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hovered on the edge. "Dix, you are not quite human," he managed to say, and with something like dignity, walked out of the club. Butler shook his head. "Hubbard, I was just treating him like a brother," he said.

"I wouldn't want to be your brother." I said.

"Hell, my older brother used to corn-hole me until I hit him up side of the head with a rock. I was fourteen. What did your older brother do?"

"I only have younger brothers."

"Corn-hole them?" Dix asked.

"No."

"Weren't man enough?"

"My brothers are twins. It's confusing."

He laughed. He clapped me on the back. He had a light in his eye that put perspiration into the palms of my hands. To my surprise, however, he sighed. "Oh, well, Arnie will recover. The question is: What about me? I'm getting too old to be a legend."

I don't know how much of this scene with Butler carried over, but things did go wrong with Rosen on the night we tried to cross the East German border (Camp Peary version). For one thing, it had rained through the day. The woods were muddy, the air swarmed with midges. Our night sky was clouded. We had to proceed by compass alone, a slow procedure prone to error.

We were working on a well-prepared scenario. If there was a climax to training at the Farm, and one course that received superior instructors and good preparation, it was *Escape and Interrogation*. Over the last three weeks, each of the trainees in my group had been given the role of a West German agent infiltrated into East Germany. We had each had to absorb our own West German biography, then add a detailed East German cover story. This second biography we were obliged to memorize even as a West German agent would have had to if he were infiltrating into East Germany. We were, in consequence, prepared to speak of the jobs we had held in East Germany, of family and school history including those of our near relatives killed in the Second World War, and we were supplied with the dates corresponding to major Allied bombing raids on our alleged home town, Männernburg. Rosen and I, re-named Hans

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up a compressed air cartridge in the toilet connected by a wire to their end of the bar. There was a fifteen-minute wait for *in-phase resolution*, but when Rosen finally went to the toilet to take, as he made the mistake of announcing, "an ungodly dump," Trigger flicked the switch. Cartridge went off. Geyser splashed Target clear off the seat. Rosen's clothing was so drenched that he cut back to his barracks for a change of denims. "Surveillance is working at Camp Peary," became Dix's battle cry.

Meanwhile, more bona fide explosions went off on night demolition exercises in the woods, and night parachutists landed, and men with blacking on their faces rushed in, quaffed a beer, rushed out. Years later, on my way to Vietnam, I was invited to a movie set by an old Yale classmate, now a producer, and so was able to watch a battle being filmed. It was a bit of preparation for Vietnam, and it certainly reminded me of the Farm. War consisted of special effects going off from time to time; that was more in the nature of the event than death. "Death is the price you pay for enjoying a real war," one of our more hard-bitten instructors said, and I thought of that on nights when I was having a good time in Saigon.

Now I felt like a kid on one of those endless August evenings when the late fever of summer games keeps one running into the house and slamming the door on the way out. Our surveillance exercise might have been nerve-wracking, humiliating, and just about wholly unsuccessful, but the hysteria peculiar to the work was erupting now. We had, after all, been active in the next thing to an honest-to-God movie. Shadowing a man felt as odd as a dream.

Another victim walked into the bathroom of the Club, sat on the throne, and came out soaking wet. We laughed, and something in that commotion of waters got into the rest of the night. Rosen joined us again in dry clothes. Drunk on beer, he made the mistake of saying to Butler, "That was a crazy thing to do to a buddy. You're lopsided."

"Punk," said Butler, "spread your cheeks. I'll teach you lopsided."

He said it within the hearing of everyone around. Rosen, who usually presented a small but iron face to his persecutors,



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Krüll and Werner Flug for the exercise, had been memorizing hundreds of details over the last few weeks.

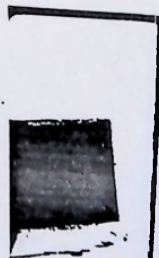
At this point in time—so went the prearranged scenario—our West German principal sent out an alert to us in East Germany: transmissions from our radio were being picked up. We had to make a run for the West German border. The last two miles would traverse an East German wood which happened to correspond to our own Virginia thicket. If we succeeded in getting over the fence unobserved, then our cover stories would not have to be used (although we were still expected to volunteer for an interrogation as if we had been caught—in order not to miss the experience!). Any chance to use this more gracious option, however, was unlikely. We were not expected to make it over the fence. Few did.

I wanted to. I had gathered from Harlot that not only were grades at the Farm put into one's 201 file, but also a five-letter code grouping that had much critical bearing on the future career. While you might have a fair idea of how well you had done at the Farm, the five-letter group could advance or exclude you from exceptional posts. The highest marks, I was just about certain, would be given for getting over the fence: there would be another concealed rating, no doubt, on how well one did in the interrogation.

Rosen and I did not get off to a good start. By the time we reached the ditch adjacent to the East German fence, our fatigues were imbued with a noxious muck. Filthy and unmanned, we had to duck every thirty seconds as a searchlight swept the dirt road and fence in front of us. Every minute or so, a Jeep went by in one direction or the other. During one of these irregular intervals, we were supposed to scramble up the mud-bank, climb the fence, go over the barbed wire at the top, and drop fourteen feet down to the other side. *There*, by the rules of our game, was freedom!

Rosen seemed demoralized. I think he was desperately afraid of the barbed wire. "Harry, I can't do it," he muttered. "I can't make it." He was sufficiently frantic to infect me with his fear.

"You goddamn Kike, get your ass over," I shouted. It was a half-throttled cry, pulled back even as I was saying it, but it was



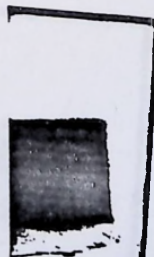


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there between us forever, a small but permanent dent in my view of myself as an essentially decent fellow. The searchlight went by. Sobbing from fatigue, we scrambled up the vile mud bank, hit the fence, started to climb, and were transfixed—also forever—in the glare of the searchlight as it returned, stopped like the angel of death, and rested on us. In but a few seconds, an armed Jeep with two guards drove up, its machine gun trained on our bodies. We had flunked. So, for that matter, would most of the class. Even the Big Ten jocks. The exercise was not designed to make East European agents of us, but to give insight into the kind of horrendous experience some of our future agents might undergo.

Since the guards were wearing East German uniforms, the jeep proved to be the only element in the charade that did not seem authentic. We were manacled and driven at high speed along the border road to a whitewashed cinder-block building. Inside, was an aisle down the middle and a series of windowless interrogation cells on either side, each cell about eight feet square and containing no more than a table, a couple of chairs, and a strong lamp with a reflector that would soon be directed into our eyes. The interrogator spoke English with such an intense German accent that, willy-nilly, one found oneself copying him. I had never seen any of these men at the Farm, and learned only later that they were professional actors on contract work to the Company; this contributed to disrupting one's anticipations; everything was becoming more real than I expected.

Since the interrogators moved from room to room questioning other trainees as they were brought in, one was left by oneself for longer and longer periods. Given the alternation of intense interrogation and glaring white-walled silence, I began to feel a sense of dislocation as the night went on. My cover story felt awkwardly lodged, a mind jammed into my mind. During questioning, the cover story became nearly all of me. I learned that a role could become more vivid to an actor than his own life. Why hadn't I realized how quintessential was preparation? Each detail in my imaginary life upon which I had failed to meditate sufficiently now became an added weight. For I could recall certain details only by an act of will. In contrast, every item I had been able to meditate upon in advance became alive to me. My





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cover story put me in the vocational school at Männernburg near Leipzig right after the Second World War, and I had been able to imagine the pervasive stench that came through the school windows from the rubble of charred humans, dead rats, crumbled stone, and garbage—my voice sounded good to me when I spoke about my studies there.

"What was the name of the school in Männernburg?" my interlocutor asked. He was dressed in a black Volkspolizei uniform and held an impressive sheaf of papers. Since he was also dark in complexion and had a shock of heavy black hair and a dark beard, I found it difficult to think of him as German until I remembered that the Nazi, Rudolf Hess, had also had just such an iron-blue pallor to his shaved cheeks.

"Die Hauptbahnhofschule," I replied, "was my school."

"What did you study there?"

"Railroad trades."

"Graduate?"

"Yessir."

"How did you get to school, Werner?"

"I walked."

"Every day from your home?"

"Yessir."

"Remember the route?"

"Yessir."

"Name the streets you took."

I recited them. Not only was the map clear in my mind but I knew from photographs taken soon after the War how the streets ought to look.

"On your route, Herr Flug, it was obligatory to take the Schönheitweg?"

"Yessir."

"Describe the Schönheitweg."

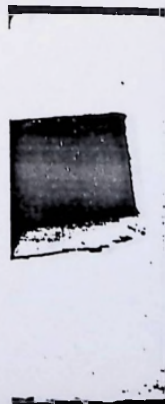
I could see it before me as I spoke. "It was our grand avenue in Männernburg. The Schönheitweg had an island of grass between the two directions of traffic."

"Describe this island."

"It had trees."

"What kind of trees?"

"I do not know the names."



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"Were any of these trees cut down?"

"Yessir."

"Why?"

"I don't know," I said.

"How many traffic lights on the Schönheitweg?"

"Maybe two."

"Two?"

"Yessir, two."

"Near which traffic light did they cut the trees?"

"The second light on my way to school."

"In which year did they cut down the trees?"

"I don't remember."

"Think, Werner, think."

"Before I graduated in 1949."

"You are saying they cut down the trees in 1947 or 1948?"

