Hubbards now live in Manhattan has nothing to do with it.)

X Fine lady or not, C.G. had approved of me. I was enough of a slop to think it was one of the best things about her. Then I took a second look into Harvey's protruding bloodshot eyes. I was dealing with no ordinary husband. Jealousy was as natural to him as bread and butter.

It was ill-founded. For all her friendliness, C.G. sent out one clear instruction: she was a married woman; ergo, she was not really alone with a young man in an apartment.

Marriage enclosed her. I could have tried to tell him this, but I was not about to. I had just noticed on top of each of the three large safes in this office three prominent thermite bombs. At his right hand was a panel with many buttons. Within his drawer, I was certain, were other buttons. On different sites over the desk top, were a red phone, a zebra colored phone, and a white phone, looking not unlike landing craft that had just come in from Mars. I did not know which one of these buttons and instruments could trigger the thermite bomb device, but it was evident to me that he could set this room ablaze in two-fifths of a second.

"Yeah, kid," he said, "she likes you." He breathed a bit heavily, his eyes fixed on me with the intentness that accompanies a man who wants to take a drink but is holding off. "She don't like many."

"Yessir."

"Do not say 'yessir' around me unless you're feeling insubordinate. 'Yessir' is what people say when they think you're full of shit, but are still ready to put their tongue up your ass."

"Okay," I managed to get out.

"I called you in here for a talk. I need a couple of Juniors to do a couple of jobs for me. But I'd rather find such capability in one amateur, not two."

I nodded. I had never wanted to say 'yessir' so much in my life.

"C.G. seems to think you can do it, so I looked up your 201. The training grades are respectable. For me there's only one beeper in your file. You went from training to Technical Services but no saddle-bags come with your 201." Saddle-bags was the fearful word I had been awaiting. Saddle-bags were cryptonyms. "What the hell did you do at Technical Services?" he asked.

"Well, Mr. Harvey, I didn't get an assignment, so in a short while I was transferred to the course in Intensive German. There was never a need for me to pick up a cryptonym."

"It's off-chart to land in Intensive German before you even know where you're going to be assigned. I'd hate to dive into Kraut-talk and end up in the Philippines." He burped. "In fact, language is not the initial necessity at a Base like this. Let's remember that we won the war, not the Heinies. You can get along with poco German. I do."

He did. I may have just met him, but for the last two weeks, the pool had been informing me: William King Harvey's

German was one of the best jokes at Base. He held up the revolver for the first time, and aimed to the left of my ear.

"Seems to me, you knew you were coming here."

"Well, Mr. Harvey," I said in reply, "I had reasons to think so."

"What allowed you to know more about your future than Personnel?"

I hesitated, but only to make the point. "I was given the idea by my father."

"The old family fix?"

"Yessir."

"Yessir? You're feeling insubordinate, huh?" he chuckled. The sound was raspy and full of phlegm like an automobile starter kicking around. "Let me hand it to your father," he declared. "The Oh So Socials may not run as much of the Company as they used to, but your father hangs in. I guess he can still get his son assigned where he wants."

"He seemed to think Berlin was where I should be."

"Why?"

My cheeks were red. I hardly knew what turn to take. "He said that's where the action is."

"Hubbard, did your father tell you anything about VQ/CATHETER?"

"I don't know who or what that is." I didn't, which was just as well. Bill Harvey seemed to receive one's verbal output with as much close metering as a polygraph machine.

"I don't believe you do," he said. "Good."

In the next moment, however, I divined that VQ/CATHETER might be a cryptonym for the Berlin tunnel. It was considered good procedure to go in for analogical or poetic connections between the operation and the cryptonym, but I could see where VQ/CATHETER would be exactly to King William's taste.

Whereupon, he looked me over once more, and said, "Is your yap capable of maintaining itself within allowable informational parameters?"

"I'm close-mouthed. My family accuses me of being a clam."

He broke out the revolver beneath his left arm, opened the chamber, removed the bullets, rotated the cylinder, replaced the bullets, closed the breech, put on the safety, and stuck it back in his holster. The butt of the handle looked out me again from his armpit. He had done it all with an easy delicacy, as if it were the equivalent of a tea-pouring ceremony.

"I'm going to use you," he said. "You're not smart enough yet for the street, but I've perused some of the stuff you've

done on our hotel people. You show a sense of network. Not everybody has that."

"Check."

"You can say 'yessir' if you want to."

"Yessir."

"When it gets on my nerves, I'll let you know."

"Right-O."

"What did they tell you Downtown? About what I need?"

Downtown was the shed building where I worked. No one had told me anything. I had the feeling, however, that I would do well to reply. "They said you needed a go-fer. A good go-fer."

"I need a great one, but I'll settle for a good fellow."

"If you're thinking of me, I'll do my best."

"Listen to a job description first. My go-fer doesn't go out for coffee. He goes along for the ride."

"Sir?"

"He sits next to me in my bullet-proof ultra-high steel alloy Cadillac, which, when it comes to resisting Soviet armor-penetrating XRF-70's, is no more bullet-proof than ultra-high alloy wet newspaper."

"Yessir."

"You can get killed sitting next to me. Those Soviet rockets do the job. And their look-alike for our bazooka, does not look like us at all. Their bazooka telescopes down into a cylindrical case about the size of a 300 millimeter telephoto lens. Read me?"

"I think so."

"Expatriate."

"A terrorist could dress himself up to look like a photographer. At an intersection, he could open his case, extend his bazooka, and hit your car."

"With you sitting next to me."

"Yessir."

He began to chuckle again. Once again the phlegm revolved around his throat. Despite myself, I thought of the taffy you see in an amusement park mixing machine. When it was up to texture, he hawked it neatly into a handkerchief and picked up his cigarette again. I was beginning to realize what a chain smoker he was. His hands were the equal of that delicate mouth, however, and cupped the cigarette with finesse, two fingertips bringing the wet end to his cupid-bow lips which pursed forward to suck in a full measured heartbeat of smoke. His lungs seemed to ingest a tender passionate greed along with each puff.

"When the car door is opened," said Harvey, "you will not always step out before me. Sometimes I will go first. Why?"

"I don't have an answer."

"The flunky gets out first. The sniper, if there is one, will be waiting for the second man. What do you say to that, Hubbard? Are you afraid of buying an explosive bullet in a vulnerable area?"

"No, sir."

"Take a good look at me. Do I appear to be the kind of man you want to die sitting, or standing, next to?" He said this so quietly that I was, indeed, leaning across the desk.

"You wouldn't believe me if I told you it was an honor."

"Why?" he persisted.

"Given your achievements, Mr. Harvey, the personal sacrifice would not be meaningless."

He nodded. "You're twenty-three?"

"Yessir."

"You get down to essences fairly well for a kid. If you want to know the truth, I told my wife to take a look at you because I liked the way you wrote your reports. You're not getting this job because my wife likes you, but because I think you can help me. You can finish up what you're doing Downtown, then take the Junior who came in after you, groom him into what

you've been carrying, and figure to start with me next Monday, at this office, 9:00 A.M." He put a finger on either side of his nose as if to center his thoughts. "Drop your German course. Put your time for the next few days into hand-gun work. We have an arrangement with the Army to use their pistol range in the N.C.O. Club off the Linzenburger. Get in some hours before Monday." He stood up to shake hands with me, then lifted his leg and farted. "The French got a word for it," he said.

After Mr. Harvey's morning I reported to Mr. [unclear] office in M.C. 2, ready for the job. I did not see him until late, however, in his black Cadillac that day, but stopped at my new desk which was in [unclear] of [unclear] as my first duty at the Department of Defense; the new [unclear] I had of Mr. Harvey was not until Tuesday afternoon when he passed in the aisle, saw me, greeted in [unclear], as if to say, "What is hell will we do with you?" and moved on quickly. Wednesday I did not see him at all. I found myself in the [unclear] to my replacement about one of the [unclear] in East Walling. I was alone in [unclear] for [unclear].

Thursday afternoon, Mr. Harvey came along at a hard fast rolling gait down the hall, and again, [unclear] a [unclear] for me to follow, but I sat beside his [unclear] in the rear part of the

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I groomed my replacement so conscientiously that by the end of the week, he was carrying out my old tasks as well as myself. Perhaps better--his German was better. Religiously, I went each morning to pistol practise at the N.C.O. Club off the Linzenburger, and began to believe that I might yet become a decent shot. I had fantasies that Mr. Harvey would run into an ambush from which he would be rescued by the path cleared to safety through the ice-cold aim of my pistol.

Most of the [unclear] were still there, his contempt for the [unclear] was

Nine A.M. on Monday morning I reported to Base Chief's office in BOZO, ready for the job. I did not ride out beside him, however, in his black Cadillac that day, but stayed at my new desk which was as innocent of work-papers as my first desk at the Department of Defense; the next glimpse I had of Mr. Harvey was not until Tuesday afternoon when he passed in the aisle, saw me, grunted in displeasure, as if to say, "What in hell will we do with you?" and moved on quickly. Wednesday, I did not see him at all. I found myself on the phone talking to my replacement about one of the networks in East Berlin. I was close to homesick for Downtown.

Thursday afternoon, Mr. Harvey came along at a hard fast rolling gait down the hall, saw me again, wagged a thumb for me to follow, and I sat beside him at last in the rear seat of the Cadillac. There had been no time to pick up my overcoat, and the February air was cold whenever I had to get out of the car to walk with him into another office.

He was having a vendetta with the State Department, and so took every opportunity to spread our Base functions into more and more abodes around West Berlin. While we still had a substantial wing at the Consulate where the bulk of our administrative work was done (which meant that most of our employees were still there), his contempt for the consulate was

in the code-name he used for it, the Ukraine. "Tell the top asshole over in procurement at the Ukraine--what's his name?"

"McBearney," an assistant would say.

"Tell McBearney to get going on that tape order."

So we kept the Ukraine in the American Consulate of West Berlin as our normal main office, and we had Downtown, and BOZO, and GIBLETS, and seven safe houses, and a translation mill off the English Garden called CRUMPETS, and one out at Tempelhof Airport in a warehouse near Customs labelled SWIVET (in recognition, I suppose, of how something was always going wrong at Customs). We also had more than a dozen subsidiaries to visit. Everything from an import-export bank to a sausage exporter. We got around. Travelling with Chief Harvey was close to my idea of what it must have been like to ride around with General Patton. Maybe George Patton was in Bill Harvey's mind as well. My father once told me that Patton could measure the fighting morale of an outfit by driving his Jeep into their perimeter, and that may have been why he had slapped that soldier in the hospital. Something in the whine of the invalid's voice told the General that the man carried a spiritual disease which would yet undermine the Third Army. "Patton had his instinct and was bound to act on it," my father said.

Harvey could always pick out what was wrong in an office. It might be a broken-down cable machine, a telephone switchboard, a secretary indisposed, or a section chief who was getting ready to resign, but Harvey took it in. "I want you to sign on for another two years in Berlin," he would say to the Section Chief, "we need you," and give the secretary an afternoon off as he was leaving. He would kick the cable machine, and sometimes it would start. He would pass eight Juniors working in a corridor at eight jammed desks, stop at one, pick up a cable that had just come in, nod, say, "This operation is going to heat up in a couple of days-- keep an eye on it," and move on. He was God, if God was short, thick in the middle, and had goggle eyes. For that matter, God drank like a fish and hardly slept.

It took me a while to realize his virtue was often his vice. He was not efficient. If unable to decide a matter instinctively, he might never decide it. But what an instinct! One day in the Cadillac, he said to me, "I had a job to give you when I told you to come aboard. Now, I've forgotten it." He stared at me, he blinked those bloodshot eyes most carefully, then he said, "Oh, yes, KU/CLOAKROOM."

"KU/CLOAKROOM, sir?"

"A loose end. It's been bothering the hell out of me. I need a bright young fellow to chase it down." He held up his hand at the look of full perplexity I was doing my best to offer.

"Let me fill you in," he said.

As I had discovered on the first ride, Mr. Harvey was depending on more than my pistol for his firepower. The driver had a shot-gun on a mount between the front seats, and the security man in the passenger slot next to him held a Thompson sub-machine gun. I would hear more than once, that a Tommy gun was, for close range, Mr. Harvey's weapon of choice. "Part of my FBI heritage," he would grunt. Sitting amidst that much armament, however, conversations did not flourish. Now, as if he had already said too much in hearing of the others, Chief Harvey pressed a button to raise the glass divider behind the front seat, then murmured in his low voice, "We have what could be a security problem. I'm putting you to work on the preliminaries."

"Terrific," I said.

"Just paper-chasing," he said. "Here's the summary. A Berliner named Wolfgang, a student, a Bohemian, one of our petty fry, organized some street riff-raff a couple of years ago to throw a few stones at the Soviet Embassy in Bonn. It

made the wire-services. We assume that since then Wolfgang's been doubled."

"By the East Germans or the KGB?"

"Probably East Germans. Half the Krauts on our payroll also feed the SSD. Take that for granted. It's all right. Half their Vopos are working for us via the BND. It's no big deal either way. A thousand small fry cost more, if you try to check out all their stories, than the information is worth.

"I see." I was thinking of the work I had been doing the last few weeks.

"They're like insects," he said. "In quiet times, they feed in all directions. It's not worth watching. But if a swarm of insects suddenly start moving together, what do you deduct?"

"A storm is coming?"

"You have it, kid. When our networks, no, let me correct that, when our gossip mills start going in one direction, you can be certain something big and military is on the way. If the Russians ever decide to take us out of West Berlin, we'll know in advance. That's what the small fry are for--big clam bakes." He reached forward, took a cocktail shaker out of an ice bucket, and poured himself a full martini. It was hard not to watch the way he held it, for his wrist reacted to every

bump in the road with more subtlety than the car springs. The glass never lost a drop.

"All right," he said, "we keep in loose touch with Wolfgang, and he checks in periodically with us. As I say, petty fry. I do not go to sleep at night thinking about Wolfgang. Not, that is, until we have a flap. VQ/CATHETER, as you've gathered, is our most sensitive area of security. I won't even allow the men who work on it to buy a piece of strange."

"Piece of strange?"

"A piece of ass. Too risky, security-wise. If any of them get into a one-night stand, they are on order to furnish a detailed report to Security in the morning. Well, there's one law of bureaucracy you can count on: The more you protect yourself against an eventuality, the more it will eventuate. One of our kids turns out to be a closet homosexual. He comes to us and admits to having sex with a German fellow. Name of the piece of strange: Franz. What does Franz look like? Young, insignificant, slim, dark. That description narrows it down to about four hundred East Berlin agents, West Berlin agents, and known double agents. We can muster photographs of most of this group. That's a large number of photographs to make our sissy-boy go through. We need him back at work. He's

a specialist and we can't afford to lose his time. Except now he confesses to a little more. 'Yes,' he tells us, 'Franz did inquire about the work I do. Naturally, I wouldn't tell him a thing, but Franz wanted to know if my job had anything to do with VQ/CATHETER! Then, Franz tells me it's okay to talk to him because he has clearance from the Americans. He, too, is working for them!"

This was worth a serious sip of the martini. "You better believe," said Harvey, "that we put our specialist through a sweat. He must have looked at three hundred photographs before he narrowed it down to Wolfgang. Wolfgang is Franz. So we pored through our Thirty Day Back-Index, and our Thirty-One to Sixty Day Back-Index, and then the Sixty-One to One-Hundred-and-Twenty, and there's not one report has come in to us lately from Wolfgang. That can hardly be. Wolfgang used to be an active little punk. He liked being on retainer. Now, all we have are some chits which we have not yet paid because he's sent them in from Hamburg. Not Berlin. What develops, on examination, is the kind of administrative nightmare you're always fearing. Our files grew so quickly that we used up the space allotted for them. So some intermediate-level asshole at the Ukraine decided to lop off large chunks of the 30, the 60, and the 120 day Back-Index and fly them back to Washington.

All we had to do was rent one more building here, and we could have kept the stuff on hand, but the little lords of the budget do not allow that. Building rentals are local. Budgetarily speaking, therefore, they are circumscribed. You can't spend two dimes on rental when there's only one in the cup. Air freight, however, is another matter. Air freight is tucked into the Air Force budget, not ours. Air Force doesn't care what we spend. Billionaires do not count their pimples. In consequence, a lot of files were sent off at the stroke of a pen by some incompetent in the Ukraine who did not check with my office. All he knew was that he had to find new file space for BOZO. He must have thought he was doing me a favor. To make that room, whole branches and bags of potentially crucial material were air-freighted over to the Document Room back at Cockroach Alley."

Another sip on the martini. "We've got to find Wolfgang. That faggot in CATHETER could have given more away to Wolfgang than he now cares to remember. Only Wolfgang can't be found. Is he dead, or underground? He does not contact his case officer. He responds to no signals. Maybe Wolfgang has slipped over to the East with news about CATHETER? It's a longshot, but I send a cable to the Snake Pit. Maybe they can find something on Wolfgang. Lo and behold, I get back a snotty

reply. Just what I needed. 'Owing to conditions in the Document Room, etcetera. . .' Whoever sent it, obviously did not realize the significance of a cable signed by a Chief of Station. I may be Chief of Base, not Station, but find me one Station in the world that counts for as much as Berlin Base. We are in the front line of the Cold War, except they don't seem to know that back in Foggy Bottom, I am obliged to deal with bureaucratic backbiting in the shape of some indescribable turd named KU/CLOAKROOM. Ergo, I get ready to gun a few motors. I decide to blow KU/CLOAKROOM off the pot he is sitting on."

"Wow," I said.

"Nothing to what's on the menu next, kid. I ask West German Desk in Washington to supply me with the identity of this KU/CLOAKROOM and they come back with the news that Bridge-Archive will be anti-forthcoming for seventy-two hours. You count them. Seventy-two hours. It's due to a change in cryptonym. That son of a bitch CLOAKROOM knows he is in fucking trouble. I tell West German Desk to get Bridge-Archive to kick over the 72-hour Elapse, and furnish Immediate Translation. Desk has to know I am angry. They send back a cable: WILL CONCUR. Only they can't. They can't concur. By procedure, they have had to move up to Bridge-Archive:Control,

and someone there has put in a STOP. I can't believe it. I'm facing forces. Wolfgang is in hiding, his records are buried in the Document Room, CATHETER is conceivably endangered, and somebody who may just turn out to be a mole has put STOP on my search. I don't think there are twenty men in the Company who have sufficient clout to put STOP on me. Yet one of them has. Eighteen of those twenty, at the least, have to hate my guts for the best reason in the world. My family may not be quite up to the elevation of theirs (although it's good enough stock, thank you) but, God, kid, my brain works faster,"--and he emptied his martini glass and turned it upside down--"yes, STOP when expanded properly, reads: STOP HARVEY."

He exhaled heavily. He glared at me. "Well," he said, "you have to know when the other side has won the first round. Whether it was done to stop me, to protect Wolfgang, which is the extreme and worrisome possibility, or to safeguard CLOAKROOM, who may be some kind of intermediary, I can see one thing: CLOAKROOM is now my target. Other answers will be obtainable once I get my hands on him." He sighed. "The trouble with being Chief of Base is that you're caught up in the crisis of the week too much to take care of the daily shop. Other matters got me sidetracked. Besides, I wasn't about to go up against Bridge-Archive:Control--Senior with half a deck.

One needs to collect a few high cards. For one thing, if forces are protecting CLOAKROOM, they'll take him through two or three cryptonyms. In that kind of shell game, you have to be able to concentrate on your objective. I don't have the time. You do. As of now, you are promoted from go-fer to junior troubleshooter."

I hesitated to speak. My voice might not be faithful. I nodded.

"We'll use a two-pronged attack," he said. "First, you crank up the West German Desk at Headquarters. They're still on the titty. Total bureaucrats. They can't wait for Spring so they can paper-bag their lunch around the Reflecting Pool. They're soft as plop. They respond to unrelenting pressure. Get them on the trail of CLOAKROOM'S shift of saddle-bags. It'll take time. They will want to drag their feet. So, keep shoving it up their ass. Give a poke every couple of days. I'll throw in a nigger-dick from time to time.

Bridge-Archive:Control may be able to lay a 72-hour Elapse on each new cryptonym for good old CLOAKROOM, but sooner or later they'll run out of holds."

"But as you said: won't they put it then into Bridge-Archive: Control--Senior?" I had a moment of panic

wondering if he would think I was picking this up too quickly, but he was moving on.

"They will. Bridge-Archive:Control--Senior is inevitable. But by then, we ought to have some funny facts. We may lose at Senior--that's one committee I have minimal input with--but, all the same, we will have dropped a very bad smell in those marble halls. One egg-shaped fart, in fact, will be floating around in the perfumery. I'll teach those guys to fuck with me."

"Sir, may I speak frankly?"

"Save time. Just talk."

"If I understand, you are saying you will never obtain the name of CLOAKROOM. Whoever managed the changes, is, you believe--as I follow you--a member of Senior. He will also be on the warpath by then. Is it okay for you to have a determined enemy when you can't even find out who it is?"

"Hubbard, you miss the point. Senior is not composed of cretins. They'll have a good idea at their end of who's playing the game. And whoever it is, will lose a few inches of height to his peers. That's my payback."

"Won't you lose also?"

"Kid, I invite anybody around to trade punches with me. We'll see who's standing at the end."

"I have to hand it to you, Mr. Harvey. You're not timid."

"Working under Hoover, you pinned a little fear on your heart every morning when you went in to work. I got tired of that."

"What kind of man was J. Edgar Hoover?"

"A low cowardly ungrateful son of a bitch. Excuse me, I'm speaking of a great American." He burped and filled his martini glass again. "All right," he proceeded, "I said we were going to have a two-pronged attack. From one side, pressure all the way up to Senior; on the other, let's see how good your own network is."

"Sir?"

"I have a hunch that KU/CLOAKROOM is a recent trainee. He has to be. His cable was that stupid. You might even know him. I want you to get in touch with a few members of your training group at the Farm. Before long, you ought to be able to pick up a description of who was assigned to the Snake Pit."

I could feel perspiration starting behind my ears.

"I can obtain a couple of names," I said, "but will I be able to request their cryptonyms from Bridge-Archive? That looks like an odd request for a Junior to put in."

"Candidly, it's not even comfortable for me to ask for too many crypts from Bridge-Archive. Not unless we score. And, of

course, I don't know that in advance. I certainly don't want to attract beaucoup attention on a dud mission. But, kiddo, we won't go to Bridge-Archive. We'll use the Bypass."

"I'm not familiar with the Bypass," I said.

"You're not familiar with the name," he said, "but you're probably part of the process. None of you Juniors will ever admit to revealing your saddle-bags to each other, yet half of you go around collecting them like autographs. Studies show: half of the Americans in combat in the Second World War couldn't fire at an enemy soldier. Too much of the Ten Commandments in their nervous system. And half the new people in this cockeyed Company can't keep their own secret. Treachery comes with mother's milk." He reflected. "And father's horseshit." That was worth a sip. The martini glass did a dipsy-doodle over some bumps. "Just call in your favors," he said. "Get those saddle-bags from your friends." He nodded. "By the way, what was yours?"

"You know that, Chief. It's VQ/STARTER."

"I mean, what was it in TSS?"

"I'm sorry, sir. I can't reveal that."

He nodded. "Wait'll we torture you," he said.

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Berlin, seen through the dark windows of Chief Harvey's Cadillac, was, no matter the time of day, a vision of late afternoon shadow. The pale lots cleared of rubble, and the amputated backs of buildings, presented themselves in hues of lavender-gray, the official tone for tinted glass in bullet-proof limousines. It might be a sinister view of the world, but on this particular ride, I saw little enough of it. I was giving too much attention to each word Bill Harvey uttered.

Now, I have refrained from describing my other reactions. It is tedious to recount those cascades of hot fluid in the stomach, back-ups in one's gut, alarm bells in the limbs. Over bodily discomfort, one draws the veil.

Nonetheless, if you will believe me, I was not all that terrified. As Mr. Harvey finished laying out the procedures I was to use for a venture which could produce success only by the final entrapment of myself, the voice that came out of my throat, if hoarse, did not betray me further; my perspiration stayed in bounds. I felt not unlike the way I would soon feel on being able to get into bed with a woman for the first time. It might be strange, but sex felt like an activity I had been waiting to engage in for a long time. A part of me told myself: "I was born to do this. Being a double agent is natural for me."

I was under no illusion that I was anything else. What did it matter if Hugh Tremont Montague and William King Harvey served under the same flag? I was already a different person for each of those men; that was the essence of the condition. To be a double agent working for the West Germans and the East Germans at the same time might be more dangerous, but whether it was BND against SSD, or Montague versus Harvey, one's balance was equal to one's quick wits. An unholy delight.

Of course, my inner life did not continue so beatifically as that. So soon as I was back at my desk, I experienced what Kittredge would describe as a changing of the guard. I went from deep and exultant Omega to all the worldly concerns of Alpha, forever fearing for his career. Outright rage at the unfairness of things passed through me in the next ten minutes with all the roar and clatter of General Patton's tanks. At one point I had to go to the Men's Room to put cold water on my face. My cheeks were painfully hot. Yet in the mirror above the sink, no strain showed. I had been studying that face for years. I showed, no doubt of it, the seamless Hubbard expression. My older cousin, Colton Shaler Hubbard, custodian of the family legends once said, "With the exception of Kimble Smallidge Hubbard, and possibly your father, there's nothing particularly special about the rest of us. We're just about down there with l'homme moyen sensuel. Except for one faculty, Herrick. We Hubbards never show a thing. It's a bossy advantage, I tell you."

For practical purposes, he was right. In the midst of all this perturbation, an alert face looked back at me from the mirror, life in my eyes, optimism on my mouth. I thought of other occasions when I had felt calm within, rested, and full of life, but my reflection appeared tired, even sullen, as if

yesterday's fatigues still remained on my skin. Could I assume that the agreeable appearance I now presented to the mirror was a species of protective coloration? Perhaps one did well to look lively when exhausted.

That night, ready to step away from a few of these concerns, I went out with Dix Butler. We made the rounds of his night clubs. Over the last couple of weeks, I had travelled with him often enough at night to pick up a sense of how he worked. He had a contact or informer in every club we visited. Of course, he had not recruited them, he had not been in Berlin long enough, and his German was inadequate for such a purpose, but his job put him on the scene at night. He served as a cut-out between two of our case officers at BOZO and those petty agents who could speak English. If Dix enjoyed full cover from one of our business subsidiaries, presenting himself to Germans as an American executive from an import brewery-- "Just call me a beer salesman, Putzi,"--the staff at the boites we visited had small illusion clouding their clear Berlin vision that Dix Butler, cover name Randy Huff (for Sam Huff, the New York Giants linebacker) was anything but one more species of CIA man.

The axiom that intelligence officers and agents must be kept apart, inculcated in me throughout training, did not, as

Dix warned, seem to apply here. Not only was he highly visible, but anyone who talked to him could come under suspicion. Since his agents did not seem to mind, I was certain most of his people were doubled.

Dix, however, was without concern. "It oughtn't to work, but it does," he said. "I get more information from my boys than any other officer, CIA or BND, working these streets."

"It's tainted."

"You'd be surprised. A lot of agents are too lazy to lie. They end up telling more than they're planning to. They know I can shake it from them if I have to."

"Dix," I began.

"Huff," he said, "is the name. Randy Huff."

"Everything you get from them is, at the least, steered by the BND."

"Put away the book. My people are earning a living. They're street stuff. Of course, the BND runs them. You don't think West German Intelligence would encourage us to get down and dirty with any Kraut that didn't belong to them first? It's a comedy. Everybody is paying for information, the British, the French, the West Germans, the Soviets. We happen to be paying the most, so our job is the easiest. Take the subway and go over to East Berlin, to Café Warsaw. That's the

place they have agents, informers, contact men, cut-outs, couriers, principals, even Russian and American case officers. They're all hanging out. Rodents go scurrying from table to table looking for the best price they can get. West Berlin is a spy market, but East Berlin is even a bigger joke. Every agent is doubled and tripled. You can't even remember if they're supposed to be yours or theirs, and it doesn't matter. They make up the stuff if they don't have it."

"Don't you worry about the SSD polluting your input?"

"The SSD can't begin to pay what we do. Besides, I'm up on who's working for SSD, and I know what to feed them." He was bored with this, just as bored as any lawyer giving legal information to his friends on Sunday. "Forget it, Charley Sloate," he said--which happened to be my cover name at the Department of Defense desk--"just look at that redhead over there!"

We were in the Balhaus Resi at a corner of the Grafenstrasse, and I am afraid it is exactly that legendary place where telephones sit on every table. You can call a woman across the room by dialing her table number. The process worked equally well in reverse, and our phone kept ringing. Women wished to speak to Dix. He was executive, and cut off

any female who could not converse in English. For those able, the advanced course was waiting.

"Angel," he would say, "wave your hand, so I'm certain I know whom I'm speaking to."

A blonde lady across the room would now wag her finger into the smoke.