"Probably."

"Do you recognize this picture?"

"Yes. It is of the intersection at the second traffic light on the Schönheitweg. Before they cut down the trees."

He pointed to a building near the intersection. "Do you remember this?"

"Yessir. Postwar. The Männernburghof. A new government building."

"When did it go up?"

"I don't know."

"You don't remember the construction?"

"No, sir."

"You passed every day on your way to school, but you don't remember the construction of the only new government edifice in your town?"

"No, sir."

"But you saw it every day on your way to school?"

"Yes, sir."

"Was 1949 your last year at school?"

"Yessir."

"In 1949, the Männernburghof had not yet been constructed."

"It hadn't?"

"No, Werner."

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"I am confused."

"It was erected in 1951. And the trees were cut down in 1952."

I was in a panic. Was the memory I had developed for my East German biography at fault, or was the interrogator lying to me?

He now inquired about my work in the railroad yards. Again, I was presented with small but definite discrepancies in the names and faces I had memorized: a locomotive repair shop to which I had been sent as clean-up man was located not at the east but the south end of the yards, and when I insisted it had to be in the east because I could remember the sun coming up in the morning, my interrogator left me alone for half an hour before coming back to ask the same question again.

Fortified by every photograph I had studied, I formed a picture of the town of Männernburg in my mind, but it was incomplete. As in a painting by Larry Rivers—whose work, after this interrogation, never failed to fascinate me—there were blank spaces to my Männernburg. As the hours of questioning went by, edges began to blur.

"Why were you climbing the border fence, Werner Flug?"

"I did not know it was the border."

"Despite the barbed wire at the top?"

"I thought I was in a government park. Me and my partner were lost."

"You were in a forbidden area. Did you know that?"

"No, sir."

"Männernburg is only five kilometers east of the border."

"Yessir."

"You are aware of that?"

"Yessir."

"Yet you walk through the woods that lie to the west of Männernburg and are surprised to find a fence."

"Me and my partner thought we were walking to the east, not the west."

"Werner, you were found with a compass on your person. You were not lost. You knew if you could climb the fence, you would be in West Germany."

"No, sir."



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"Where would you be?"

"It was a prank, sir. We bet each other who would be the first to get over."

"You are a stupid fellow. Your story is sickening." He stood up and went out.

In chess, if one studies openings carefully enough, one can play on equal terms with a far superior opponent for the first eight or ten or twelve moves, for as long, that is, as the opening has been analyzed. After that, one is, as they say in chess, "out of the book."

I was out of the book. I had an acquired background and an acquired biography, but I did not have a good explanation of why I had tried to climb the border fence in the middle of the night.

My interlocutor came back, and began to question me as if our first colloquy had not taken place. Once more I was asked which year the trees were cut down on Der Schönheitweg. Again, I was interrogated on my claim that the railroad foundry was in the east yard. Each of my errors began to seem larger. I do not know if the act of confirming false details was responsible, but I began to feel as if his questions were related to a dentist's drill, and soon the nerve would be touched. To my horror, I began to contradict myself. Now I tried to claim that I must have blundered by error into West Germany. I must have gone across a portion of the border that had—could it be?—no fence, then had wandered through the woods wanting to return to East Germany, and so had climbed the fence on the Western side, and was descending on the East German side in order to go back to work in the morning like a good citizen of the German Democratic Republic "just when the soldiers found us."

"Your sweat stinks with your lies. When I come back, Flug, I want the truth or I will give you a couple of hot ones." He was holding a rubber truncheon, and he slapped it against the table. Then he left.

Outside my eight-by-eight-foot white cement-block room, a prison din was building. The interview cells along the corridor had filled, and the most curious condition began to prevail. I do not know if the tempo of these interrogations was accelerating in anticipation of the arrival of the dawn we could not see





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through the windowless walls, but even as my questioner left me with the suggestion of dire remedies, so did I become more aware of cries from other cells.

One captive was cursing audibly, "I don't know, I don't know. You've got me deranged," he shouted. Another was whispering, but so loudly I could hear: "I am innocent. You have to believe I am innocent," and from the farthest room down the corridor, one of the policemen was whipping his truncheon against the table. "No more, no more," someone cried out.

Then I heard Rosen. "This is outrageous," he was saying in a clear voice. "I do not care what my partner claims. You have confused him and terrified him. We only climbed the fence to be able to see the lights of Männergburg and thereby find our way back. That is my story. You may have shaken my partner, but you do not faze me. You cannot intimidate me with threats of violence. Never!"

The *thwap* came back from the cell at the far end of the corridor.

"Confess," said Rosen's interrogator. "You are not a citizen of the German Democratic Republic."

"I am Hans Krüll," said Rosen, "born in Männergburg."

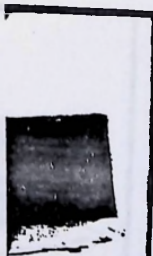
"You are a piece of filth. Tell the truth or we will use the filth that comes out of you to stuff your nose. Why did you try to climb the fence?"

"I am Hans Krüll," Rosen repeated.

Now two truncheons were being used, one at each end of the corridor.

My sense of reality had not disappeared, but it was frayed. We were in Camp Peary, not East Germany, but I did not feel safe. Even as a casual vacation trip can remind one that death, too, is a journey, so did I now feel as if insanity did not exist across the sea from reality, but could be visited on foot. It was down the road.

My ears had never seemed more acute. I could hear Rosen arguing in his irritating, supercilious, nasal whine. Yet I could also hear his enormously developed sense of self-importance, ugly as gross riches, but nonetheless his kind of strength. "You are trying to throw me off the track," he was saying, "and it will not work. I submit my case to the legal guarantees substantiated



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by Order of Law 1378, Division Three, Chapter B, in the new Constitution of the German Democratic Republic. Look it up. It is there. My rights are being transgressed."

Yes, he had risen to the occasion! What a diversion! Now the interrogator was out of *his* book! Later I would learn that Rosen, in preparation, had gone to the Farm library three nights earlier to study the new Constitution of East Germany, thereby picking up enough to offer this exceptional gambit.

My interlocutor came back. Again, he began to question me from the beginning. I was led from detail to detail about the year the trees were cut down on Der Schönheitweg. Again, we passed through the railroad foundry and the aborted climb of the chain-link fence.

"It was because we were lost," I said, "and I wished to look for the lights of Männernburg."

"Your partner has told that story already. We have disproved it."

"I am telling the truth."

"Earlier you claimed that you did not know it was the border."

"I knew it was the border."

"You lied to me before?"

"Yessir."

"Why?"

"I was frightened."

"You claim you blundered into West Germany through an unfenced portion of the woods, and were now climbing back into East Germany."

"Also a lie."

"And now you are climbing the fence to look for the lights of Männernburg?"

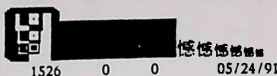
"That is the truth."

"You have confessed to lying, but now you tell the truth?"

"Yessir."

"In fact, you are a liar, and an agent of the West German government."

A siren went off. It resounded through the corridors and cells of the building. My interrogator gathered his papers and sighed.



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"It's over," he said.

"It is over?"

"I wish I'd had another fifteen minutes." He looked angry. Indeed, he still looked like a policeman.

"Well, it's been weird," I said.

"You did all right," he said.

"I did? How do you know?"

"I could kill you. When you make me feel like a cop, you've been good."

I stood up.

"Yeah, you can go," he said. "There's a truck to pick you up."

"I think I'll walk back to camp. Is that okay?"

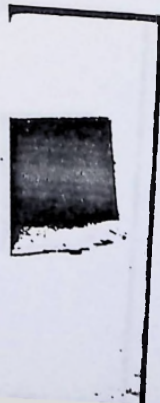
"Sure. You've got the day off now."

"I think I need the walk."

"You bet."

We shook hands.

I did the two miles back to the parade ground and the barracks. New trainees were taking their first jumps through the mock-up of the C-47 door on the thirty-eight-foot tower. In another six hours my training would be over and I would go back to Washington to work in the I-J-K-L by the Reflecting Pool; then, presumably, I would be assigned overseas. As I made my way to the cafeteria for breakfast, I felt an epiphany near. I had passed through a dark wood full of midges and ticks, was captured in fatigues filthy with the slime of a border ditch, my fingers raw and newly scabbed from the chain-link fence, my eyes aching from the glare of the reflector lamp in an eight-by-eight-foot cell, and I had told lies all night in the face of prodigies of attack on a contrived memory, yet I felt clean and full of the virtue that greets one at the end of a rite of passage. It had been the most exciting eight hours I had spent in CIA; I had never been so happy. Something in these hours of interrogation confirmed my training. I had found the realm where I could spend my working life. To labor every day for the security of my country appealed to every breath that was deeded over to one's sense of the responsible and the appropriate. As for the other side of me, not yet worldly enough to go seeking for spiritual explorations and carnal adventures, it could be fascinated all the





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same by the arts of deception and the war against evil. It was certainly intrigued with games and the no-man's-land of those who were ready to play such games. So it was also in accord. I had my epiphany. Happiness was that resonance one knows in the heart when the ends of oneself come to concordance in the morning air.

11 | The canal house purchased by Hugh Montague after his wedding to Kittredge was situated on the bank of the old Chesapeake and Ohio Canal that passes through Georgetown. This waterway, if I recall correctly, was a thriving artery in 1825, floating down its fair load of coal from Appalachia to the Potomac, the barges then towed back with a cargo of such assorted sundries as flour, gunpowder, bolts of cloth, and axes. After the Civil War, however, the canal could no longer compete with the railroads. The mills on the river banks had long been empty, the locks were still, and the canal bed was a trickle.

Hugh's house, built as a stable for tow mules, was also graced with a second-floor loft where bargemen could sleep in the hay. The little building, already renovated by successive owners when the Montagues purchased it, had something like seven or eight rooms, and had become a modest but charming house for those who could abide child-sized chambers and low ceilings. One would have assumed that Hugh and Kittredge were too tall for the place, but the canal house revealed a side of them I might not otherwise have perceived. The nature of their separate professional tasks had this much in common: their labors were often lonely, and rarely void of anxiety. So they tucked themselves into their canal house which they called—no





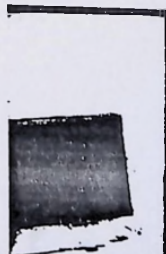
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great surprise—the Stable, and if there was a century-old efflu-
vium of straw and mule-balls embedded in the floorboards, why,
the better. Coziness was their connubial marrow. Since they
were both, as I soon discovered, tough with a dollar, I think it
helped that their little find had cost but \$10,000. (Late in 1981,
in a stroll one afternoon in Georgetown, I discovered that the
house sold by them in 1964, and several times again by subse-
quent owners, was now up to nothing less than an asking price
of \$250,000. That had to inspire some sour reflections on the
changes in our American republic these thirty years.)

It also provided a half hour of melancholy. The Stable came
back to my memory as it used to be in 1955.

I used to love their small living room, small dining room,
and very small study for Hugh. In those former mule mangers,
Kittredge showed something of her father's inclination for col-
lecting antiques. Given a childhood in Boston and Cambridge,
she had to perceive Washington as a Southern city. Why, then,
not look for rare originals by colonial cabinetmakers from Vir-
ginia and the Carolinas? Listening to her speak of her acquisi-
tions, I became half-familiar with names I had never
encountered before, and was not to meet often again: such
colonial artisans as Thomas Affleck, Aaron Chapin, John Pimm,
Job Townsend, Thomas Elfe went in and out of her conversation
until I did not know who had designed what, nor from where.
I could hardly be concerned whether her cherrywood dining
table and handwrought chairs with doe feet (which were, indeed,
touchingly carved), her poplar sugar chest, her planter's table,
her candlestand, were choice samples from North or South Car-
olina. It was enough that they had pedigree. Like show dogs,
these pieces were not the same as other beasts. In the dining
room on a panel between the mantle and the fireplace was a
scene, neatly painted, of woods and houses and the canal; whis-
key taken by the fire, then fortified with her pate, could taste
awfully good.

Harlot's study was another matter. Kittredge had furnished
it to his choice, and I, feeling a pang at how well she understood
his desires, suffered sentiments of disloyalty to Hugh in the
midst of all my honest feelings. Since there were no two people
I cared for more, I had an insight into the true attraction of





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treachery. It felt as bright as a spring leaf. Treachery helps to keep the soul alive—a most awful thought! What if it is true?

Harlot's study consisted of not much more than a massive dark oak desk and a leviathan of a chair. Victorian furniture, circa 1850, obviously satisfied Harlot's idea of a companionable style. A taste for the substantial gave solemnity, Harlot would explain, to the subterranean and lewd endeavors of the period. That is a large thought for one piece of furniture, but his grand seat was of mahogany and nearly five feet tall. The top of the chair-back was framed by a gothic arch full of quatrefoil fret-work. When you consider that this chair-back had been added to a sturdy Chippendale design for the arms, seat, and legs, the result was as baroque as a cathedral rising from an English manor.

The other rooms I never saw. Let me correct myself. The kitchen was an old pantry off the dining room with its share of cast-iron pots and trivets, and I was in there often, chatting with Kittredge while she cooked for the three of us, but Harlot had an upstairs library I was never asked to enter, and they had two or three bedrooms where the loft used to be. I was not invited to stay over. Perhaps they had a finely honed householder's fear that if I achieved entrance upstairs, I might work up some way to live with them.

What evenings we had! While I never went over without telephoning first, and there were more than a few nights when they were out, or had company they did not choose to have me meet, I still encountered an odd collection of people at their small dinners. (Indeed, I was too young to know how curious and mutually unsuited some of their dinner guests were.) The columnist, Joseph Alsop for one, proved to be overpoweringly patriotic, even for me, and I must say he breathed heavily whenever military or Company matters were discussed. The thought of young American men in such pursuits was obviously moving to him. Alsop also proved prodigious in his snobbery. I was paid no attention until he discovered that Boardman Hubbard was my father, and then Alsop asked me to dinner, an invitation which I, suddenly acting much like Cal, took pleasure to refuse.

Actually, I was lonely on those evenings when I did not have a welcome at the Stable. Graduated from the Farm, I had been



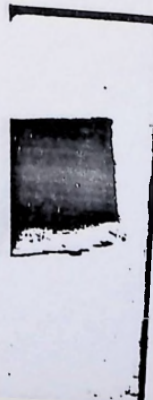
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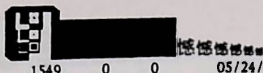
bunking with four other Junior Officer Trainees in a furnished apartment in Washington. One or another roommate was invariably preempting the living room in an attempt to seduce his date, usually a secretary from the I-J-K-L, and I, looking to think a few things through, took long walks at night.

No wonder, then, if invitations to the Stable meant much to me. I felt not unlike an unemployed curator who, once or twice a week, is permitted to visit the museum's private collection. There was no doubt Harlot knew extraordinary people. Since many of them had to do with OSS, I never judged by appearances. One hard-looking man with a limp and an off-accent who talked about horses all night turned out to have been one of the guerrilla leaders of the Chetniks—the Mikhailovitch group that lost to Tito. I was impressed with his Balkan manners. When he toasted Kittredge—which he did frequently—he not only raised his glass but curved his knee, as if the good leg were a bow and he was flexing it. Another guest was a formidable old lady with a grand manner, porcelain blue eyes and white hair, a half-Bavarian, half-Italian countess who had run an underground safe house in Rome for Jews during the Occupation.

Twice Kittredge had a girl there for me, each the younger sister of Radcliffe classmates, and both young ladies proved no better than I at petting on a couch somewhat later that night in my crowded apartment. We got awfully drunk to do it, and roommates would come through the door or go out, and my romances were without wings. I was becoming seriously concerned about the intensity of my sexual dreams compared to the lukewarm manifestations of it I was able to offer the dating world.

One evening the Montagues had a guest who most certainly brought out the best in Harlot. Given the size of the dining table, they never sat down to more than six, and this night we were four, but it looked like five. Their guest was a red-faced British general six feet seven inches tall, of magnificent bearing, with four rows of ribbons six inches wide on his chest, and he sat at his quarter of the table and drank all night and nodded wisely to all Harlot said. It seemed he had been in the SOE, and served on sister missions with the OSS, parachuting into France with Harlot. After which they became, as he put it, "good fellow





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sots" in London. Since the General contributed no more than his immaculate and immense presence, his lineage—which went back eleven hundred years—his title, Lord Robert, and his remarkably impressive uniform which he wore, he murmured, "in Kittredge's honor," conversation was left to Harlot. He did not flag. I had never known anyone to speak as well on so many matters; if Harlot had a conversational vice, it was his preference for monologue. Sir Robert suited him. "What," the General asked, after listening to other matters for a half hour, "is the history of this place? Looks quaint. What do you call it? *Georgetown*? Has to've been named after one of the kings, hope not the Third." That was Lord Robert's longest speech of the night. Harlot reimbursed his guest with a disquisition on Georgetown after the war—the Civil War. "Nothing but camps and government corrals and a few bone factories. An awful lot of the horse-meat put into tins for the Union troops was processed just a few streets down. You can still smell dead animals in the fog."

"Hugh, you can't," said Kittredge.

"Darling, I can sniff them out," said Hugh, the reflections on his eyeglasses dancing from the candle light.

"It must have been an awful place for a little while," admitted Kittredge. "Full of diphtheria and brothels."

I had the distinct impression that Lord Robert perked up. Dead horses one hundred years gone might not waken much appetite, but old brothels did!

"All the same, it was a thriving work town," said Hugh, "full of flouring mills and corn mills, and hammers hitting the adze in the cooper's shops, a good sound."

"Good," agreed Sir Robert.

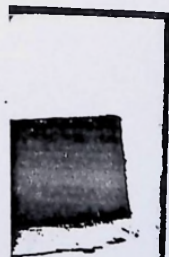
"Saws and planing machines," Hugh went on, "anvils ding-ing away. Such stuff. On a still night, I can hear echoes. Raucous bars. Canalmen fighting. A few of those taverns have made it all the way down to our time, and boys like Herrick, who work in the government, go to drink there now."

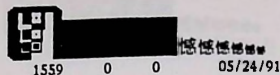
"What did you say your name was?" asked Lord Robert.

"Herrick Hubbard, sir."

"His father is Cal Hubbard," said Harlot.

"Yes, a man of very strong opinions, your father," said Lord Robert, as if mental life on his own promontory six feet seven





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inches high, offered few people who would voice their opinions up to him.

"Hugh has got it wrong," Kittredge said. "Georgetown used to be, for the most part, a darling place. The houses had porticoes and gabled dormers. Slathers of gingerbread in the eaves."