"You're fabulous," he would tell her. "Don't thank me. It's the truth." All this while, he would be drumming his knuckles on the table. "Helga. A nice name. I have a question, Helga."

"Yes?"

"Would you care to fuck?"

"Don't you get slapped a lot?" I asked him once.

"Yes," he said, "but I get laid a lot."

If Helga hung up, he would shrug, "One dried-up wildcat."

"What if she'd said yes?"

"I might have lubricated her screech."

Women did not always say no. He made dates for later in the evening. Sometimes he kept such dates. Sometimes his mood turned bitter to the very idea of women. He'd get to his feet and we would move to another club. At Remdi's, on the Kantstrasse, the categorical imperative was to obtain a ringside table and use the fishing poles furnished by the

management to lift pieces of loose clothing from the stripteasers. Homage to Immanuel Kant! We'd drop into "The Bathtub" on Nürnberggerstrasse, a cellar pit for jazz, then on to the Kelch in Pragerstrasse. There, a great many men dressed as women. I hated that with all the Puritanism lurking in the ancestral blood, but Butler loved it. Once or twice, I had the suspicion he made a date here too. It was hard to know, for he was always in conversation, a hand on a girl's hip, a piece of paper going into his pocket from a waiter, a whisper from the hat check girl, a quick notation in his pad which he ostentatiously tore off to send to the bartender. Despite my heralded inscrutability, he read how displeased I was at his technique, and began to laugh. "Go back to the manual on black propaganda," he said. "That bartender is working for the East Krauts. Pure SSD. I want to embarrass him."

So it went. One night out offered enough excitement to fire my fantasies for a month. Yet, I went along on his rounds several times a week. I had never had such a sense of ferment in myself. I did not know if we were in a cellar or a zoo. Life was promising precisely because life had become dark and full of evil. We were in West Berlin and surrounded by Communist armies on all sides--we might live for a day or a century, but vice twinkled like lights in an amusement park.

One night a middleaged waiter said to me, "You think this is something now?" I nodded. "It is nothing," he said.

On impulse I asked, "Was more going on when the Nazis were here?"

The waiter looked at me for quite awhile. "Yes," he said. "It was better then."

I was left wondering how it was better. At far-off tables, people might be depressed, but around us, a fever was rising. Dix's physical presence was never more overpowering than at 1 A.M. in a Berlin club. His features, merry and cruel, his blond hair, his height, his physical force, his clear-cut lust for plunder had to speak to that other more victorious time when the dream of a godlike pagan imbued with sacramental power, had lived in every Berliner's mind. Fomentations surrounded us. Dix always looked as if he had never been in a better place at a more appropriate time.

One might have supposed that with the number of women who came his way, I would have caught some of the overflow, but as I soon discovered, I was not ready. I had never been in so many situations to point out how terrified I was of women. I had always thought it was the best-kept secret of my life. I had even managed to hide it from myself. Now, I was obliged to recognize that I was afraid of girls who looked not more than

fourteen, and women remarkably preserved at seventy, and we need not speak of the spectrum between. To know that some of these working girls, divorcées, single women, and wives on the loose wanted me, aroused the same kind of panic I used to feel in my first years at the Buckley School when I did not know how to fight, and so believed I might be seriously injured for too little. Now, it seemed to me as if sex were the fiercest human transaction of them all; one gave away large parts of oneself in order to receive one knew not what. A dreadful bargain could be struck, and the woman walk off with your jewels. Your spiritual jewels. I exaggerate my fear in the hope to explain it. When a woman sat next to me on those nights, I felt the most abominable if well-concealed panic. Something in my soul seemed about to be stolen. I might give away secrets God had entrusted to me. This was even more devout, I must admit, than the Episcopalianism imbibed at St. Matthew's on the true force of Christ, courage, and responsibility.

On the other hand, I still felt competitive toward Dix Butler. I don't know if it was the cold showers of prep school years, or the sinews in the family synapses, but it irked me not to be able to enter the lists against him on the field of female conquest. I wanted to be able to boast that I would yet be more of an artist at making love than Mr. Randy Huff, but

the Hubbard common sense was also in my way; one reason I had until now been able to evade these terrors, was due to the simple fact that in college I had spent my time paying attention to girls who for one reason or another were never available. This ironic light was now obliged to be cast as well on my love for Kittredge. A trap door had been opened to my dungeons. I hardly wished to come face to face with the depth of the problem now; it frazzled too completely the portrait I liked to keep of myself as a well-balanced young CIA officer.

I had to put some face, however, on this obvious rejection of all the women who came my way. Any tale I might offer to the effect that I wished to stay faithful to a girl back home would open me to every harassment in Dix Butler's book, so I chose the other direction. I had a venereal disease, I told him. Clap, I muttered.

"You'll be all right in a week."

"It's a strain resistant to penicillin."

He shrugged. "Every time I caught a dose, I'd get evil," he told me. "I used to love sticking it in a woman, drip and all." He fixed me with a look. There was, as always, an extraordinary light in his eye when he talked about how low he was. He never looked more splendid than at such times nor more

aware of all the irridescent possibilities in voiced impurities and upturned stones. "You know, that was when I would try my damndest to get into the most respectable women's pants. I loved the idea I was passing on my infection. Do you think I'm crazy?"

It was my turn to shrug.

"I attribute it," he said, "to the fact that my mother left my father and my brother and me when I was ten years old. My father was one hell of a drunk. Used to beat the shit out of us. But when we got older, my brother and me and my dad, too, would count up how many bitches we all had. That is, not counting the ones we were doing behind each other's back. I hated those bitches for never providing me--when you think of all the women resident on this earth--with one good mother. Old King Bill, over on his little hill in Giblets, is the nearest I ever came to having a decent mother. Only, don't tell him I said that. He'll start to look at the overruns on my per diem. Don't want to get into that."

Dix, mixing pleasure with official rounds, was able to charge off his bar bills. When he offered to put in for my expenses as well, I refused. The rules he broke were not there for me to bend. From the attitude of the more sober officers I had worked with Downtown, it took no wise man to see that

unauthorized use of one's expense account would be a bad debit to get listed on one's 201. We were signed up to cheat our enemies, not our own.

Dix acted, however, as if his status was privileged. I do not know if this was a reflection of his own incandescent view of himself, but he showed more disregard for rules than any CIA man I had encountered so far. On the night I spent with my father in Washington, I talked about Dix, but Cal merely remarked, "One like him comes up every month from the Farm. A few get through. Most go down in flames."

"He's exceptional," I told my father.

"Then he'll end up running a small war somewhere," Cal replied.

I was thinking of this conversation about the time Dix remarked, "What are you worrying about tonight?" I was not about to confess it was the assignment to unmask KU/CLOAKROOM. I countered by looking around the Balhaus Resi. What a polyglot of human resources! I had never seen so many people with odd faces, but then, to be a Berliner was not unequal to having one's features set at a slant, a cant, a keening off, a hooking on--the collective physiognomy was reminiscent of the sharp edges on a cabinet maker's tools (not to speak of the conniving glint you could find in the dullest eye.) The band

at one end of the dance floor had the expression of musicians who have played through the burning of the Reichstag, the death of von Hindenberg, the rise and fall of Adolf Hitler, the Allied bombardments, the occupation, the Berlin air lift, and they had never had to change their expression. They were musicians. In ten minutes, the set would be over and they could smoke or go to the bathroom--that was more meaningful than history. Now, having played their way through such American hits as Doggie in the Window, Mister Sandman, and Rock Around the Clock, which last succeeded in chasing even the most libidinous of the bourgeoisie off the floor--I was thinking that only prosperous Germans with stiff collars could offer vice the dignity of a serious pursuit--the band moved on to an oompah waltz with a tuba. That, in turn, swept all the wildly dressed young criminal element back to their tables, plus all the younger women with pink and purple wigs.

The telephone rang at our table. An American girl across the room wanted to talk to Dix. She had dialed his number on the assumption that he was German. "Hello, honey," he said. "You got it wrong. I'm an American, but that's all right. We can still fuck."

"I'm coming over. I want to learn what kind of dodo talks like you."

She was big and fair, with large features and a rangy body. By any gross measure of animal husbandry--were the shades of Nazi nightlife dictating my thoughts?--she would have made an appropriate mate for him. Her name was Susan, Susan Blaylock Pierce, and she had gone to Wellesley, and was working in the American Consulate. In addition to the beer-import enterprise, Dix had additional cover from State, but when he chose to speak of working there, Susan Pierce needed no more than five minutes to poke through his qualifications. "Well, Randy Huff, or whatever your name is, I will tell you, somebody over at the Consulate must be sick and tired by now of looking at your empty desk."

"I'm just a field-hand, ma'am," he said. I could see she was his choice for tonight. She had a horsy laugh, and argued doggedly with him about the merits of English saddle over Western. "Who wants to look at some big slob slumped over a horse?" she said.

"Some people need an animal for work, instead of to show off their ass, lady."

"You," she said, "should have been a little ogre with warts."

He loved that. Marks of status rang in his mind like a cash register. I heard the bell sound for Wellesley, and for Susan Blaylock Pierce.

He surprised me, however, by his next gambit. "Would you care to hear a long story about me?" he asked.

"Yes. I want you to beat on your own gong all night."

"Lady, cut me some slack. This story is special."

"Don't make it too long," she said.

"At the age of fifteen," Dix declared, "I was in excellent shape. I lied a little about my age to get into the Golden Gloves in Houston, and I won my weight division. Sub-novice. I hardly drank. I ran six miles a day. I could do one-arm chin-ups, one-arm push-ups. Susan, name me a feat, I could perform it. I could have run for president of my sophomore class in high school if I wasn't from the wrong end of everything you ever saw. But I was happy. I was going with a blonde girl who had blue eyes and fifteen-year-old plump little turn-up tits." When Susan Pierce pulled back, he shook his head. "Don't be offended," he said. "They were innocent, those tits, didn't even know what they were there for. I loved that girl, Cora Lee, and she loved me. It was beautiful." He took a sip of his drink.

"One night I broke training to take Cora Lee to our big dancehall, Laney's, to show her off. She had to be the prettiest girl there. Laney's was always jammed with the best riff-raff. Equal to some of the lower element here. Funky place. You could no sooner leave your girl alone than put a piece of meat on a plate and ask somebody else's dog not to look at it. But I didn't mind if I had a fight, and I sure wanted a beer. I hadn't had a drink in a month. Training. So, I was thirsty. I placed Cora Lee on a bench and said, 'Honey, don't let any man sit down next to you. If they want to give trouble, tell them to watch out for Randy Huff.' Then I left her and went to the bar and bought two cans of beer. Since I had my own church-key, I told the bartender not to open either of them. I brought those cans back ice-cold. Hard as rocks. I was saving them until I could sit next to her, and feel her sweet little thigh nuzzling right next to mine as the first toke of beer went down.

"What did I see instead? A fellow with his arm around her. Cora Lee was looking at me in pure panic.

"He was huge. I was big, but this old boy was huge. He had a face you could put up against the bumper of a flat-bed truck and the face alone could push the truck uphill." Susan began to chuckle. "I was not demoralized, you understand. I

was boss of my own equipment, thank you. So I said, 'Fellow, I don't know if you are aware of this or not, but that happens to be your arm on my girl.'

"'Well,' he said, 'what are you planning to do about it?'

"I smiled. I gave a dumb country-boy grin like I had nothing to do but get lost. Then, I took a quick step and hit him in the face with the bottom end of the full beer can, him sitting down, me standing up. I hit him with the right arm that did those one-arm push-ups. The end of the beer can indented a circle from the middle of his nose to the middle of his forehead. It broke his nose and laid vertical cuts over both eyebrows. He looked like a cross between a bat and a hog."

We were silent before this memory recollected in tranquillity.

"How do you think the fellow responded?" Butler asked.

"How?" asked Susan.

"He sat there. He didn't blink particularly, and he didn't move. He just smiled. Then he said, 'You want to play? Let's play.' He looked happy. What do you think I said?"

"I don't know," she said. "Tell me."

"I said, 'Fellow, you can have her. You can have her.' I started running." Full pause. "I started running and I haven't stopped since."

Susan Pierce laughed as if something in the very scheme of things had just caught on fire. "Oh, golly," she said, "oh, golly." Then she kissed his cheek. "You're cute. You're such a fool, but, do you know, you're cute." Proprietary lust for him appeared in her face.

After a few minutes, it was obvious there was nothing more for me to do than say goodnight. On my way to bed, I could find no explanation why his story had appealed so greatly to her. It impressed me, however, that he had told the same story once to a group of us at the Farm, and it had had a totally different ending. He had hardly run away. He had stayed in and taken the beating of his life against that huge old boy, but afterward he had made love to Cora Lee for all of July and August.

I was depressed. I had had dates with girls like Susan Pierce all through college and we would drink beers together. Nothing much more. Now, he was going to seduce her in one night. Was it Berlin? I did not believe girls like Susan would make love that quickly back in America. On such thoughts, I fell asleep.

I tried to calm myself. I reminded what Hugh Hefner had
already accomplished. Before I left for Berlin, he succeeded
in taking my cryogenics through its first, second, and other
disseminations. In the course of working on the Temple of
the Reflecting Pool over the Executive Garden, he had also
managed to acquire my paper record of Derrick Hubbard's
presence in the House etc. My life was put on its technical
service staff for the time period. Since technical services
was closed, I stayed and worked with the projects, which
necessity would prevent any such thing as reward. The
Derrick Hubbard bill had been effectively launched.

All this, Derrick had taken as a personal present.
Now, however, none of it was ⁷
~~-1A-~~ A ~~substantially~~. I was
suffering from the worst form of paranoia & was in my

At 4 A.M., a gallon of German beer took the ride of the
Valkyries through my urinary tract. Awake, on two hours of
sleep, I felt marooned in a neon desert of the night, sober,
cold, wholly electrified. The reality of my situation came
down on me again, and the hours I had spent slogging away at
beer with Huff-Butler came off my heart like a mustard plaster.
I was naked to the night breeze. William Harvey was on the
trail of KU/CLOAKROOM.

I tried to calm myself. I reviewed what Hugh Montague had already accomplished. Before I left for Berlin, he succeeded in taking my cryptonym through its first, second, and third transmogrifications. In the course of sending me the length of the Reflecting Pool over to Intensive German, he had also managed to expunge any paper trace of Herrick Hubbard's presence in the Snake Pit. My 201 now put me in Technical Services Staff for the same period. Since Technical Services was mined, layered, and veneered with top projects, serious security hurdles would confront any search into my record. The Herrick Hubbard 201 had been effectively laundered.