"Kittredge, you miss the essence," said her husband.

"Do I?"

Two spots of anger showed in her cheeks, an unhappy color. It was the first time I had seen her looking harsh. It gave me a sense of the reason they did not invite me to sleep over: they would need the space to raise their voices.

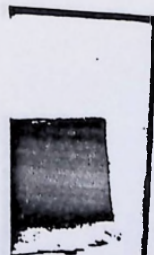
Hugh, however, was not about to go to war with the General and myself as linesman and judge. "She's right," he said, "so am I. We happen to be talking about opposite ends of the town."

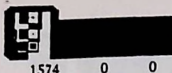
"Never knew a place that didn't have its up street and its down," Lord Robert said.

"Yes. Funny story. I was reading about Georgetown last night in a local history." Hugh began to laugh. His mirth was powerful enough to suggest that a good deal of anger had just been packed away. "Quotes a newspaper account from 1871. A resident of this town, Thaddeus Atwater, walking down Q Street one March morning, slips on the ice. His cane flies out of his hand and hits a hog strolling by"—a look at Kittredge who put her tongue out at him and took it back so quickly, that the General, if he had seen it, might have thought his eyes were up to tricks—"whereupon the injured pig roars like a bull and bolts into the nearest open cellar door. That happens to be a carpenter shop with shavings on the floor. It's filthy dark down there, and they've set a candle on a stand which, of course, the beast knocks over into the shavings and so starts one hell of a fire. Enter Red Hat . . ."

"Red Hat?" inquired Lord Robert.

"The local firehorse. A giant steed. Red Hat is pulling the Henry Addison fire wagon in unison with his mate, Dora Girl. The firemen drop hose into an adjacent brook, begin to pump, and manage to quench the fire, although they are all the while slopping so much water over Q Street that it soon becomes a frozen pond. By evening, the townspeople are out to try their





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ice skates. I enjoy that period," said Harlot.

"Yes," I said, "I guess events had more influence on other events, then."

"Yes," he said, "you're not a dull boy, are you? You see the metamorphoses."

"Just so, metamorphoses," Lord Robert remarked. He seemed to be coming out of the trance Hugh's story had left him in. "Do you know, there's talk of sending Philby to Beirut. Going to give him a journalist's job."

"Oh, no," said Harlot. "It'll play like hell over here. Do your best to stop it. It's hard enough to keep the FBI off MI6, without your people giving Philby a plum."

"Be bad for you personally, won't it?"

"No," replied Harlot, "all is forgiven."

"Hope so. I used to think it was your Waterloo."

"Not at all," said Kittredge. "They need Hugh much too much."

"Good to hear that."

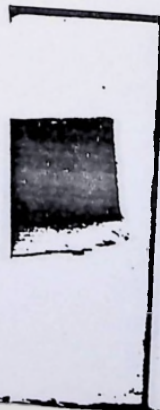
"The mark of a great man, is that his mistakes are also great," Kittredge declared.

"Well, damn Philby, I say," said Lord Robert. "Let's drink to his damnation."

"To Philby," answered Harlot, holding high his glass. "Damn him for eternity."

I had no idea what they were talking about. Yet its importance permeated the room. The shadow of things unsaid was on our evening. Once again I was content with my profession and the mysteries it would yet disclose. Philby. I was even stirred by the way they said his name; they could as well have been speaking of an old fort where drear losses had been taken.

One night there was a small gentleman at dinner named Dr. Schneider who, I was informed, had achieved some recognition in Europe as a concert pianist. He remained determinedly vague about whether he was Austrian or German, but was quick to express the most extreme monarchist opinions: Hitler, he insisted, might have been able to win the war if he had only been wise enough to restore the Hohenzollerns. "After all," Dr. Schneider said, "the monarchy could have underwritten the crusade against Bolshevism."



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Dr. Schneider wore dark glasses and had large, pointed ears. He sheltered himself behind a thick, gray mustache. His hair was white, and he looked to be more than sixty. Given his opinions, he must have gone through some fancy footwork when the war ended, since he now spoke of giving recitals in the Soviet zones of Germany and Austria. I wondered if he had been a spy for Harlot. All the same, I found him unsavory and wondered why the Montagues treated him with respect. On second examination, I could detect that Dr. Schneider was wearing an expensive white wig, well placed on his head, but I had my mother's eye for masquerade and so was intrigued with his desire to present himself as an older man. I hardly knew how I felt about sitting at table with what might be a crypto-Nazi.

After dinner, Harlot sat down to a game of chess with Dr. Schneider, and I decided that Hugh liked to enjoy people by their pieces and parts. "Watch the play," Harlot confided to me. "Schneider is phenomenal in the endgame. He falters occasionally with openings, but unless I'm two pawns up after the middle game, I'm far from home."

The pianist would rub his hands and croon or moan after every one of Harlot's moves. "Oh, you are a devil, Mr. Montague, you are a clever fellow, the trickiest, aren't you, oh, oh, oh, you have me in a pickle, you do, sir, a fiend with your knights you are, yum, yum, yum, yessir," after which, nodding his head, albeit still groaning, "*Punkt*," he would say, and move a pawn. As Harlot predicted, Dr. Schneider did well in the endgame and brought off a draw. It was the only time I ever saw him at the Stable.

After he left—and I did notice that he and Harlot shook hands at the door like old comrades—Harlot asked me to stay. While Kittredge was doing the dishes (with which I usually helped her, although, on this night, by Harlot's insistence, signally not) he took me into his study, pinned me down on a small wooden chair to face his presence in the Cathedral Chippendale, and proceeded to give the first reasonably full deployment of his mind that I had received since the night he told me to give up rock climbing.

I was ready to talk to him about an unhappy situation at my new work (about which he had never made one inquiry) but,

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then, I did not dare. What if he had no interest?

At this moment he said, "Your father is coming back. We'll go out to dinner, the three of us."

"That sounds terrific." I kept myself from asking where my father had been. No word had come from him in months, so I did not see how I could inquire.

"Do you find CIA a large place?" Hugh Montague inquired. "Enormous."

"We weren't always so big. In fact, the baby almost didn't get born. J. Edgar Hoover did everything he could to stop us. Didn't want his FBI put in competition. Hoover may be the most fear-ridden man in Christendom. We refer to him, by the way, as Buddha, J. Edgar Buddha. If the fellow you're talking to doesn't follow, then he is not one of us."

I nodded. I didn't know whether *us* now referred to all of CIA or but a small part.

"What with Foster Dulles owning Eisenhower's mind. Allen has us in good shape. We're certainly expanding."

"Yessir."

"To do what?" he asked. "What is our purview?"

"To supply the President with intelligence, I suppose."

"Do you have a vision of what that intelligence ought to be?"

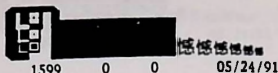
"Well, first to catch up with the KGB."

"We can do that. We may have to do a little better than that. It is not just the Russians, you see. We can probably work their mainspring loose, disembarass them—even if it takes a half-century—of their Marxism, but the war will go on. Right here. Right here, it's taking place. Across all the face of America. The secret stakes keep going up. The active question is whether this Christ-inspired civilization will continue. All other questions fade before that."

"Including the bomb?"

"It's not the bomb that's going to destroy us. If it ever gets down to the nuclear people, then we're merely incinerating the corpse of all that's been destroyed already. The bomb can't be used unless civilization dies first. Of course, that can happen. Our continuing existence depends on not falling prey to false perceptions of reality. The rise of Marxism is but a corollary to





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the fundamental historical malady of this century: false perception."

What a man of the cloth he would have made! The value of his words was so incontestable to himself that he did not question the size of his audience. I could have been one parishioner or five hundred and one: the sermon would not have altered. Each word offered its reverberation to his mind, if not to mine.

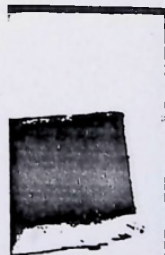
"It's sad," he said. "For millennia, every attempt at civilization foundered because nations lacked the most essential information. Now we lurch forward, overburdened by hordes of misinformation. Sometimes I think our future existence will depend on whether we can keep false information from proliferating too rapidly. If our power to verify the facts does not keep pace, then distortions of information will eventually choke us. Harry, are you beginning to have some concept of how much our people here have to amount to?"

I managed to mutter, "I'm not sure I see where you're heading."

"You just don't welcome it." He swallowed his brandy. "Our real duty is to become the mind of America."

I nodded. I had no idea whether I was ready to agree with him, but I nodded.

"There's absolutely no reason," he said, "why the Company can't get there. Already, we tap into everything. If good crops are an instrument of foreign policy, then we are obliged to know next year's weather. That same demand comes at us everywhere we look: finance, media, labor relations, economic production, the thematic consequences of TV. Where is the end to all we can be legitimately interested in? Dwelling in an age of general systems, we are obliged to draw experts from all fields: bankers, psychiatrists, poison specialists, narcs, art experts, public relations people, trade unionists, hooligans, journalists—do you have a good idea how many journalists are on contract to us?—do observe a little *hush-hush* on that one. Nobody knows how many pipelines we have into good places—how many Pentagon pooh-bahs, commodores, congressmen, professors in assorted think tanks, soil erosion specialists, student leaders, diplomats, corporate lawyers, name it! They all give us input. We're rich in our resources. You see, we had the great good luck



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to start all at once." He nodded. "For a bureaucratic organization, that is usually a disaster, but it happened to work for us. Not only were we seeded with some of our best OSS people, but we attracted good ambitious men from all over the place, State, the FBI, Treasury, Defense, Commerce—we raided them all. They all wanted to come to us. That created a curious situation. Organizationally speaking, we were set up in a pyramid. But our personnel, as measured by their skilled experience, gave us the shape of a barrel. Enormous amounts of talent in the middle ranks. And they had no way to rise. After all, the people at the top were also young. Relatively young, like myself. So a good many of the men who rushed to join our ranks five years ago, had to sign out again. Now, they're all over the place."