All this, Harlot had bestowed on me as a farewell present. Now, however, none of it seemed adequately substantial. I was suffering from the worst form of paranoia a man in my profession can undergo--I was suspicious of the motives of my protector. Why had Montague chosen such a convoluted path? What in Heaven was I escaping from? My inability to satisfy an impossible task in the Document Room could certainly have resulted in a wholly disagreeable letter being put into my 201 from Chief of Base, Berlin, and that would have done my future advancement no good. How could such harm compare, however, to the damage of discovery now? Harlot could weather a minor flap--it would all go into the portfolio of his commodious

achievements--but I, if not asked to resign, would certainly have to live under a professional shroud.

I dressed and took the U-Bahn to the Department of Defense where I had clearance to the key for a secure phone. Staring out upon the last of the night through a window, the Department of Defense deserted at that hour, I made a call to the secure phone that Harlot, as one of his perks, was able to keep at the canal-house in Georgetown. It was midnight in Washington. Looking down the long hall of this empty office, I heard the sound of his voice, scrambled electronically, then re-constituted; it had the hollow timbre of words heard through a long speaking tube.

Quickly I explained my new assignment. His reassurances were firm. Bill Harvey would never be able to get anywhere--"You, dear boy, hold the strings, not King William. It's droll to be put on the trail of oneself. I wish that had happened to me when I was your age. You'll use it in your memoirs, supposing the Pickle Factory ever gets permissive about memoirs, that is."

"Hugh, not to disagree, but Harvey is already familiar with my 201. He may ask what I did for four weeks at Technical Services."

"The answer is that you did nothing. You have a sad story. Stick to it. You were never assigned. You never met anyone but the secretary who guards the first waiting room. Poor boy, you were on the edge of your seat waiting for clearance. It happens all the time. Some of our best trainees expire that way over at TSS. The clearance never comes. Say..." He paused. "Say that you spent your hours ducking out to the Reading Room at the Library of Congress."

"What did I do there?"

"Anything. Anything at all. Specify something. Say you were reading Lautréamont in preparation for taking a good whack at Joyce. Harvey will pursue it no further. He is not interested in reminding himself that he is devoid of culture. He may bully you a bit, but in his heart he will know that people like Harry Hubbard do just such eccentric things as delve into Lautréamont while waiting for clearance at TSS."

"Dix Butler happens to know I was in the Snake Pit."

"Whoever this Dix Butler is, give him some definite impression that the Snake Pit was your cover. Don't say it. Let him come onto the idea himself. But I promise, you are worrying needlessly. Harvey is much too busy to pursue your activities down into the drains. Just furnish him a little bit of progress each week on the search for CLOAKROOM."

He coughed. It made a barking sound over the hollow center of the secure phone. "Harry," he said, "there are two choices in this Company. Worry yourself to death, or choose to live with a little uncertainty." He seemed about to hang up.

I must, however, have laid one note on the empyrean of his calm, for next he said, "You remember our conversation on VQ/CATHETER?"

"Yessir."

"That project is the most important thing in the world to Harvey. If he starts pressing you on CLOAKROOM, nudge him back to CATHETER."

"I'm not supposed to know nothing about CATHETER but that it's a cryptonym."

"Bill Harvey is broad-gauge paranoid. Such people think associationally. Use your wits. Speak of the Holland Tunnel, or of Dr. William Harvey. Bill must certainly know that the noble namesake charted the circulation of the blood back in 1620, but if by any chance our Base Chief is ignorant of the greater Harvey--never expect too much from an FBI man, and you will never be disappointed--why, get him to think of blood vessels. Arteries. Before long, his thought will slide back to the tunnel. You see, Harry, Bill Harvey believes that one day he will be running the Company, and VQ/CATHETER is his

ticket to Top Desk. He won't get there, of course. He will certainly self-destruct. His paranoia is too high octane. So just divert him. He can't work properly on anything else."

"Well, thank you, Hugh."

"Don't feel sorry for yourself. If you're obliged to go through the crux before you're ready, all the better. You'll be twice as good on your next job. That's what this work is all about, Harry. Figuring a way through the crux."

I tried to laugh. "You like the word."

"Good for you. I do like the word."

Right after we hung up, I told myself that the son of the Lord had perished on the crux. (If there is abominable taste in this last remark, attribute it to my hangover.) no, call it, my panic: My panic at 6 A.M. was like a hound on a leash.

I got through the day. I sent a cable to West Berlin Desk in Washington, notifying them that Chief of Base wished to re-address the cryptonym of KU/CLOAKROOM through Bridge-Archive:Control. I even wondered for the first time if Control was a person, an office, or a machine. Then I called Dix Butler and arranged to go out with him that night. So soon as we met, he told me in passing about Susan Pierce. "It was a wall-banger," he said. "I knew she would go for my little anecdote."

"Is that why you told it?"

"Of course."

"Which version is true?"

"Don't stare at me in judgement. I steer an anecdote to suit the scene."

"Tell me. Why did it work? Is there a psychology of women?"

"Your dick is sixteen years old." He hooked my forearm with his first two fingers. "Hubbard, admit it. You don't have a dose."

"I might."

"I might conduct you to the men's room for an examination."

"I won't go."

He began to laugh. When he stopped, he said: "I liked Susan Pierce. But I had to recognize that my initial approach was loaded with error. I was presenting myself as too sure of myself. I realized that I'd never make it with her if she thought I was her superior. So, I tried to make her feel sorry for me."

"How did you know she wouldn't be disgusted?"

"Because she's arrogant and strong-minded. Shame is one emotion that girl never wants to feel. She has a lot of

compassion for that. Like, if you fear blindness, you usually develop some feeling for blind people."

I had a closer question I wanted to ask: "How was she in bed?" The inhibiting hand of St. Matthews, however, was at my throat. The cost of continuing to see oneself as appropriately decent is that such inquiries are not permissible. I waited, all the same, for his account. On some nights, after listening to a slew of sexual particulars, all forthcoming from him to me, I would return to the apartment while he went off on one or another meeting. It was then I could not sleep. My loins were stuffed with his tales.

On this night, however, Dix did not say any more about Susan. Was it because he felt close to her or because it had been unsatisfactory? I was discovering how much of an intelligence man I was becoming in one way at least--my curiosity leaned on my heart like undigested food.

All the same, Dix stayed away from revelations. He was in a state of exceptional tension tonight and repeated more than once, "I need action, Herrick." He rarely called me by my full first name, and when he did, the ironies were not attractive. I could hardly explain to him that an old family name was re-invigorated when given to you as a first name, and could even prove fortifying when you filled out a signature. So I

said nothing. While I would never have to suffer being grabbed by the upper lip like Rosen, there might be some other price. Tonight, he was drinking bourbon neat rather than beer.

"I'm going to fill you in, Hubbard, about me," he said, "but don't you pass this on or you'll be sorry. Fucking sorry."

"Don't tell me," I said, "if you don't trust me."

He was sheepish. "You're right," he said. He stuck out his hand to shake. Again, I felt as if I sat next to an animal whose code of behavior rested in no good balance on his instincts. "Yes," he said. "I paid for running away from that dude with the beer can. I paid, and I paid. I used to wake up at night sweating. I stank. No beating is ever as bad as the depths you plumb in a nadir of shame." He used the word like a new acquisition. "I have learned the resonance of verbal surprise," I half expected him to add.

"I felt so bad inside," he said instead, "that I started to stand up to my father. And he was one man I had always been afraid of."

I nodded.

"He wasn't a big man. He was blind in one eye from an old fight, and he had a bad leg. But nobody could take him. He wouldn't permit it. He was a bad old dog. He'd use a baseball

bat or a shovel. Whatever it took. One night he got abusive to me, and I laid him out with a punch. Before he got clear again, I had tied him to a chair, and stole his handgun and a carton of ammo, and was out of our domestic little cabin. All I owned was in one cardboard suitcase, and out the door. I knew just so soon as he worked himself loose, he would come at me with a shotgun. I even took his car. I knew he wouldn't report that. Just wait for me to come back.

"Well, dig it, Herrick, I entered on a life of crime. Fifteen and a half years old, and I learned more in the next half year than most people acquire in a life. Like the war had just ended. The soldiers weren't home yet. So, I became the stuff women turned to for a little love. I looked nineteen, and that helped. I didn't enlighten the populace that it was otherwise. I would hit some new good-sized town about eleven in the morning, and drive around until I could pick the store to hit. Then I would choose the bar that was right for me. I'd hang in with all those good soaks who were drinking their lunch until I'd found the right girl or woman, depending on my state of mind. Did I want to learn from a wise and greedy older person, or was I hankering to instruct young pussy in the art of lust? Depended on the day. Sometimes you just took what you could get, but I did leave a countless number of

before I was ten miles away, and I'd hole up with the female for twenty-four hours, or whatever slack she could cut. Six hours or forty-eight. We'd eat, drink, and fuck. Those robberies were equal to injections of semen. You're raking in the goodness from people when you stalk right over to their holding and take it from them.

"I never tried to save any of that money. Once I got so lucky I walked out with eight hundred dollars from a single cash register, and there wasn't any way to spend such a sum on a girl and drink, so I bought a good used Chevy, and sent my father a telegram. 'Your car is parked on 280 North Thirtieth Street in Russelville, Arkansas. Keys under the seat. Don't look for me. I'm gone to Mexico.' I giggled like a looney-bird writing that telegram. I could see my old man on his gimp leg searching for me in Matamoros and Vera Cruz, every low bar. You ought to seen him. One of his teeth was like a broken fang."

There were more stories. Robbery followed robbery, and each girl was described for my benefit. "I don't want to get your clap stirring around too much in your poor detumescent young nuts, but this lady's pussy. . ." He was off. I knew everything about female anatomy except how to picture it truly.

A grotto of whorls and looplets glistened darkly in my imagination.

Then his life altered. He lay over in St. Louis for a few months and lived with a couple of new-found buddies. They would have parties, and exchange girlfriends. I could not believe their indifference to questions of possession. "Hell, yes," he would say. "We used to take turns putting our dicks through a hole in a sheet. The girls would then give samples of oral technique. You'd have to guess which girl was on the chomp. Not easy. Leave it to chicks. They could mix their styles. Just to confuse us."

"You didn't mind that your girl was doing such things to another guy?" I admit to asking.

"Those chicks? Incidental. Me and my buddies did jobs together. We shared a half-dozen houses we thoroughly looted. I can tell you--there's nothing like a break-in. Better than robbing a store. It kicks off crazy things into the armature of any settled habits you might think you have. For example, one of these dudes always used to take a shit right on the middle of the carpet in the master bedroom. It was an overpowering urge for him. I tell you, Herrick, I understood it. If you'd ever entered a medium-sized house in the middle of the night, you'd know. It feels as large as a castle, just

about. You are aware of every thought that's ever passed through those walls. You might just as well be a member of the family. Me and my two buddies had a bond that was closer than any girlfriend." Now he fixed my eyes by staring into them, and I was obliged to nod. "None of this is to be passed on--you hear me?" I nodded again. "People ask about me," he said, "tell them I served in the Marines for three years. It's true, I did."

"Why?"

"Why?" He looked at me as if I were impertinent.

"Because you have to know when to make your move. Hubbard, in years to come, keep an eye on my path. I talk a lot, but I get it done. Sometimes, people who brag the most are the ones who accomplish the most. They have to--they'll look like fools if they don't. I open my mouth, I'm raising the ante. I expect to have enemies up to here in this Agency," he said, raising his hand well above his head, "but I will prevail. Comprehend why? Because I commit myself wholly to an endeavor. Yet, I also know when to move. These are contradictory but essential favors. The Lord grants them to few. We were being pulled in," he went on without transition, "every week by the police. They had nothing on us, but they kept putting us into lineups as cannon fodder. It's no picnic

to be in a lineup. The people who are trying to recover their memory as to who robbed them on their own street corner, are usually hysterical. They could select you by mistake. That was one factor. The other was my sixth sense. Time to move. So I got drunk one night and enlisted in the morning. Lo, I was a Marine. Three years. I'll tell you about that sometime. The rest is history. I got out, went to the University of Texas on the G.I. Bill, played linebacker from 1949 to 1952, and thereby--help of certain alumni--was able to avoid being called up as a reserve for Korea to which I could have gone and come back in a coffin or as a hero--I know such things--but I had my eye on professional football. Therefore, I finished college and tried out for the Washington Redskins but smashed my knee. Whereupon, I followed Bill Harvey's advice and signed up with my peers, you, and the rest of the intellectual elite."

"How did you get to know Bill Harvey?"

"That's another story."

"Don't care to tell me?"

"Hubbard, my attention is wandering. My tongue is turning dry." He stared around the room, his restlessness licking at my calm. Then he signalled, and we left for another bar and then another. If the evening proved in the end to be without incident, I attribute it to the wisdom of the Germans.

They knew when to leave him alone. I found it a very long night. When I opened my eyes in the morning, I had to recognize that the search for KU/CLOAKROOM was going to be with me on awakening throughout every hangover for quite some time.

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Cables were sent back and forth. I was able to inform Mr. Harvey that KU/CLOAKROOM had been changed to KU/ROPES. Now, we had to decide whether to wait seventy-two hours to pick up the next shift of cryptonym, or put a push on Bridge-Archive:Control. Harvey told me to wait. Three days later, I was able to inform him that we were in South Korea, courtesy of DN/FRAGMENT.

"That is going to hold us up for two weeks," he said.

"I can," I offered, "hit Bridge-Archive hard." Already, I was beginning to count on a contrary reaction by him to any move I proposed.

"No," he said. "I want to mull this one around. Just initiate a request for DN/FRAGMENT. With all we've got to do, two weeks will pass before we can turn around."