"All over Washington?"

"All over America. Once you've been in the Company, you don't really want to quit it altogether. It's tedious to work in those financial worlds and business worlds. I tell you, we have liaison into every game that's going on in this country. Potentially, we can give direction to the land." He smiled. "Feeling tired?"

"No, sir."

"Didn't wear you out with the size of the mural?"

"I'll be up all night."

"Good for you." He smiled. "Let's have one more drink before you go. I want you to understand something. I don't get confidential very often, but from time to time, I will. You see, Harry, everyone in this Pickle Factory has a weakness. One fellow drinks too much. Another screws around heedlessly. A third is a closet queer—either he brazened it through the polygraph, or turned queer later. A fourth smokes marijuana on the sly. My vice, old Harry Hubbard, old before your years, is that I tend to talk too much. So I'm obliged to choose people I can trust. One does get the feeling, speaking to you, that it all goes down into the deepest vault you've got. So, yes, I'll tell you a thing from time to time, and Heaven help you if you don't keep it to yourself."

He took a full draw on his Churchill and let the smoke surround him. "What did you make of our Dr. Schneider?" he asked.

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I had the sense to be brief. "I would," I said, "read him as an ex-Nazi in a wig. I think he must be ten years younger than his false white hair, and he may know less about concert recitals than dead drops."

"It's tempting," said Harlot, "to tell you more. But I'm afraid I can't let you in."

"Despite what you just said?" I was as suddenly hungry for secrets about Dr. Schneider as a hound called back from his food.

"Well," said Harlot, "there's no remedy. Perhaps you'll discover him for yourself one of these days." He took a puff again. He was enjoying my frustration. "Harry," said Harlot, "keep the faith."

12 | Let me descend from the heights of Harlot's confidence in me to the low information of how I spent my working day. If I had finished training with high hopes for my immediate future, having spent many a night at the Farm discussing the best station to be sent to; if the merits of Vienna and Singapore and Buenos Aires and Ankara and Moscow, Teheran, Tokyo, Manila, Prague, Budapest, Nairobi, and Berlin had been weighed for their qualities as the most lively spot for commencing one's career, I, in common with most of my class, was assigned to a job in Washington, D.C.

Then came another disappointment. I was not selected for any of the foreign desks. That was the usual prelude to getting an overseas post. An assistant to the Iran Desk in Washington could assume he was learning the ropes for Teheran. Ditto for the Congo Desk and the Japanese, the Polish Desk, and the Chilean. It was generally agreed among Junior Officer Trainees



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at the Farm, that if you had to begin in Washington, Assistant to the Desk Officer was the best job.

Now, I was not an ambitious young politician, but I had enough of my mother's social sense to know I had been invited to the wrong party. I landed in the Snake Pit, also known as the Boiler Room and/or the Coal Bin. On an unrewarding job, synonyms proliferate. In a huge room whose fluorescent lights droned away under a relatively low ceiling, in the very small draft of a few modest air conditioners situated in little windows on a far-off wall, we bumped and maneuvered around one another down aisles that were always too narrow for their human traffic. It was hot, unseasonably hot for October. On either side, six feet high, were old-fashioned wooden cabinets with shelves and file boxes.

We had a Document Room next door, a large chamber, stuffed with stacks of papers as yet unfiled. The stacks grew to the ceiling. The names encountered in each pamphlet, station report, agent report, magazine reference, newspaper reference, trade journal, or book, were supposed to be set down on a card with a summary of the information contained. After which, the card could be filed, and the document stored more permanently. The theory at the core of such labors was to be able to look at all the information available on any person the Company might be interested in. By such means, telling profiles could be formed.

It was chaos, however. Documents accumulated faster than we could card them. The Western Hemisphere Division was soon six months behind their tower of paper in the Document Room; Soviet Russia was four months back; China (given the difficulty of ideograms) a year and a half. For West Germany, to which I was assigned, only three months were in arrears. It was enough, nonetheless, to bring stress to every endeavor. I spent much of my time squeezing my way down aisles, or wiggling my fingers into a file box. Once in a while, there was honest panic. One morning, for instance, the Chief of Base in West Berlin sent a cable requesting vital information on one VQ/WILDBOAR. Since hordes of such requests came in, and the turnover of personnel at my low level was considerable, such chores were assigned by lot—you took the cable on the top of the pile at the



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Incoming Queries Desk.

Then you worked your way through traffic, doing your best not to collide with the body, its nose in a file, that was blocking your path down the aisle. The odor of sweat was ubiquitous. It might as well have been summer. The air conditioners had small lungs, and each one of us clerks—were we better, for all our training, than clerks?—was carrying his own anxious stir. It was not enough to find WILDBOAR for Chief of Base, Berlin; one had to find him quickly. The cable had been frantic: NEED ALL RECENT ENTRIES ON VQ/WILDBOAR. URGENT. GIBLETS. Yes, the Chief of Base had signed it himself.

I had had to wait in Records Integration Office down the corridor to obtain access to the *PRQ-Part I/Part II/201-File Bridge-Archive*, which hopefully was up to date and so could tell me who VQ/WILDBOAR might be. On this morning, VQ/WILDBOAR did translate into Wolfgang-from-West-Germany, last name unknown, last address Wasserspiegelstrasse 158, Hamburg. That, at least, was a start. Back in the Snake Pit, I could continue my search through the two file boxes—each twenty inches long, each containing something like eighteen hundred index cards, stuffed with Wolfgangs who had been sufficiently inconsiderate to provide us with no last name. Wolfgangs who offered the courtesy of a last initial, a Wolfgang F., or a Wolfgang G., took up another three file boxes. Wolfgangs with a whole last name occupied ten. I did not know that so many Wolfgangs were interesting to us in West Germany!

Then I discovered they were not. My Wolfgang-from-Hamburg had been entitled to one card in the Snake Pit for the occasion on which he was arrested in 1952 after heaving a brick during a street demonstration in Bonn. Yet he had nothing less than fifteen such entries, carded from fifteen separate West German newspapers which reprinted the same West German wire service story. Absolutely invaluable stuff on my Wolfgang might well be lying somewhere in the Document Room at the other end of this interminable shed, but it had not yet been carded. I was, by now, irritable. In the lunch break, I sent back a cable to the office of Chief of Base, West Berlin. NOT ABLE TO SATISFY REQUEST FOR RECENT ENTRIES RE: VQ/WILDBOAR. SEND BETTER ADDRESS. KU/CLOAKROOM. It was my first cable out. My first use



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of my own cryptonym.

At end of day, an answer was routed back to me. CABLE 51—(SERIES RB 100 A). TO KU/CLOAKROOM: MOST RECENT, REPEAT AND UNDERLINE, MOST RECENT INFORMATION ON VQ/WILDBOAR IS OF THE ESSENTIAL, REPEAT, ESSENTIAL. FILE-RAT, ARE YOU INEPT? COME UP WITH YOUR OWN BETTER ADDRESS. VQ/GIBLETS.

The Chief of Base in Berlin was famous for his short fuse. Yet I had no idea where to look. If I didn't respond to his cable, I could conceivably receive a Notice of Censure. It left me full of unspoken rage at Harlot. Why had I been left at the Snake Pit? Others in my training group were sited already at some of the best desks in Washington, Rosen was in Technical Services, a supersecret plum—was that due to his performance on the night of interrogation? Worse, Dix Butler, as I learned by way of Rosen, was actually operating out of West Berlin.

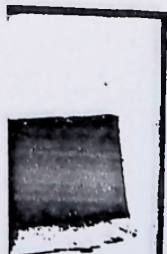
Just when my mood felt condemned to brood through the night—where is Wolfgang, and what would I do tomorrow?—I received a phone call from my father. Heading up something big and unnameable in Tokyo, as I learned from his first remarks, he was reporting back to Washington after a visit to stations in Manila, Singapore, Rangoon, and Djakarta. "Join me for dinner," he said right off. "We'll celebrate your release from the Farm. Montague will be there."

"Terrific," I said. I would have preferred to see my father alone.

"Yes," he said, "watch Hugh tonight. He knows I've got the jam on a lot of doings in the Far East. He'll be dying to know. Keep an item away from Hugh, and he carries on like you're picking his pocket."

Well, we had a rich dinner at Sans Souci, and a good deal of maneuvering did go on between Cal and Harlot. I could hardly follow the shop talk about Sumatra, and SEATO and the rigors of getting a little intelligence out of Singapore without ruffling the Raj. When Harlot asked, "How do you plan to hold Sukarno's feet to the fire?" my father leaned forward, touched my elbow with his, and replied, "Hugh, that's just what we won't get into."

"Of course not. You'll listen to some total fool out there who's covering every base and hasn't idea one on how to pro-



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ceed, but you won't take a chance with me."

"Hugh, I can't."

"I see where it's leading. I sniff it. You're going to try to photograph Sukarno in one of his circuses."

"Throwing no stones," said my father, "he's certainly got a few going."