It was the truth. There was a lot to do. If, for the first few days, serving as aide-de-camp to William King Harvey had meant not much more than waiting for him to get into BLACKIE-1 (our bullet-resistant Cadillac) my job soon expanded to note-taker, implementor, intra-office communicator of unhappy orders from the boss, plus assignments to monitor from my desk the wastebasket product of significant hotel rooms in West and East Berlin by our hotel chambermaids. There was also the collection of cargo manifests for all airplanes coming into Schönefeld in East Berlin, covert bookkeeping of our disbursements for special operational expenses, and various other pay-offs that case officers passed over to me as chits with code-names. I do not wish to suggest that I was on top of any of it. I had a little to do with a great many things, but most of the time I could give no close account of what was going on; it made more sense to recognize that we had a large-sized factory operation spread over the 341 square miles

of West and East Berlin, and information of all varieties came in as raw material, was processed in our various intelligence shops and mills, and went out as product via cable and pouch to Headquarters back at the Reflecting Pool and other relevant offices in Washington. I was comparable to a clerk in the superintendent's office who could brag that he had a desk near the boss. It was no boon. Harvey worked as hard as any man I ever met, and much like Harlot, saw sleep as the interruption of serious activity. Daily, he would go through the hundreds of cargo manifests that had come in the day before at Schönefeld Airport, and since he could hardly read German, this cost us the output of a couple of translators who had to work through the night at CRUMPETS to number the apples and rifles. Harvey could make out flights, time and place of departure and arrival, and the amount of product; he knew the German words for cartons and cases, containers, and off-category loads; he had a vocabulary for kilograms and cubic meters. That was his linguistic limit. Since he could hardly recognize the names of the variety of different arms and commodities flown into East Berlin from Moscow, Leningrad, the Ukraine, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Rumania, Hungary, et al, he had ordered his translators to assign a number to each kind of item. Since this included, as I say, everything from apples to rifles, and there were ten

kinds of apples and several hundred varieties of small arms, Harvey had put together a vest-pocket code of several thousand numbers. In lieu of a dictionary, he kept a private black book with each number listed, but he did not have to refer to text often. He knew his numbers. Riding in BLACKIE, sipping on his martini, his free hand, one stubby finger forward, would be guiding his eye down a cargo-manifest list with translator's numbers added. Sometimes, when he wished to take notes, he would put the martini glass in its holder, or worse, pass it to my hand, and, with his color coding pen, underline items in red, blue, yellow, or green, so that on the second pass through these pages, relations between various Soviet forces stationed in Berlin would start to speak to him. At the least, this is my supposition. He never explained any of it, but he certainly hummed like a handicapper reading the racing sheet. His muttering sputtered in my ear with the agreeable sound of fritters crackling in a frying pan. "Two-thousand-six-hundred-eighty-one, that's got to be some kind of Kalashnikov, but I'll look it up,"--over came the martini to my hand, out came his black book--"damn, it's a Skoda, not a Kally, should have known that two-thousand-six-hundred-eighty-one is the Skoda Machine-Pistol Series C, model IV. Wasn't that discontinued?" He looked up. "Hubbard, take a note." As I

fumbled for my notebook and pen with my free hand, while holding his martini in the other, he took back his glass, drained it, set it in the holder, and dictated: "Sovs either dumping outmoded Skoda Series C Model IV on Vopos and ilk, or starting up Model IV again, or, option three, preparing a caper. Latter most likely. Only 96 Skodas in shipment." He filled his martini glass from the shaker. "Put it in the Womb Room," he said.

That was an extra large closet the size of a jail cell off his office at GIBLETS. The walls had been covered in cork to give him a four-sided bulletin board. On it, he tacked every unanswered question. Sometimes, he would taper off from a sixteen hour working day by snooping around in that cork cavern, dwelling among his enigmas.

My day, then, was generally lived within parameters. I had a desk adjacent to each of Mr. Harvey's offices at GIBLETS, BOZO, and Downtown, and I travelled with him, gathering together--if I could anticipate when he was ready to saddle up--all the papers I was working on, stuffed them, file-folder and all, into my flunky-bag (the term he delighted in applying to my attache case) and sprinted down one or another corridor after him. Off we went in BLACKIE, arsenal style, driver, bodyguard riding shotgun, second shotgun (myself), plus Chief,

tales. That is the way to pass a big picture down in acceptable form."

"Even if the stories are indiscreet?"

"You've put your finger on it. We all have a tendency to talk too much. I had a relative who was an alcoholic. Gave it up. Never touched the stuff. Except one or twice a year, he'd break down, go off on a toot. It was biologically adaptative. Something worse would probably have happened to him if he didn't break out and drink. I guess I believe that in the Company it's good once in a while if a secret gets told over a drink."

"Do you mean that?"

"Now that I've said it, no! But we are living in two systems. Intelligence and biology. Intelligence would permit us to tell nothing unauthorized. Biology reduces the pressure." He nodded at his own words. "Of course, there are discernable variations in our top men. Angleton is a super-clam. So is Helms. Director Dulles may talk a little too much. Hugh Montague, way too much."

"How would you classify yourself, sir?"

"Clam. Three hundred and forty days a year. Magpie on my two weeks in summer." He winked.

for the Joint Chiefs) and Mr. Harvey took pleasure in interrupting our drive on a side-street of Steglitz. We pulled into a parking shed, changed the Cadillac for a bullet-proof Mercedes, and took off again with Harvey now behind the wheel, his driver riding shotgun, myself in the rear with the General. "Finger the turns," said Harvey, and his driver thereupon took up the duty of giving directions; we drove quickly through the outskirts of Berlin with much doubling back on side streets to make certain there was no tail. Twelve kilometers soon became twenty, and we passed through Britz and Johannisthal twice before coming to Rudow and its open fields.

All the while, Bill Harvey kept telling the General about problems faced in the building of the tunnel, sending this monologue over his shoulder. I was hoping the General's hearing was good. Familiar with Harvey's voice, I could barely pick up his words. Since the General and I managed, however, to share the rear seat without any acknowledgement that I was present, I soon began to enjoy our muffled orientation. The General reacted by helping himself to the martini pitcher.

"This was the only tunnel to my knowledge that had a sister tunnel of the same diameter and depth built at the White Sands Missile Proving Ground in New Mexico to a length of four hundred and fifty feet, as opposed to our fifteen hundred feet,

and for one reason," said Harvey non-stop. "The soil bears comparison to the white-pack sand soil we were facing in Altglieniche. The softness was the problem, said our soil engineers. What if you dig the tunnel, putting in one steel ring after another to support it all the way, but the disturbance to the earth produces some small depression on the surface? That could appear as a rogue-line in a photograph. We can't have unaccountable phenomenon showing up in their aerial surveys. Not when we're tunneling into East Berlin."

"There was a lot of back and forth about that with the Joint Chiefs," said the General.

"You bet," said Harvey, "but, what the hell, we took a chance, didn't we, General Packer?"

"Technically speaking, it's an act of war," said the General, "to penetrate another nation's territory whether by air, sea, land, or in this case, below."

"Isn't that a fact?" said Harvey. "I had a selling job from here to Christmas. Mr. Dulles said to me, 'Can we represent as little of this behemoth as possible in writing?'" He began to laugh, and the phlegm coughed up in his throat, but he kept talking and driving. He was as good at adjusting the shriek of the tires through a tight turn as any symphony man clashing his cymbals in a well-timed accord.

"Yessir," said Harvey, "this tunnel demanded special solutions. We had close to insuperable problems of security. It's one thing to build the Taj Mahal. But try slapping up the Taj Mahal in such a way that the adjoining neighbors never receive a clue. This sector of the border at Altglienicke is heavily patrolled by the Commies."

"What was it that somebody did with the Taj Mahal?" asked the General in a half-voice as if he could not decide whether it would prove more embarrassing to be heard or unheard. Having set down his glass, he then, on reflection, picked it up again.

"Our problem," said Harvey, "was getting rid of the immediate construction product--tons of dirt. To dig the Tunnel we had to excavate approximately 50,000 cubic feet of earth. That's more than 3,000 tons which comes to several hundred average truck loads. But where do you dispose of the stuff? Everybody in Berlin has 360 degree vision. Every kraut can count. Heinie is looking to supplement his income through the power of his observations. OK, say you spread your dump all over West Berlin and thereby reduce the amount visible in any one place, you still have the truck driver to contend with. Ten truck drivers are ten highly vulnerable security packages. We came up, however, with the unique A-OK solution: We would

not truck tunnel dirt away from the site. Instead, we built a large warehouse right near the border of Altglienicke in East Berlin, and put a parabolic antenna on the top. 'Ho, ho,' says the SSD, "those Americans are pretending to build a warehouse, but, in fact, they have an AN/APR9 on their so-called warehouse roof. And, look, Hans, this warehouse is heavily protected by barbed wire. Clearly, the Americans are putting up a radar-intercept station. Ho, hum, one more radar-intercept station in the Cold War. That makes no big history.' What the East Germans and the KGB don't know is that we have built this large warehouse with a cellar that happens to be twelve feet deep throughout. Nobody worries about any dirt we cart away while we're building the cellar for the warehouse. Not even the truck drivers. Everybody knows it's a radar station pretending to be a warehouse. It's only when we're done with the trucks that we start the tunnel. Our cellar space proved adequate to receive the 50,000 cubic feet of dirt we had to dig out. That, General Packer, was an elegant solution." He whipped around a car, cut back in front of an oncoming truck.

"So all that dirt has just been sitting in the warehouse cellar all this time?" asked the General.

"Well, it's no worse than burying the gold at Fort Knox," said Harvey.

"I get it," said the General. "That's why the dig was called Operation GOLD."

"It's policy among us," Harvey said solemnly, "not to discuss cryptonym nomenclature."

"Right. I find that a reasonable stance."

"We're here," said Chief. At the end of a long empty street which passed between empty fields on either side, we could see a large one-story warehouse, silhouetted from behind by the lights of passing automobiles along the belt highway on the East German side. The warehouse had its own floodlights around a barbed wire perimeter, and sentry lamps at a few windows and doors, but, in the night, it merely looked well-guarded and somewhat inactive. I was more intrigued with the cars and trucks on the Schönefelder Chaussee beyond. They seemed to be driving with such purpose. The collective sound of their tires came to me through the night like the surf from an ocean patrolled by my enemy, and yet those vehicles knew nothing. Our warehouse would attract no more prominence than one gives to any building at night on a desolate highway.

The sentry opened the gate, and we parked two feet from a small door to the warehouse. Harvey darted from his seat right into the building. "Apologies for running ahead of you," he said to the General once we had followed, "but our E and A folk

back at Headquarters say I'm the most recognizable CIA operative in the world. Except, of course, for Allen Dulles. So we don't want the Commies wondering why I come here. Might start up their mental motors."

"E and A? Estimates and Assessments?"

"A, actually, is for Analysis."

"You fellows are as much in the alphabet soup as we are."

"Just so the mail gets through," said Harvey.

We walked down a corridor with a few partitioned offices on either side, most of them unoccupied, at this hour, then Chief opened another door to a large windowless room with fluorescent lights overhead. For a moment I thought I was back in the Snake Pit. At endless rows of work tables, recording machines were stopping and starting. Up on a dais, lights blinked from a console the size of a pipe organ. Half a dozen technicians, seated before it, were studying their local configurations of signals, while other technicians trolleyed shopping carts of tapes and cartridges to the machines. The sound of one hundred and fifty Ampex tape recorders--Mr. Harvey provided the number--moving in forward or reverse, electronic beeps signalling the conclusions or commencements of telephone conversations produced an aggregate of sound that stirred me in

We were on the lip of a cylindrical hole about twenty feet across, and curiously deep. I could not estimate the depth. Looking down, one seemed to be studying the fall from a ten foot diving board, but then it seemed more, a long dark plunge to the duck-boards below. I felt an hypnotic vertigo, not disagreeable but magnetic--I wanted to go down the ladder that led to the base.

It descended about eighteen feet. There, out of a cupboard on the floor of this hole, we exchanged our shoes for boots with heavily cushioned soles and put on coveralls. With a finger to his lips, as if he would draw all errant echoes into himself, Harvey led us along the duckwalls into the endless passage. The hypnotic, magnetic--I now called it, the honorable--vertigo, continued. Lit by an overhead bulb every ten or twelve feet, the vista of the tunnel stretched out before us to the vanishing point. I felt as if I were in a room of mirrors whose repeating view took us to infinity. Six and a half feet high, six and a half feet wide, a perfect cylinder, nearly fifteen hundred feet long, the tunnel took us down a narrow aisle between low sandbag walls on either side. Acoustical machines sat at intervals on the sand-bags wired into lead-sheathed cables that ran the length of the tunnel. Harvey whispered, "Carries the sap from the tap to the bucket."

"Where's the tap?" asked the General.

"Coming attractions," Harvey replied.

We continued to walk in one carefully weighted step after another. "Do not stumble," we had been warned. Along the route, we passed but three maintenance men, each isolated on his own watch. We had entered the domain of CATHETER. It was a church, I told myself, and immediately submitted to a chill on the back of my neck. CATHETER had its indwelling silence; one might as well have entered the long entrance to a god's ear. My breath seemed to collect in pools. "A church for snakes," I said to myself.

Our path proceeded not much more than a quarter of a mile, but progress which is counted by one's breath, overtakes estimates of time. I felt as if we were walking along the tunnel floor for some real part of an hour before we came to a steel door in a concrete frame. A maintenance man who accompanied us brought forth a key, turned a lock, and pressed four numbers on another lock. The door opened. We were at the terminus of the tunnel. Above us was a vertical shaft which rose some fifteen feet into the dark.

"I can't take you to the taps," whispered Harvey. "See that overhead plate? Just above, is where we made our connection to the cables themselves. That was one delicate

X m
deal. We learned from our sources that the KGB sound engineers at Karlhorst sealed nitrogen into their cables to guard against moisture, and attached instruments to monitor any drop in nitrogen pressure. Hence, General Packer, we never fool with that plate except for maintenance emergencies--which we have not had as yet--knock on wood," whereupon he dropped to his knees and gave one near-inaudible rap to the duckboard on which we were standing.

"Yes," said Harvey, "just about a year ago, right on the other side of this overhead plate, you would have been able to witness an operation comparable in delicacy and work-tension to a world-famous surgeon going in for an organ transplant never attempted before." Standing there, at the bottom of this vertical tunnel which led to that overhead plate on the other side of which was a chamber as sealed as a monarch's crypt, I received a remote trace of the immaculate anxiety experienced by the technicians when the tap went into the wire. "At that instant," said Harvey, "if the Krauts had been checking on the same line, we'd have shown up on their meters. Just like a nerve-jump. So, ultimately, it was a crap-shoot. But we brought it off. Right now, General, we are connected into one hundred and seventy-two such circuits. Each circuit carries at least eighteen channels. That's more than twenty-five hundred

military and police phone calls and telegraphic messages that we are able to record at once. You can call that coverage."

"You fellows," said General Packer, "are getting good marks for this back home."

"Well, I'm glad to hear the level of appreciation is rising."

"The Joint Chiefs won't be handed anything but good stuff from me."

"I remember," said Harvey. "when the Pentagon used to say, 'CIA hires spies to sell them lies.'"

"No, sir, not any more," said General Packer, but on our return through the tunnel, Harvey gave me a wink.

On the ride back, Harvey sat in the rear with General Packer, and they shared his pitcher of martinis. After a while, the General asked, "How do you handle the take?"

"The bulk of transmissions are flown back to Washington."

"That much I know already. They took me on a tour of the Hosiery Mill."

"They took you there?"

"Room T-32."

"No right to open it up to you," Harvey said.