"You're on squander-time. It's madness. You can't trap Buddhists with sex. They place it somewhere between eating and evacuating. Part of the comedy of what goes in and comes out. You'll need more than photographs to get Sukarno into your pouch."

"The only alternative is the Colonels," said my father. "I don't know that they're honest dinner guests."

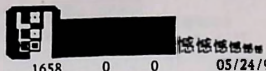
Such talk went on. I certainly couldn't swear to what they were contesting, but I thought it wonderfully interesting. Before too many years went by, perhaps I, too, would carry on such conversations.

Of course, I was not enjoying the evening altogether. I was still in dread of tomorrow's search for Wolfgang, and my stomach was raw. Harlot and Cal had taken, after the smallest acknowledgment, no further recognition of my last six months of training, and my graduation from the Farm. Nor had they given me room to talk about my present condition. After three martinis, I had begun to pack veal roulade into my gorge with a red burgundy whose nature seemed more complex than my own. Add Hennessy, and the attempt to smoke a Churchill with panache, and what I had hoped would be a party of celebration (and possible explanation for why I had been marooned in the Bunker) was now becoming a long march of gastrointestinal fortitude. I lost interest in Sukarno and how they would hold his feet to the fire.

Beneath it all, I was feeling the same sure resentment my father always stirred. Sad cry: he had no desire to see me for myself alone. I was his adjunct to business, pleasure, or duty. So, despite my physical discomforts, heavy as thunderclouds, I felt the same rush of love my father could also stir in me when he said at last, "I'm really waiting to hear about you, boy."

"There's not much to tell."

"He's in the Snake Pit," said Harlot.



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By my father's pause, I could tell this came as unexpected information. "Well, that's a hell of a place to have him."

"No. It's advisable."

"You put him there?"

"I didn't keep it from happening."

"Why? Did he do that badly at the Farm?"

"No. He landed in the top quarter of his class."

"Good."

"Not good, adequate."

All this, of course, was being said in front of me.

"Then why do you have him in Files?"

"Because it's a holding tank, and I plan to send him to Berlin. That's an interesting place right now."

"I know all about Berlin. I agree. But why isn't he working at West German Desk?"

"Because it can be fatal to young fortunes. Four promising kids have come and gone from that slot in the last three months. Harvey chews them up before they have time to learn."

My father nodded. He puffed on his cigar. He sipped his brandy. He took this much time to say in effect that he was a Far Eastern hand and did not know all that much about what was closer to home.

"I want," said Hugh, "for you to write a letter to Harvey. A puff for Harry. Tell him what a great son you've got. Harvey respects you, Cal."

This Bill Harvey, I could recognize, was the same Chief of Base, West Berlin, who had called me a file-rat. Why did Harlot think I should work for him? I was, despite the last full lecture imparted at the canal house, not without suspicions.

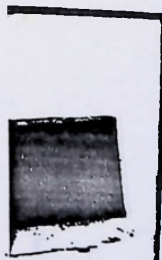
Perhaps my unhappy stomach could not hold its own bad news much longer. I told them of Harvey's cable.

"I'm no longer," I said, "exactly anonymous. He knows there's a guy named KU/CLOAKROOM who didn't produce what he wanted on VQ/WILDBOAR."

They laughed. They could have been brothers for the way they laughed together.

"Well," said Cal, "Maybe KU/CLOAKROOM ought to disappear."

"Exactly," said Harlot. "We can drink to the new fellow."



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Got a preference in the christening?"

"KU/RENDEZVOUS?" I proposed.

"Much too salient. Get over into the gray. Let's start with KU/ROPES."

I didn't like ROPES any more than CLOAKROOM, but I discovered it didn't matter. It was explained to me that just as laundered money grew cleaner with each new bank, so did each change of cryptonym remove you farther from the scene of a fiasco. My new cryptonym would soon be altered from KU/ROPES to DN/FRAGMENT, then, over to SM/ONION. Last stop: KU/STAIRS. Harlot jotted down these names with little self-congratulatory clicks of the tongue, while my father chuckled in approval. They were cooking a dish.

"I don't know how it works," I protested.

"Worry not. Once I get this through, odds against discovery will go up to something like ten thousand to one," said Harlot.

It still seemed to me that all it would take for Mr. William Harvey, Chief of Base in West Berlin, to find out who KU/CLOAKROOM was, would be to ask the West German Desk in Washington to get my real name over to him in a hurry.

No, my father assured me, it couldn't happen that way. Why?

"Because," said Harlot, "we are dealing with bureaucrats."

"Harvey?" I asked.

"Oh, no. The people between Harvey and you. They won't see any reason to violate their rules of procedure. If West German Desk here at Headquarters is asked to furnish the identity of KU/CLOAKROOM to Chief of Base, West Berlin, they must apply first to Bridge-Archive, who, in turn, will reply that KU/CLOAKROOM has just been given a shift to KU/ROPES. Well, that means delay for West German Desk. Any alteration of cryptonym invokes a seventy-two-hour elapse before *translation* can occur. This protective regulation is a perfectly good one, by the way. Such a change took place, presumably, for some valid purpose. At this point, West German Desk probably decides to wait the required three days. It's a minor search, after all. They're just accomodating Harvey. He's over in Berlin, and West German Desk is working for West German Station in Bonn."

"Doesn't Base in West Berlin have priority over West Ger-



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man Station in Bonn?" I asked my father.

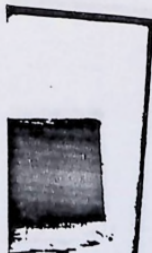
"Don't know about that. Bonn does have the Soviet Russia Division." He frowned. "Of course, Berlin, on balance, could be more important. Only we're not talking about real clout. We're dealing with bureaucracy, and that's a whole other kingdom."

"Count on it," said Harlot. "If Bill Harvey insists on immediate processing of his request, which is highly unlikely, because he's bound to be mad at somebody else by tomorrow—it's another day, after all—West German Desk still won't be able to satisfy him directly. They will have to go a step higher to Bridge-Archive:Control. Right there, they will meet a STOP. I will have put it in. STOP will say: 'Wait your seventy-two hours.' If they don't want to, they have to take it up even higher, to Bridge-Archive:Control—Senior. Now, that is a committee. Bridge-Archive:Control—Senior meets only for emergencies. I happen to be on the committee. One never presumes on Bridge-Archive:Control—Senior unless one can prove extraordinary need to know."

He puffed with complete happiness on his Churchill. "Obviously, you're safe enough for seventy-two hours. In the interim, we will switch your cryptonym from KU/ROPES to DN/FRAGMENT. That means West German Desk, far from discovering who KU/CLOAKROOM is, will have to recommence the process to learn the identity of DN/FRAGMENT. They're still not near anything, you see."

"DN," said my father, "is the digraph for South Korea."

"Yes," said Harlot. "KU/ROPES has gone to South Korea and become DN/FRAGMENT. On paper, at least. Of course, an overseas cryptonym puts a two-week hold on Bridge-Archive. By then, Harvey, we can predict, will be well on to other things. Nonetheless, as a matter of pride, I believe in carrying these matters out properly. If Harvey, for any reason, becomes obsessed with finding out who you are, which is always a possibility, and waits out the two weeks, I promise that at the end of such interval, you will be shifted over to London as SM/ONION. Still on paper, of course. A fortnight further down the road, we will bring you figuratively back from London to the U.S., which, dear boy, you have not left in the first place. But we'll have you back working as KU/STAIRS. Total write-off for Harvey at that





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point. He will see that a *signature* is on this business. It will tell him to lay off. He's obviously tampering with something. No ordinary file-clerk gets three cryptonyms in one month including junkets to South Korea and London with protective STOPS from Bridge-Archive:Control. So it's our way of saying to Bill Harvey: Bug off. Big guns are in place."

It seemed clear enough to me. I would be safe. But why go to such pains?

My father must have been enough of a parent to read my cerebrations. "We're doing it because we like you," he said.

"And because we like doing it," said Harlot. He nudged the ash from his cigar onto a clean plate as carefully as he might roll an egg with his forefinger. "I'll also have to get," he remarked, "KU/CLOAKROOM expunged from your 201. Then there'll be no record at all."

"I appreciate the troubles you're taking on," I said, "but, after all, I committed no crime. It's not my fault if the Document Room is buried in backlog."

"Well," said Harlot, "the first rule in this place, if you value the size of the future contribution you want to make, is to protect yourself when young. If some mogul sends a request for information, supply it."

"How? Do you tunnel through ten thousand cubic feet of uncarded documents?"

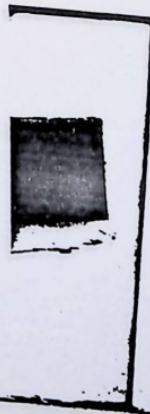
"Wolf gang was a student in a street gang, and he moved around a lot. You could have made up a report that kept him moving a little more. Send him to Frankfurt, or over to Essen."

"Maybe," said my father, "Rick should still do that."

"No," said Harlot. "Too late. It won't work now. Too much attention will be paid to the false information. But the point for my godson to recognize is that in the beginning Harvey was not asking for a serious inquiry."

"How can you be certain of that?" I asked.

"If Chief of Base in West Berlin is not aware of the frightful condition of the Snake Pit, he is incompetent. William King Harvey is not incompetent. He knew, given the chaos, there would be nothing up to date on VQ/WILDBOAR. I would say he sent the cable, and put his name to it, mind you, to scorch some of his people in Berlin. They probably lost contact with





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Wolfgang. It's a slap in the face for them if our file system here has to do the job when they are in place over there. If you had provided some fiction for Wolfgang's travels, Harvey could have used it to stir up his principals and their agents. 'See,' he would tell them, 'Wolfgang has gone back to Frankfurt.' 'Impossible,' they might answer. 'He's too recognizable in Frankfurt.' 'All right,' Harvey could have answered, 'get cracking and find him.'"

I could not keep myself from saying, "What if it was urgent to find Wolfgang? What if he"—I showed, I fear, a wholly callow spirit—"what if he was about to pass some nuclear secrets on to the Russians?"

"It doesn't matter," said Harlot. "We've lost it at that point. We're lumbered. The world ends because the Document Room is an impacted mass."

My father took a long look at Hugh Montague and something was exchanged between them. Harlot sighed. "In fact," he said, "there is one larger-than-life secret in West Berlin, and I may have to let you in on it before you go over. If you don't have any idea of what it is, you could get in Harvey's way." He sighed again. "It's a thousand to one that Wolfgang has nothing to do with larger-than-life, but if he does, we'll know about it soon enough."

"How?"

Hugh sniffed another measure of that air of the judicious and the corrupt which is common to courtroom corridors and cigars, and said, "We'll get you out of the Snake Pit tomorrow, and on to intensive training in German." That was all the answer provided.



13 | After dinner, my father proposed that I stay with him for the night. He was living, he told me, at a friend's apartment off K Street and 16th, "an old hand in an old apartment," my father said in passing, and when we went up, I was struck with how shabby were the furnishings. It spoke of small income for an old hand without private funds; it also reminded me of how pinch-fisted we Hubbards could be. My father was certainly able to afford a decent hotel, yet chose to bunk here instead—I hardly knew if he was saving expense money for the CIA or himself. On second look, however, I realized his story was not true. The spartan lack of amenities—one gray sofa, two gray chairs, one old carpet, one pitted metal ashtray on its own stand, no drapes, and a bureau with cigarette burns, a refrigerator, as I soon discovered, with three beers, a tin of sardines, a box of crackers, and half-empty old jars of mustard, ketchup, and mayonnaise—was enough to tell me that no one was living here. There was no personal clutter. Not one picture or photograph. This couldn't be a friend's apartment. We were in a safe house. I was visiting my first safe house. Naturally my father would choose to stay in one. It fit the loneliness he liked to wrap around himself whenever he was not back in his Tokyo home with warm reliable Mary Bolland Baird Hubbard.

My father now waved me into one of the two dusty arm-chairs, and brought forth from a kitchen cupboard a half bottle of cheap Scotch which we drank with water, no cubes. He had turned on the refrigerator, however, and it was humming loudly enough to discourage any microphone hidden anywhere about. I was, at this point, highly sensitive to the possible presence of *sneakies*, inasmuch as one of the courses back at the Reflecting Pool had been in electronic surveillance, and I wondered if my father's quick tapping of his fingernails against the end table by the side of his chair came from nervousness, fatigue, or his long-trained habit to send out sufficient noise to discourage any but the most advanced listening devices. Of course, I had even less idea whether I was being too paranoid or insufficiently so.

"I want to talk to you about Hugh and Bill Harvey," said my father. "Hugh means a good deal to me, but I have to tell you—he's not perfect. It's damnable, because he's almost per-



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fect, if you know what I mean."

"I don't."

"Well, when people get up to 98 percent, it hurts out of proportion if they can't reach those last two points. Hugh may be the best man we have in the Company. He's the most brilliant, and certainly one of the more scholarly, and he has guts. He's a real cross between a panther and a mountain goat. Don't get him angry, and don't dare him to leap."

"Yessir," I said, "I have a very high opinion of him."

"I don't mind if he takes his own leaps, but I'm not sure he isn't asking you to go along with him on this one." My father threw up his hands as if to apologize for not being able to tell me more.

"Does any of this concern the larger-than-life secret?" I asked.

He coughed heavily with an unhappy subterranean sound. A considerable mucus must have been ravaging his powerful chest. My father was still in his late forties, but the sound of this cough, filled with the gravel of booze and nicotine, seemed to have come from a much older man concealed within that powerful body. "Yes," he said. "Hugh should not have brought the matter up. I know I won't tell you, and I wouldn't even if I could because I don't want you to bear the responsibility of holding such a weighty secret, a true secret of state. Tell me, then, why Hugh figures he can feed it to you as part of your orientation?"

There was obviously no answer to that.

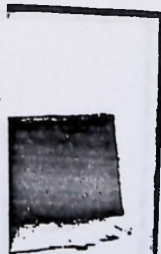
"He will certainly tell you," my father went on. "Don't repeat this to a soul, but he lets more secrets out than anyone in his position ever should. It's as if he's making a bet on his own judgment. I suppose it gives him the grandest feeling."

I think my father may finally have had his fill of drink, for I could feel him meandering away from me in his mind. Then he sat up with a jerk. "The point is, Hugh has no right to trust anyone. Not after Philby. You've heard about Kim Philby?"

"A little," I said. I was trying to recall Lord Robert's comments on the subject.

"Philby came very near to being Hugh's nemesis. Philby was so thick with Burgess and Maclean. Ever hear of them?"

"Wasn't it a newspaper story? They were British Foreign



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Office stationed over here, weren't they?"

Damn right," said Cal. "When Burgess and Maclean pulled their disappearance back in 1951 and ended up in Moscow, everybody here divided into camps. Did Philby tell Burgess and Maclean to decamp, or did he not? Old friends weren't speaking, not if one thought Philby was guilty and the other didn't."

"Which camp were you in?"

"Pro-Philby. Same as Hugh. Kim Philby was a friend of Hugh's, and he was a friend of mine. We used to drink together in London during the war. You'd swear Philby was the peachiest Englishman you ever met. Had a stammer. But very funny when he could get the words out. Which he could, when drunk." After which my father suddenly went silent.

I waited, but he said no more. Then, he yawned. "I'm ready to turn in," he said. "I caught this bug in Djakarta—a hellzapopper of a bug. I wonder what it looks like under the microscope." He smiled in superiority to his own physical defects, and added, "Let's not get into Kim Philby now. It's too depressing. The point is, Hugh ended up looking pretty bad when it was over. The anti-Philby people clearly won out. That was Bill Harvey's doing. When Hugh tells the story, and I think he will if you ask him, he'll pretend to be half-fond of Harvey. He has to. By now, we're just about certain that Philby was working for the KGB. So Hugh has to say half-decent things about Harvey. Don't believe him. He hates Bill Harvey."

Then why am I being sent to Berlin? I wanted to ask.

"All the same," said my father, as if I had in fact spoken aloud, "Berlin's a good idea. I *will* write that letter. You could use some roughing up. Bill Harvey's the man to give it to you."

With that, I was left to turn in for the night. There were two single beds in the next room and sheets and blankets of a sort. I lay there listening to my father cry out from time to time in his slumber, a short barking sound, and I finally slept in a half-coma which commenced with visions of Bill Harvey through Kit-tredge's eyes. She had certainly described him once. "We know a man in the Company, awful person, who carries a handgun in a shoulder holster even when he comes to dinner. Isn't that so, Hugh?"

"Yes."

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"Harry, he's built like a pear, narrow shoulders and a relatively thick middle. His head's the same way. Pear-shaped. He has goggle eyes. An absolute frog, this man, but I couldn't help noticing—he has the prettiest little mouth. Small and nicely curved. Very well shaped. A glamour-girl's mouth in a toad's face. That sort of thing gives even more clues to Alpha and Omega than the right and left side of the face."

Had it been Bill Harvey who confronted me at the edge of sleep? I had a curious experience that night, and it was far from wholly unpleasant. I felt West Berlin coming nearer to my life. My first foreign tour awaited me. Even this grim safe house with its olfactory echo of old cigarettes and wet cigar butts, its memories of men waiting for other men to arrive, was a harbinger of the years to come. My loneliness could serve much purpose. The mean appurtenances of our gray apartment, spectral by the street light that came through the window shades, as brown by now as old newspapers, gave me a sense of why my father chose to stay here rather than at a hotel. A safe house was the emblem of our profession, our monk's cell. Perhaps that was why my father had produced the transparent fiction that this was a friend's apartment. In the act of penetrating his cover story, I would see a safe house with eyes of discovery. Many a rendezvous in West Berlin would look like this, I supposed, and I was to prove right.

Let me describe the bizarre vanity of the meditation that followed. Lying in this habitat, I felt equipped to travel through dark spaces and engage in deeds not free of the odor of burning sulphur. A few feet away was my father's troubled body, and I, sensitive to the specters that would bring a man as strong as himself to cry out in barking sounds as though to warn off nocturnal enemies, thought of my old taste for caverns, including that underground city of excavated rooms whose plans I had drawn as a boy. That brought me to contemplate once more the cavern in my own head. It had been left in place of whatever half-formed monsters of harsh tissue or imperfect flesh had been uprooted from my brain. Did that unfilled volume now draw me toward many a strange situation I would yet encounter?

At that moment I thought of Harlot with whole admiration. He believed that our work could shift the massive weight of



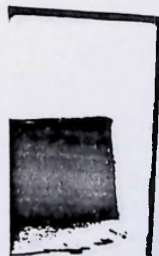
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historical drift by the only lever our heavens had given us, the readiness to dare damnation in our soul. We were here to challenge evil, negotiate its snares, and voyage out into devious activities so far removed from the clear field of all we had been taught that one could never see the light at the end of such a crooked tunnel. Not when one was in the middle.