"Well, they did. You've seen my clearance."

"General Packer, no offense intended, but I remember a time when high clearance was given to Donald Maclean of the British Foreign Office. Why, in 1947, he was even issued a non-escort pass to the Atomic Energy Commission. J. Edgar Hoover didn't even rate such a pass in 1947. Need I remind you that Maclean was part of the Philby gang, and has been reliably reported to be making his home in Moscow these days. No offense intended."

"I can't help it if you don't like it, the Joint Chiefs want to know a few things."

"Such as?"

"Such as how much of the take is kept here for immediate processing. Are you in a position to give us twenty-four hours notice if the Soviet army is getting ready to blitz Berlin?"

I heard the soundproof window partition going up behind my ears in the Mercedes. Now, I could not hear a word. Nor did I dare to turn around. I leaned toward the driver to light a cigarette, and flickered a look at the rear seat. They both appeared considerably more choleric.

When we stopped at the parking shed to switch cars again, I heard Bill Harvey say, "I won't tell you that. The Joint Chiefs can kiss every square inch of my ass."

Now, back in BLACKIE-1, two new martinis poured from the Cadillac decanter, Harvey kept his partition raised. I was able to hear no more until the General was dropped off at his hotel, the Savoy. Harvey immediately lowered the glass to speak to me. "There's a general for you. General Asshole. Stays at the Suh-voyyy." He said it as if he were trundling an English accent over a notable bump. "I once was taught that Generals were supposed to stay with their troops," he said, He belched. "Kid, you seem to be the troops. How do you like little old Catheter?"

"I know how Marco Polo felt discovering Cathay."

"They sure teach you Juniors what to say in those New England schools."

"Yessir."

"Yessir? I guess you're telling me I'm full of shit." He belched again. "Look, kid, I don't know about you, but time-servers like that General scratch my woodwork. I didn't happen to be in uniform during World War II. I was too busy chasing Nazis and Communists for the FBI. So, the military dogs irritate me. I think we ought to wax the floor with some serious booze, therefore. I want to get to know you better."

"I never turn down a drink, Chief."

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Once we were back in Giblets, however, and installed in his living room, Mr. Harvey's fatigue offered its manifest. He would fall asleep as we were talking, the glass undulating in his hand like a tulip in a summer breeze. Then he would awaken with a well-timed swoon of his wrist to compensate for the near spill of his liquor.

"I'm sorry my wife couldn't stay up tonight," he said, as he came out of a ten second snooze.

She had greeted us at the door, made our drinks, and tiptoed out, but I could feel her moving about upstairs, as if, after my departure, she would come down to steer him to bed.

"C.G.'s a wonderful woman. Top of category," he said.

The injunction not to say "yessir" cut off the easiest response to many of his remarks. "I'm sure," I said at last.

"Be double sure. Want to know the kind of individual C.G. is? Some woman living in the Soviet sector--we never found out her name--must have come over on the S-Bahn one night, her infant in her arms, and left a baby on the doorstep of a Company officer down the street. Right outside his home! I won't tell you the fellow's name because he went through a lot of flak. How did this East German woman know he was CIA? Well, you can't clear yourself on a crazy drop like that, so let's forget his side of it. What's essential is that the woman left a note. 'I want my child to grow up free.' Enough to turn your heart-strings, right?"

"Right."

"Wrong. You don't take anything for granted. Not in our work. If you have an agent with a new filling in his molar, don't be too certain somebody hasn't planted a microdot under the filling. But my wife says, 'This baby could have been dropped on us from heaven. I won't let her go to an orphanage.

Bill, we have to adopt her.'" He shook his head. "Just the night before, I was sitting with C.G. looking at an East German TV newsreel to see if I could pick up a couple of clues about their Order of Battle from the outfits who were in their military parade--never feel superior to your source, no matter how mundane--and one of their bands went by. An entire platoon of glockenspiels. I looked at the ribbons they put on those glockenspiels--real Heinie frou-frou--and I said to C.G., 'Why don't they hang prison camp skulls on these instruments, ha, ha,' and next day, she picks me up on it. If I hate the Sovs all that much, she informs me, then it's my duty to adopt the baby." He burped, gently, sadly, fondly. "Make a long story short," he said, "I have an adopted baby daughter. Phenomenal, right?"

"Right," I said. I did not wish to echo him in order to be contradicted again, but he just grinned and said, "Right. My daughter is lovely. When I get to see her." He stopped. He looked at his glass. "Fatigue is your mother in this kind of work. You'd think it was a waste of time with the general, but it wasn't. You know why I was selling Catheter so hard?"

"No, Mr. Harvey."

"The Director asked me to. I received a call from Allen Dulles just this afternoon. 'Bill, fellow,' he said to me,

'give their three-star General Packer the tour. We need to fluff their feathers.' So I dedicated myself this evening to selling Catheter to General Asshole. Do you know why?"

"Not yet, exactly."

"Because the Joint Chiefs and their flunkies live so high on the military hog. They have their fancy battleships and their nuclear warning system. It's hard to impress them. They're used to visiting underground facilities that are as huge as a naval station. You can park a city in some of their underground stuff. Whereas, we have just a dirty little tunnel. Yet, we're picking up more intelligence than any operation in history. Any nation, any war, any espionage endeavor ever. Got to remind them of that. Got to keep them in their place."

"I could hear some of the things you said in the car. You were certainly keeping him at bay."

"It wasn't hard. The fact of the matter is that he didn't really want to know what we're picking up. We spot-check, right here in Berlin, about one-tenth of one per cent of our total take, and that's enough. You can recreate the dinosaur from a few bones in the tibia. What we know, and the Pentagon hates to hear this, is that the state of the railroad tracks over on the Sov side of the line through East Germany,

Czechoslovakia, Poland, is execrable. Only word for it. And their rolling stock is worse. The Russians just don't have the choo-choo trains to invade West Germany. There's not a blitzkrieg in sight for years. Well, I hate to tell you how tight the Pentagon is going to sit on that news. If Congress ever got wind, it could strip the Army of billions of dollars in tank contracts yet to be allocated. And General Packer happens to be in tanks. He's touring NATO scared. Of course, Congress won't get wind unless we break a little over in their direction, and we won't unless the Pentagon goes out of their way to insult us. Because the bottom line, Hubbard, is that it's highly improper that Congress be given any inkling. They're too malleable to public reaction. The Russians must and will always remain our ultimate enemy."

I confess I was not unhappy to hear this last remark.

"Yes," Harvey went on, "it's a mistake to reveal any Russian weaknesses to the American public. They do not have the appropriate background in Communism to appreciate the problem. Do you perceive, then, the parameters of my double game? I have to scare the Pentagon into thinking that we might shoot their future budget ducks right out of the water, when actually, I'm prepared to protect said ducks. But I can't let them know that I'm part of their team already, or Pentagon

won't value us. Anyway, it's academic, Junior. The Hosiery Mill that General Asshole was talking about is already two years behind in translating the gross product we send them from Catheter, and we've only been in existence one year."

He fell asleep. The life in his body seemed to move over into his glass which perambulated further and further out to the side until the weight of his extended arm woke him up.

"Which reminds me," he said. "How are we doing with CLOAKROOM?"

"Mucho cables," I said.

"Where is target now?"

"England."

"From Korea to England?"

"Yessir."

"What's the new cryp?"

"SM/ONION."

Harvey sat up straight for a moment, put down his drink, grunted, reached over his belly to his ankle and raised his pants leg. I saw a sheath knife strapped to his ankle. He unhooked it, opened it, and began to pare his fingernails, all the while looking me over through blood-shot eyes. It had been a couple of weeks since he had put me to squirming in his

presence, but now I could not say if he was friend or foe. He grunted.

"I guess," I said, "SM/ONION may be a way of telling us to keep peeling the layers."

"Fuck that noise." He set down the knife to knock back half of a new martini. "I don't intend to wait another two weeks to discover that this son of a bitch has still another cryptonym. Either he's heavyweight stuff, or somebody's in a total panic of me. I smell VQ/WILDBOAR in the wood-shed."

"Wolfgang?"

"You bet. Do you think Wolfgang could be with ONION in London?" He mused on this long enough to snort. "All right. We're going to tie you in to a couple of effectives in London. Good Company people, I guarantee. Tomorrow morning, you start talking to them. If KU/CLOAKROOM assumes that he can hide in London, he is going to learn what a ream-job is all about."

"Yessir."

"Don't look so unhappy, Hubbard. Hard work never killed an honest intelligence operator."

"Check."

"See me here for breakfast seven o'clock."

With that, he put the knife back in its sheath, picked up his glass and fell asleep. Sound asleep. I could be certain

of this because the hand that held his martini did a
quarter-roll of the wrist and emptied out his drink on the rug.
He began to snore.

-20-

It was close to midnight. I felt as if I had seven hours before the rites of execution would commence. On leaving Giblets, therefore, I made a quick decision not to go to bed, but to find Dix Butler and drink the night through. The first half of this proposition took considerably less time than the second. I soon found Dix in a small club that we had often frequented off the Kurfürstendamm, a place called Die Hintertür. There was a girl in this Back Door who would dance and drink with you, and a lady bartender whom Dix liked. She

had jet-black hair, not an everyday matter in Berlin, even if it was dyed hair, and offered a look of exceptional sophistication for a small bar with one waiter and no agents in sight. I judge it was the luxury of being able to drink without an eye on business that brought Dix here, plus Maria, the lady bartender. He was uncharacteristically polite with her, and did not try any more herculean approach than to ask occasionally if he might see her home, to which she invariably responded with a mysterious smile as a congenial way of saying no. The other girl, Ingrid, had red hair, was available for a dance, or for sitting with you and hearing your troubles, an office nicely complemented most evenings by one or another glum German businessman in from Bremen or Dortmund or Mainz. Dependably, such a fellow would buy Ingrid's time for a couple of hours of slow dancing, perfunctory conversation and heavy silences. She would hold his hand, she would tell stories, and occasionally make him laugh. I was invariably impressed with the balance of supply and demand. Almost never was Ingrid free, but such was the tempo of The Back Door, seldom were two businessmen seeking her company at the same hour.

By now, Ingrid was my pal. We flirted between customers, danced a little--she was encouraging to the idea I might

improve--and alternately practised German and English with each other. Occasionally she would ask, "Du liebst mir?"

"Ja," I would reply. Conversing in a foreign language, it was not difficult to agree that one loved somebody when one did not. In turn, her sharp mouth, primed with all the trade wisdom that love is a gritty condition, spread into a wide and slightly maniacal smile. "Ja," she repeated, and held up her thumb and forefinger an eighth of an inch apart. "Du liebst mir ein bisschen." She had a gutty voice which I enjoyed, for she employed it with surgical precision, laying each German word like a template on my cloudy understanding.

I eventually learned that Ingrid was married, lived with her husband and child plus a few cousins and brothers in her mother's apartment, and wanted to get to the United States. Dix told me as much. "She's looking to hook an American." All the same, I enjoyed her occasional congratulatory kiss when I showed a little rhythm in my dance. Nor would she take remuneration from me. I was described to the German businessmen as her "schatz."

Having become the official sweetheart, Ingrid now informed me that Maria was kept by a rich protector. When I relayed this information to Dix, he promptly gave it back to me with his superior sources of information. "The gent that Maria

returns to every morning," he said, "happens to be a woman. That's why I can't score."

"Why do you try?"

"I'm asking myself."

His restlessness ratcheted up another notch. I was deciding that Die Hintertür was too quiet for him tonight, when the door opened and Freddy and Bunny McCann came in. Freddy, (middle name Phipps, Princeton, '54) was my replacement Downtown, precisely the fellow who had learned my job so quickly, and all because--I sometimes thought--he was nice. He had put himself in my hands. He had trusted me. It is not difficult to instruct when there is no unhappy question about your motives. So I liked him and his manners. He was even taller than me, but weighed somewhat less, and if he had a shortcoming for certain kinds of Company work, it was that he was too obviously an American official.

His wife, however, would be even more visible. She had a mane of beautiful dark hair and the loveliest face. Her eyes were blue. I confess she reminded me of Kittredge.

In any event, they were much too well-suited a couple to impinge on Dix Butler at this hour. I could see by the tentative look on their marital face as they came over to sit with us that they were disappointed by the lackluster air of

the joint, the empty tables, the absence of vice. It was my fault. Freddy had called during the working day to ask if I could recommend a boite for quiet drinking, "a place with a little authentic Berlin mood." After protecting my powers of advocacy by assuring him that no such entity existed--"they're all circuses or morgues"--I had come around to suggesting The Back Door, "where you can, at least, breathe and speak. The lady bartender might be a novelty, and the girl who's available for dances," I was low enough to brag, "pretends to have a crush on me."

"Well, it certainly sounds authentic. We've been cooped up. Bunny's cousin, Bailey Lawrence, is in the Consulate here, and he's just about put us on the banquet list. Solemn stuff. When it comes to vulcanizing a chicken, the Germans are quite our equal."

"The Back Door might amuse you," I said.

"I thought you said it was Die Hintertür."

"It is," I told him, "but they also repeat the name in English. Right on the sign."

I wish that had warned him off. Never did my favorite if dim watering-hole look so third-rate. Nor, given the range of Butler's mood, where was the worst yet to be found?

"What did you say your name was?" Dix asked as soon as Freddie's wife sat down, and repeated, "Bunny Bailey McCann." It was not unlike the way he would say Herrick.

"What does Bunny stand for?" he asked.

"Actually, it's Martita."

"Martita Bailey McCann. A nice name," he said.

"Thank you."

"Good to-and-fro in the consonants."

"Are you a writer?"

"Actually, I'm a poet," Dix said.

"Do you publish?"

"Only in magazines that accept doggerel."

"Oh."

"Oh."

Freddie laughed. I did a bit to join him.

"What are you drinking?" asked Dix.

"Scotch," said Freddie. "Water, side."

"Two Scotches," Dix called out to Maria. "Make it the Scotch from Scotland."

"Thank you," said Freddie. "I suppose they put flavoring in grain alcohol and serve it up if you let them."

"I don't know," said Dix. "I can't drink the stuff. I don't understand Scotch."

"That's an odd remark," said Freddie.

"The liquor we put into ourselves is called spirits. I like to know which spirits I'm putting into myself."

"Terrific," said Fred McCann. "I've used the word all my life, and never thought about it once. Spirits."

"I think about it a lot," said Dix.

"Good for you," said Bunny.

He looked at her. "Actually, I learned about Scotch the other day. In this place. From the bartender over there. Maria. I asked her, 'What is it about guys who drink Scotch?' and she said, 'You do not know?' I said, 'I do not know.' 'Oh,' she said, 'that is not so hard. Guys who drink Scotch have given up.'"

"I suppose the shoe fits," said Freddie McCann after a silence.

"Nonsense, darling," said Bunny, "you never give up. Not if it's something worthwhile." She looked at me. Her eyes were clear. They were lovely eyes and they were asking, "Is this your good friend?"

"Well, I don't know," said Freddie, "that I throw a large amount of weight."

"You're beautiful, Mrs. McCann," said Dix. "Your husband must be lucky."

"Would you believe it if I told you I'm just as lucky?"

"I wouldn't," said Dix, "believe it for a minute."

Freddie laughed. "Hear, hear."

"Here's the Scotch," said Bunny, and drank half of her glass at a gulp. "I think you may as well bring another," she said to the waiter.

"Yes," said Freddie, "another round."

"In fact, I would go so far," said Dix, "as to say that your husband is bloody fortunate."

"I would suggest," said Bunny, "that you shut your trap."

Dix knocked off the rest of his bourbon. We sat in silence.

"Yes, ma'am, you bet," he said into the silence. When no one replied, his unanswered presence began to use up oxygen.

"You bet what?" she said.

He was not about to give up. "I bet," he said, "that you and me could drink those two under the table."

"I would bet the heaviest drinkers in the world come out of Dartmouth," Freddie said. I had to honor him for trying.

"I met one fellow in Hanover at the Princeton-Dartmouth game my sophomore year who used to drink so much that I don't believe he had any mental faculties left, except, that is, for the more basic motor functions. His fraternity brothers used to take

exams for him so he could remain in school and win bets when they got into drinking contests with the other fraternities. I saw him again last year, and he was gone."

"Pal," said Dix, "you've written your letter. Mail it."

Freddie McCann did his best to laugh. I could see he still had some outside hope that Dix might be part of the authentic ambiance in this bar.

"Would you mind if I danced with your wife?" Dix asked.

"I believe it's up to her."

"She'll say no," said Dix.

"You're absolutely right," said Bunny.

"No, fellow, your wife don't want to dance with me. It could become a habit."

"Now, what are you trying to tell me?" said Freddie at last.

"That you're fucking fortunate."

"Enough," I said.

"No, Harry," said Fred, "I can speak for myself."

"I don't hear you very well," said Dix.

"This is becoming a little implausible," said Fred McCann.

"I ask you to remember. There are Germans here. We are supposed to set an example."

"I think your wife has the most gorgeous hair," said Dix, and he ran his hand, not quickly, but not so slowly that she could react in time, from her brow to the nape of her neck.

I stood up. "All right," I said, "you can apologize. To my friends." It is odd, but at that moment, there seemed no physical punishment I might have to suffer which could prove equal to watching Dix Butler beat Fred McCann half to death.

Dix stared at me. He stood up and a body-wave of heat came off him. It altered the light in the room. At that moment, I would have testified to the existence of the human aura. His was three shades of red. With all I had been taught about hand-combat in the last year, there was, right now, so little I knew in comparison to him. If he decided to hit me, he would. The only question was whether he would. If we die in violence, does a demon come to greet us in the same red light?

Now--and I may as well testify to this as well--the light ebbed to green, a dull and burned-out green. The air felt scorched. I heard a voice stirring in Butler's throat before speech came out. "Are you telling me that I have been out of line?"

"Yes."

"And owe your friends an apology?"

"Yes."

"Tell it to me again," he said.

I hardly knew if this were a challenge, or a request to save him some fraction of face. "Dix, I think you owe my friends an apology," I said.

He turned to them. "I'm sorry," he stated. "I beg the pardon of Mr. and Mrs. McCann. I was out of line."

"It's all right," said Fred.

"Grievously out of line," he said.

"It's accepted," said Bunny Bailey McCann.

He nodded. I thought he was going to salute. Then he grabbed me by the arm. "Let's get out of here." He called to Maria, "Put their drinks on my tab," and propelled me toward the door. I had a last clipped vision of Ingrid looking at me with wise and tender concern.

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I cannot count how many alleys we traversed. The ghosts of long-gone buildings rose out of every bombed-out plot. Here and there, was a light in a window. On some schoolboy year, I might have brooded, with adolescent melancholy, on the life to be revealed in each such room. A couple fighting, a child ill, a man and a woman making love, but now in this hooded city of sewers and empty spaces, where intelligence was forever for sale, I saw instead behind each illumined window shade, an agent in transaction with another agent, BND with SSD, SSD with

and opened the door to a passageway on the other side of the arched tunnel. The doorman did not look happy to see Butler. We walked down some stairs to an empty cellar room, crossed it, opened another door and were in a bar. It was the way I had envisioned it would be if I ever got into night combat. You might be running across a dark field and then all the world would come to light at once. Men in every kind of costume were walking around. Some were flushed, some were pale, and many were sweating profusely. More than half were stripped to the waist, and a few were walking around in a jock strap and boots. The odor of ammonia was everywhere, harsh, sour, and fierce as disinfectant. I thought a bottle of lysol had broken but the smell had too many properties of the flesh. The odor, I realized, was urine. The presence of urine prevailed. It stood in puddles on the floor and in a gutter at the end of the bar. Beyond was a wooden rack, and two naked men about five feet apart were pinioned there. A fat German in an undershirt, his pants hanging low by his suspenders, his fly open, was urinating over one of the men. It was a long urination. The man in the undershirt had a cigar in his mouth, and a half-gallon of beer in one hand, his penis in the other. The flush of a heavenly sunset was on his face. He urinated upon the body and face of the fellow at one end of the rack as if he

were watering every flower in the garden. Then he stepped back to give a little bow to the sounds of approval from those who watched. Two other men came forward, each to urinate in concert on the other naked man. I could not cease looking at the two humans harnessed to that frame. The first was a wretch, ugly, scrawny, and craven. He winced as the fat man pissed on him, he shivered, he trembled, he closed his mouth and ground his teeth as his lips were deluged, but then, doomed to betray himself, he suddenly gaped his mouth wide, drank, sputtered, choked, began to sob, began to snicker, and to my horror aroused a stirring of cruelty in myself as if he were supposed to be there for urinating upon.

His partner, equally in bonds, did not look like a wretch, but a creature. Caught in the crossed streams of two dark intent young Germans who appeared to be sharing one black leather costume (since the first wore nothing but the jacket, and the second, the pants) this other naked figure was blond and blue-eyed, with a rose-bud mouth and a deep cleft in his chin. His skin was so white his ankles and wrists chafed in his bonds. He gazed at the ceiling. He seemed delivered from all the people who pissed on him. I felt as if he lived in that place where humiliation has ceased to exist. Something of the tender concern Ingrid had bestowed in her last look on me

now came forward into my drunken stirrings. I wished to wipe this young man off and set him free, or at least I had such thoughts until I came back to myself long enough to recognize that this cellar existed--it actually did exist! I was not alone in some theater of my mind. In the next moment, I was full of the panic to flee. I felt as if I must, absolutely must, decamp from here, and immediately, but even as I looked for Dix, he came into view beside the male couple who formed the complimentary halves of the one black leather outfit, moved them two feet to the side by the fact of his presence, unzipped his fly, and urinated on the blond boy's thighs and calves without spleen or lust, perfunctorily, like a bored priest whose fingers have ceased to feel the immanence of the holy water; then, Dix's presence intimidating the German couple to put up their waters altogether, he now bent forward, watchful that neither his body nor his clothing touch the blond boy, and whispered in his ear, inclined his own to hear the reply, and when there was none, the creature still off in some rapture of the pits, Dix slapped him professionally, once, then twice, repeated his question, and when there was still no answer, said, "Next time I'll fry your ass, Wolfgang," and stepped away, walking like a show horse between the puddles, hitched a

thumb at me, and we departed. "Damned drug-assed bastard," he said as we hit the air. "Totally senseless tonight."

"You know him?" I asked.

"Of course. He's my agent." Some part of me was ready to ask more questions, but I could not go on. I felt as if I had taken a bad fall.

"I don't believe what I saw," came out in a hoarse little croak.

He began to laugh. His mirth echoed in the small canyon of the alley, the back of six story buildings close upon us from either side. We debouched into a street, and his laughter went caterwauling away from him on the wind. "The people I'm associated with," he said aloud, but if I thought he was referring to the cellar bar, his next few words removed the error. "Are we supposed to conquer the Russians with personnel like you and McCann?"

"I'm not a street man," I said. His last speech hurt, however.

"That's where the war is fought."

"Yes. In that bar."

"Our agents are queer. Half of them are queer. It comes with the profession."

"Do you pretend you're one of them?" I found the courage to say.

"I use them," he told me shortly. We did not talk for a while. We walked. When he spoke again, he had come back to the subject. "I don't think you received my point, Herrick," he said. "Agents lead a double life. Homosexuals lead a double life. Ergo"--had he picked up ergo from me?--"agents are often homosexual."

"How about men who cheat on their wives?"

"Ditto."

"I would judge that homosexuals are just a small part of it."

"You would judge," he jeered. "You choose to believe what you want to believe."

"What are you telling me?" No blow taken in boxing at the Farm had left me as numb in so many junctions of the mind. I needed a drink, but not to relax, rather to return to myself again. I was chilled in my mind, chilled in my heart, and not without the beginnings of some lively disturbance below. The nearness of sex to urine and feces seemed a monstrosity, as if some mongoloid of the devil had been there at the Creation dictating nether anatomy. The smell of drains, prevalent in these nocturnal Berlin streets, was in my nose.

"What are you telling me then?" I repeated. Part of my discomfort kept shifting in me as if we were playing at musical chairs and one of my better views of myself had just lost his seat.

He stopped at a door, took out a key, let himself into a small walk-up apartment building. I did not care to follow, but I did. I knew where we were. It was one of C.G. Harvey's safehouses.

Once inside, installed in our chairs, holding glasses of bourbon neat, he looked at me and rubbed his face. He did this slowly and carefully for several minutes as if domiciling his temper.

"I've never talked to you," he said.

"You haven't?"

"I've merely offered sides of myself."

I made no reply. I drank. It was as if I were starting to drink all over again. The liquor set loose a coil of thought in me, and I began to ponder the creature named Wolfgang whom Butler had promised to fry. Was Wolfgang, beatific Wolfgang, the same fellow known as Franz? Described by Mr. Harvey, he had been slim and dark. Of course, hair could be dyed.

"One difference between you and me," said Butler, "is that I understand our profession. You have to be able to turn yourself inside out."

"I am aware of that," I said.

"You may be aware of it, but you cannot do it. You get stuck in the middle. Your asshole is tight."

"I believe I'm ready to drink up and leave."

"Your asshole is tight," repeated Butler. He began to laugh. Of all the times I had heard him laugh tonight, none sounded so full of warring parties to his own balance.

"They're crazy in this fucking Company," he said. "They give a polygraph test to all of us. 'Are you homosexual?' they ask. I never met a closet homosexual who couldn't lie to a polygraph. I'll tell you what they need in this Company. An initiation rite. Every Junior Officer Trainee ought to be ordered to pull down his pants on graduation day. Get his asshole reamed by a wise superior. What do you think of such a thesis?"

"I don't believe you would submit to it yourself," I said.

"I've had my initiation. I told you. My big brother used to cornhole me. From the time I was ten, till I was fourteen. Then I knocked him down, and he stopped. That's what they mean by white trash, Herrick. Now, I do not believe there is any

man in the Company who could stick it up me against my will.

No one has the physical force."

"What if they had a gun?"

"I would die first." He smiled at me. "All the same, taking it up the ass, out of one's own free God-given choice, may be another matter. Call it the next thing to Yoga. Frees the associations. Readies you for the street."

"Maybe I'll never be ready for the street," I said.

"You dumb smug superior son of a bitch," he said. "What if I were to push your face into the carpet, and manhandle your cherry pants off your cherry ass? Do you think I'm strong enough?"

It was not routine to speak. "I think you're strong enough," I said, and my voice was weak in my ear, "but you don't want to."

"Why?"

"Because I might kill you."

"With what?"

I was silent.

"With what?"

"With whatever it took."

"How long," asked Butler, "would I have to wait?"

"Till whenever. Till I would do it."

"Do you know, I think you would."

I nodded. I could not speak. Too much fear was in me. It was as if I had in fact committed murder and did not know how to escape.

"Yes," he said. "You could shoot me in the back afterward." He pondered this. "Or even in the front. I'll say that for you. You might shoot me if I took away the only thing that is yours. The poor little cherry in your asshole. If you had anything more to hold on to, you might not be so desperate."

His words were painful. It was as if I heard them from my father. I wanted to explain that I might be better than that. I believed in honor, I wanted to tell him. Certain kinds of honor could not be lost without being obliged to terminate oneself, or to consecrate oneself--no matter how unsuited and unprepared--to a life of revenge. I knew, however, that I could not express this aloud. The words would never survive in open air.

"Well," he said, "maybe old Dix is not going to go in for breaking and entry. Maybe old Dix is wrong and ought to apologize." He weighed this. He weighed his glass. "I was wrong," he said. "I apologize. I apologize for the second time tonight."

But he looked as intent and full of ungovernable tension as ever. He took a long swallow of his bourbon. I took a short one of mine, happy for its heat.

Now, Butler stood up. He undid his belt buckle, opened his pants, and stepped out of them. Then he dropped his jockey shorts. He was swollen, but without an erection. "There's two kinds of sexual behavior between men," he said. "Compulsion and mutual regard. The second can't exist until the first is attempted. So I attempted to frighten you into putting out for me. But that wouldn't work. You made me realize it. Now, I can respect you. Come," he said, and he reached forward and took my hand, "take off your clothes. We'll do some good things to each other."

When I did not move, he said, "You don't trust me, do you?" In answer to my silence, he smiled. "In that case, let me be the first," he said, and he bent over nimbly, put his fingertips to the floor and then his knees, and raised his powerful buttocks to me. "Come on, fuck-head," he said, "this is your chance. Hit it big. Come in me, before I come back in you." And when I still did not move, he added, "Goddamnit, I need it tonight. I need it bad, Harry, and I love you."

"I love you too, Dix," I said, "but I can't."

The worst of it was that I could. An erection had risen out of I know not what, from puddles of urine on a cellar floor and a fat German slobbering his beer, from the buried loves of my life, from bonds of family and friends and all the muffled dreams of Kittredge, from naked-ass locker rooms packed into the constrictions of my memory, and the recollection of St. Matthew's Arnold, except here were no fat sweet buttocks, but two clumps of powered meat belonging to my hero who wanted me up his ass, yes, I had an erection. He was right. It was my chance to hit it big. I could steal something of his strength. And knew that if I did, I might live forever on this side of sex. For whichever was Alpha, wherever was Omega, I would consign myself forever. Maybe he was right. I did not possess enough to live in such a way. He did. He could leap from woman to man to woman, on top, on bottom, or hang from his heels. He was an animal, a pagan, an explorer of caverns and columns, and I happened to be the piece of human work he wanted inside himself tonight. For what, I hardly knew. Was it a fiber from the spine of New England itself? Something he had missed? I felt for him. I walked around in front, knelt, kissed him once on the mouth, stood up quickly, stepped to the door, unhooked the chain, and felt an obligation to turn around

and look at him one more time, as if in salute. He looked back at me and nodded. He was sitting on the floor.

Out in the street, wind flayed the cheeks of my face. I walked along quickly. I knew I had not gotten out unscathed. "I love you, Dix," were the words that would come back to me, and I writhed at the squalid echo they would soon acquire.

Was Die Hintertür["] still open? Instinct took me there. The unfamiliar sensation of stalking the night streets with a full erection may have been my vector. An empty taxi passed, and although I had need of this walk, on impulse I hailed the cab and thereby arrived at the night club just as the steel shutters were coming down, and Ingrid, small pocketbook held in one of her square hands, short and ratty fur coat on her shoulders, was shivering on the curb in the 4 a.m. winds. Without a tremor of hesitation, and the most perfect smile on her face as if this coincidence of our meeting was but the first note in a romantic symphony whose composer could only be Herr History, she came right into the cab, gave an address, sat back against me, and offered the full seal of her lips to mine. I went all the way back in my mind to the prep school instructor who had glommed me, but this was the night for such recollections to turn in their foundation. I was all over her in the back of the cab and could not stop kissing. "Oh," she

kept saying in some mixture of English and German, "Maybe you love me more than a little," and the repetition of "ein bisschen" (so much like "ambition") kept one small part of me in a state of stand-off amusement, while the rest was taking in the iron-corded fatigue of her legs and shoulders after a night of dancing, absorbing all of her pent energy, good and ill, into my fingers and my hands, and my hot breath. We were necking and petting and gripping and grabbing and nipping one another like two exercise machines set loose upon one another. Since my education into the interstices, locks, and patents of a girdle was only now commencing at the age of twenty-three (Ingrid may have been slim, but she was German--in consequence, she wore a girdle) I was making frantic calculations whether to mount some central attack in the back of this cab, or to countermand the address she had given and take her to my apartment, my bed, and the inevitable waking up in the morning to the hung-over embarrassment of having to stumble through the cover names of my fellow CIA men. Already, I could hear their guarded good morning before the dubious wisdom of bringing in this outside source (female) and sitting her down en famille at the linoleum-covered breakfast table. I was still running such calculations through the decision-mill of my bourbonified brain when we pulled up at the address she had given to the cab

driver and it was an all-night after-hours bar and food-mill in full view of the street, two blocks off the other end of the Kurfürstendamm.

In that place, I quickly received one more education on Berlin and its night life. Half the people in this place were familiar to me. I had seen them in one night club or another over the last week. Now, they were having coffee and American hamburgers, or schnapps, or cognac, or beer, or pig's knuckles and sauerkraut, or apple sauce and potato pancake, or gin and tonic, or coca-cola, or patisserie, or pastrami, or roast duck--a hell of an unlikely place, and brightly lit. I saw again some of the starched businessmen who had been dancing at Remdi's and The Bathtub and the Kelch, their collars wilted now. Prostitutes who were familiar, plus a few of the all-night divorcees like Helga were there, and to my disbelief, nothing less than the fat German I had seen not more than an hour ago whose pants had hung from his suspenders. He was neatly powdered now, having gone, I suppose, to just the kind of all-night barbershop that would complement this all-night emporium of food and drink, and I would not have been surprised if Wolfgang or Dix walked in. Indeed, in the next moment, I saw the wretch. He, too, was bathed and powdered. Dressed in a gray suit and vest, he wore steel-rimmed spectacles, and looked

like a clerk with spavined cheeks and a large appetite: he was devouring a plate of beans.

Ingrid, all the while, was hugging her fur coat and my body as one, proclaiming to everyone who watched that she had bagged an American. Ingrid was also eating an enormous "Grilled American" of Westphalian ham, tomatoes, and muenster cheese. She slogged down a vast mug of beer while I sat beside her in twitchy detumescence, as she unwittingly proceeded to communicate to me in twenty minutes how profoundly one might, over twenty years, come to dislike the eating habits of a mate. Poor Ingrid. She was hard-working, and half-starved, and The Back Door, as she put it to me with a toothsome grin, never allowed their help enough of food and drink to produce more than a goat turd for the other back door. On this night, therefore, in which my sphincter itself had almost been part of the battleground, insight came over me at last: I was in the presence of German humor. Die Hintertür. I got it. A nightclub for assholes.

She finished her meal. We found cabs waiting outside. We took one to another address she gave. It proved to be a cavernous cheap hotel in another bombed-out working class quarter of Templehof, and the night-clerk took an unconscionable time studying my passport and hers, and finally

returned Ingrid's with a muttered German insult I could not catch. I begged her to explain, and in the rise of the self-service elevator which took us up at a creak and a hitch past one plaster-dusted floor after another, she managed to translate. "American whore-bitch fucker" was something like how it went, but if there is a universal hierarchy of consonants and vowels, it certainly sounded worse in German.

It affected her mood. We came to our floor and walked down an echoing cavernous hall. She took the key, whose prominent handle was the size of a small phallus itself, and opened the door to a room as cold and damp as the night outside. The overhead bulb in the ceiling may have offered twenty-five watts. One standing lamp which keened in parallel to the tower of Pisa offered another such bulb, and the bed presented a coverlet the color of entropy. That may be described as not-brown, not-gray, not-green, and it was long enough to wrap around a bolster as heavy as a rolled-up rug.

We started to kiss again, but with less fever, and she shivered. "You have zwei-marken?" she asked. When I found a coin, she put it in a gas-meter, came back to me for matches, lit it, and stood by a fire which came up in a blue whispering flambeau behind artificial logs. I felt the weight of the city. All of Berlin was now contained for me in the image of a

gargoyle straining to move a boulder up a slope--no vast originality at this hour!--and then I embraced her again, and we shivered with that side of our bodies which was not toasted by the fire.

I did not know how to proceed. The girdle seemed more formidable than ever. Sobering up, I was all too near to nothing at all, but my erection, holy prime factor, was intact. It had been waiting for years. I felt as if long-dead Hubbards were gathering about. In this ghostly room, so much more suited for laying out a corpse than lying on a living body, a filament of desire rolled around in me, hot and isolated as a wire in a heating coil. Yet, it must have warmed some minimal ardor in her because now she was kissing me back, and after a moment, with a muted reluctance as grave and stately as a formal procession, we moved the four steps to the bed, and she lay down on the edge of it, gave, presto, a few deft snips and snaps to the yoke of the girdle, unhooked her garters so that each falling stocking inspired one more thin filament of desire, --these unkempt stockings reminiscent of a pornographic daguerrotype circa 1885 which had lain all through my boyhood in some old tin box of my father's up in Maine. Maybe my father had guarded it through his boyhood. One more family boon to put into the effort.

By the light of the twenty-five watt bulbs, I saw revealed, without preliminary, my first vagina. As if I were the one who was now robbing a house and did not wish to tarry, I opened my pants, to which she gave a grunt of pleasure at the readiness of my erection. I, however, taking another look at that repository of female secrets, was tempted to drop to my knees and pay homage until my eyes were sated of their formidable curiosity, but, child of good decorum, I did not really dare to look too long, and was certainly afraid of this vagina's superior relation (what with all its folds and recesses) to secrets of human state I could not even contemplate. Therefore, I placed the head of my cock where I thought it should go, shoved, only to hear another grunt, now of reproach, on which she took me by her hand and guiding me with two deft fingers, put her other hand against my chest as I started to plunge. "No, Harry, verwundbar! I'm sore. Go easy, go easy. You are mein schatz, liebste schatz--soldier-boy." And she opened her brassiere which had a catch at the front I had never thought to look for, and at the sight of those breasts, which were a little depleted, but, all the same, breasts, the first naked ones ever seen so near to me, I plunged, and came back, and plunged again, and had a picture, as I now entered the land of sex (where far-off

universes of the mind will, I suppose, implode) had, yes, a picture of Allen Dulles talking before us on the day of our initiation about a girl on a tennis court. Then I plunged and came back, and plunged again, and realized I was inside a cunt. It was another world. Alpha and Omega were revealed to me, and, at once: Omega would love Ingrid forever--the inside of her belly was one's first station in heaven, but Alpha was offended at the mean auspices--what a foul initiation!--and of the odors of our bodies in this stale cold room. A thin avaricious smell certainly came up from her, single-minded as a cat, weary as some sad putrescence of the sea, but then I was thrown back to Omega again. Once more, the depths of the universe spoke to me from a great and muffled distance.

So I hovered between two such persons of the spirit, half a lover entering the first hypnotism of love, and half an onlooker, doomed forever--or so it felt--to observe myself at love. On I sawed, back and forth.

Soon she was moist, and did not wince each time I plunged, or was it that she winced less? I must have made love at ferocious speed because the powers of displeasure in Alpha were certainly growing--this wretched room and yes, this poor and hungry girl who loved me from the outside first--America first! I moved in two worlds at once, in pleasure, and in lack of

pleasure, and it kept me moving. I did not dare to stop or it could all be gone; then there came a few minutes when the sweat stood on my neck. Given this chill half-heated icebox of a chamber where I stood erect, feet on the floor, while a strange young woman was laid out before me on the bed, no heat increased in my loins. I was lost in the perpetual-motion machine that is the purgatory of desire and I humped and I pumped, words that now had meaning to me, and fucked as beneath a pall, and on and on, until the image of Butler's knotted buttocks came back to me again, and the perpetual motion machine staggered, took a loop, then a leap, and the filaments of heat in me began to revolve and my body to quake with the onset of the irreversible. Pictures of her vagina flickered in my brain next to images of his ass, and I started to come, and continued to come, and to come from the separate halves of me: on the one side, with historic convulsions in my body; from the other, came a pinched glimpse of the heaven of her tunnel, poor sore guarded tunnel, a glimpse nonetheless of the endless fall that may yet be found on our way into the beatitudes.

We shared a cigarette. I was feeling a good bit better now. Achievement was my portion. Gloom might still reside in the outer reaches, but half the world was better than none. I adored Ingrid, and did not feel a thing for her. At the end, I

had been all alone in myself. Now, she nuzzled my nose with her fingertip as if we were newly-weds and she was examining the features to face her in years to come. Then she spoke: Tomorrow at work she would inform Maria, was the sum of her first speech. I understood that Ingrid was filing territorial rights.

"What will you tell her?" I asked. Maria, in secret, was my preference, and it occurred to me that if Ingrid spoke well, perhaps Maria would take another look.

"If she asks, I will say"--and she intoned the next words with special clarity-- "Schwerer Arbeiter, aber süsser," and Ingrid offered a kiss.

It did not seem to me that the mysterious Maria would be particularly intrigued by a hard worker who was sweet.

The dawn was coming at the window. Ingrid would now go back to her husband, to her child, her mother, her brothers and her cousins, and I would have time to change, take a bath, and go to work.

I had no sleep next day. A taxi ride at dawn to drop Ingrid off at the grim seven-story apartment house where she lived, and a continuing trip to my grim six-story apartment, a shower, coffee--I was off to work.

If I had hope that Bill Harvey could have forgotten his last conversation with me, it was dispelled before I filled my coffee mug from the urn; the buzzer rang, and Chief's low voice reverberated in my ear. "Start the London push with these fellows," he said, and furnished me three cover names: Otis,

Carey, Crane. "Approach them in that order. Otis is an old friend. Has the clout to do the job. Carey's a hard worker and will produce. Crane is less experienced but a go-getter."

"Chief, do you want me to put all three on the job?"

"Hell, no. Take the one who is least busy. Tell him it's worth a couple of Brownie points with me." He hung up.

There is no sense in dwelling on how much I needed sleep. All the while Mr. Harvey was speaking, my eyes were fixed on the coffee urn.

Then, began some mind-knotting work. I had by now developed enough sense of Company security to anticipate routine difficulties. If Berlin Base wished to speak to Station in London, or in Paris, or, for that matter, in Japan or Argentina, such telephone traffic had to be routed through the hub in Washington. It was unorthodox to go around the rim.

Exercising a mind that was now painfully aware of how much each step in elucidating a new procedure from our classified manuals was going to cost, still, I took pride in Company wisdom. My exposure to shenanigans of the cellar bar had opened a cautionary vista. What depths there were to deviant behavior! I could see why foreign outposts of the Company were not encouraged to communicate directly with each other. Given the quantity of random evil in the world, communications along

the rim had to be treated as damnably exposed. The enemy, with all his increased opportunities abroad, might gain entrance into our cable or telephone traffic. Far safer, then, to feed all messages into the hub and out again.

In any event, I was soon engaged in the webwork of pre-arranging telephone calls from Berlin to Washington to London, and spent the morning putting in requests to speak at specific times that afternoon on secure phone installations at London Station with Otis, Carey, and Crane.

By early afternoon, I reached cover-name Otis in London.

"What the hell is this," he asked, "and who are you? My boss in pinning donkey-tails on my ass. He thinks I'm looking to transfer to Berlin."

"No, sir, it's not like that at all," I told him. "Big Bozo, Berlin, needs a helping hand in London. On a minor matter."

"If it's minor, why didn't Bill use a fucking pay phone and call me at my apartment?"

I was a little shocked that Harvey's first name was used so freely, but then this was a secure phone. I replied, "The matter, when all is said, may not be minor. We don't know."

"What's your name?"

"Sloate. Charley Sloate."

"Well, Charley boy, tell me, what made Harvey think of me?"

"I don't know, Mr. Otis. He said you were an old friend."

"Bill Harvey doesn't have old friends."

"Yessir."

"Who are you, the flunky?"

"A rose by any other name," I managed to say.

Otis began to chuckle. "Charley-boy," he said, "do me a favor. Walk Bill Harvey's little project around the corner and kick it in the ass for me."

"Yessir."

"I'm going to break a rule of two month's standing, and have a martini before five."

"Yessir."

"Bill Harvey. Jesus!"

He hung up.

While SM/ONION was not going to be found in London in any event, I still had to proselyte Carey or Crane into working on our request, otherwise I could face Base Chief Harvey with a report that I had nothing to report.

I prepared, therefore, to speak to Carey, the man described as able to produce. I told myself that Carey would