On just this thought, I fell asleep. I did not know that my reverie had produced a kind of revelation. The larger-than-life secret of West Berlin alluded to on this night was nothing less than a fifteen-hundred-foot tunnel dug in holy secrecy, under Harvey's supervision, into East Berlin for the purpose of tapping Soviet military headquarter's long telephone lines out to Moscow.

14 | I was to hear more about Bill Harvey before I left. Harlot not only provided me with a full account of the fateful party in Washington that Kim Philby threw for Guy Burgess, but entrusted me—even as my father had predicted—with all the fathoms-deep hush-hush about William King Harvey's tunnel. That, I thought, was a true farewell gift; Harlot was taking me into the inner house of the Company.

I flew from Andrews Air Force Base to Tempelhof in West Berlin on a Douglas C-124. A fat, four-motor Globemaster called "Old Shakey," it shook like an old radiator. You mounted this plane from a ramp in the rear, and those twenty of us who were on our way to Europe, Air Force personnel for the most part, were sent up into the cargo well, forward of the vehicles and crates that would be loaded on after. Strapped into our seats, we faced to the stern and looked down on cargo whose neatly packed contents took up considerably more room than



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ourselves, and seemed, by comparison, more respected in treatment.

The flight took nine hours to Mildenhall, in England, where we stopped for another nine hours before moving on to Mannheim and Berlin. I was on that plane, or waiting for it to go up again, a total of twenty-four hours, and the interior was unheated, and had no view. I stared at electrical cables on the cabin walls. It was the longest trip.

After attempts to read in the poor cabin light had failed, and conversation with men on either side of me had ground down (for I was discovering again how circumscribed was conversation with people who were not in the Agency), I reached at last, somewhere in the middle of the night, an island of contemplation sufficiently removed from the grinding of the airplane's motors and the vibration of the cabin to allow me to dwell on my last memory of Washington, a farewell dinner with Harlot, again at Sans Souci.

He told anecdotes all night, filling me in on what he obviously considered the true flavor of the Company. Yes, Herrick, went his presentation, you have discovered after all that training with motley instructors, and demoralizing days on the files that, yes, we plod, we mess up, we go in circles, we expand too quickly here, and are out of it there, but it's the people who count, the one hundred, two hundred, at most five hundred people, who are the active, lively *nerve* of the Company. All those thousands of others are but the insulation we need, our own corps of bureaucrats there to keep the other Washington bureaucracies away from us. At the center, however, it can be splendid.

"The only real problem," he said, looking into his brandy, "is to spot the Devil when you see him. One must always be on the lookout for someone like Kim Philby. What a devil! Have I ever given you the go on Harvey's night at Philby's party?"

He knew he hadn't. He was launching another anecdote. It may have been the Hennessy, but a vein in Harlot's forehead began to throb prominently. "I don't know," he said, "if any Englishman who came over here from MI6 or the British Foreign Office was ever more popular than Kim Philby. A good many of us got to know him around London during the war, and we took up the friendship again when he arrived in 1949. We





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used to have the best lunches. He was shy with strangers because of that frightful stammer, but such an agreeable man. Something *sandy* about him, the hair, the jacket, the old speckled pipe. He drank like a loon, never showed it. You have to respect that. It suggests an intensity of purpose when you can handle all that drink. Harry, I forswear sentimental exaggeration, but Kim Philby had a quality the English do produce in many of their best people. It's as if their own person embodies everything that's first rate about their country. And, of course, we had the word. Kim Philby was bound to head up MI6 one of these days.

"Now, it wasn't altogether as good-fellow as that. During the war, MI6 used to treat us as if we OSS were good-natured oafs who did well to kneel at the feet of British savvy. They gave us a hard, snobby time. 'You chaps may be the plutocrats, but, don't you know, we still have this.' And they would lay a finger to their temple. We were awfully in awe of them. We were so young at Intelligence. When Philby came to Washington in '49, it was still like that. We were expanding the Company every day, and it was obvious the British were going to end up in our shadow, but, oh, that little nod of the head, that paper-thin smile. They had it. I used to study Kim Philby. Such filigree. There was his poor country to our wealthy one, and him stammering half the time, yet even the best of us felt a competitive minus when we had to go face to face.

"The thing about Kim—my God, just in saying his name I discover I'm still egregiously fond of Philby—is that he was audacious. True wit resides in audacity. You have to know when to break away from the book move. After the British Foreign Office sent Guy Burgess to Washington as First Secretary, Philby invited Guy to move in with him. Now, looking back on it, I still don't comprehend how the Russians dared to work with Burgess. He had to be the most improbable KGB asset. He was, as you may have heard, a holy, roaring mess, a homosexual of the worst sort, a bully on the prowl for slender fellows ready to turn queer. 'I'm going to *plunder* you,' is the kind of look that came off Guy Burgess. You did not measure his drinking by glasses, but by bottles. He also smoked like a Rube Goldberg filthy-nicotine machine. Besides which, he wore white clothes considerably clotted with his last half-dozen meals. He was half



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as grand as Randolph Churchill, and had manners absolutely as *bad*. One has to expect Englishmen from good families to be awful with waiters. I think they are seeking to pay back all those Scotch nannies who used to shovel porridge into their mouths. But Burgess was the worst. 'See here, you bloody fucking fool,' he would bellow at the nearest waiter, 'are you a cretin, or merely presenting yourself as hopelessly inadequate?' Hugh, imitating Burgess, spoke loudly enough to have embarrassed us if *Sans Souci* had been empty, but dinner clamor was our security.

"Philby would always reassure us, 'Guy has been suffering through the most frightful aftereffects of his car accident, poor Guy.' Philby would say, 'Guy is talented, but his head is b-b-b-banged-up, you see.' Philby made it sound like a war wound. The loyalty of one Brit for another!

"Well, enter Bill Harvey. He had the curious luck to be invited to Philby's one night in Spring 1951 for a large dinner. Everybody was there, Harvey, Burgess, hoards of us and our ladies. J. Edgar Buddha almost came, but then he heard about Harvey's being invited and did not show. Bill Harvey, to bring you a little more into the picture, was at that time very much en route to becoming our in-house pet. Since then, he's become considerably more than a toy. But at that time, we loved him. We'd taken him up. His handshake was even clammier than his pistol butt, but he was our FBI man. To get started in business, we had, of course, done our best to raid the Bureau, and signed on a few of their agents, among whom Harvey was the cream. You know, he'd helped snag the Rosenbergs. J. Edgar Buddha never forgave him for quitting the marble halls of Justice to come over to us. Then to make matters worse: Harvey, what with old contacts at FBI, was obtaining a lot of back-drawer information from the Bureau that we could use. FBI deserved no less. They had been poaching on CIA jurisdictions in six or seven countries along about then. In fact, they were hoping to kill us in our infancy. It was inhumane! Why, Allen Dulles could hardly get through to Buddha on the phone. 'Tell me,' he once asked Hoover, 'what is CIA doing to offend you so?'

" 'Mr. Dulles,' J. Edgar replies, 'tell Bill Harvey to quit pinching our stuff.'

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"Well, that puts Harvey into our graces. Naturally, Philby invites Bill and his wife, Libby, to dinner. Bill Harvey was married to Libby then. I could have warned Philby not to give such an invitation. I was not sanguine about the social prospects. When you put a *plain* like Bill Harvey alongside a *fancy* like Guy Burgess, Heaven may not be able to help.

"Well, we all start drinking. Harvey can go round for round with Burgess. So can Libby. Harvey's wife is out of Indiana or Kentucky, some agricultural *seat*, a sexy-mousy girl with no presence at all, I fear, except for a huge horse-laugh that's so bad it could only belong to a duchess. No scullery maid would ever be allowed to *guffaw* in such fashion. Whoopee! We all get five yards under. It's a revel. Harvey has been boasting up and down Foggy Bottom that he has had sexual intercourse every day of his life since some such tender age as twelve. So help me. If it can't be his wife, he implies, it might be *yours*. And Libby is not only kissing everyone at the party—"Here's mud in your eye," she keeps yelling—but is also carrying on with, of all people, Guy Burgess. Guy even takes his hands off the boy he's towed along to play car-bumpers with her rump. Under it all, is this desperate, pervasive wash of what I call *social sorrow*. It's insufficiently recognized as one of the major passions. Harvey and Libby are full of *social sorrow* because in relation to the rest, they know damned well that no amount of rump-bumping is going to lower the real barriers.

"Burgess starts to brag about his powers as a caricaturist. 'Draw me,' asks Libby. 'Oh, I'll do that, darling,' says Burgess. He makes a sketch of Libby. Shows it to me first. I pride myself on keeping a few wits together—but I tell you, Harry, I wasn't able to say a word. Burgess drew Libby too well. There she is in an armchair with her legs apart, skirts up, her fingers right where they'll be—he's even drawn her pubic hair with detail. An expression on her face you can't mistake. It's how she must look at avalanche time. Burgess is a percipient devil!

"Now, just as I take this drawing in, Burgess whips it from my hand, and passes it around. Most people are decent enough to pop no more than a quick peek, but no one, by now, really wants to bury it. We've put up with a lot from Bill Harvey. We are, in fact, surprisingly ready to witness his woe. He walks

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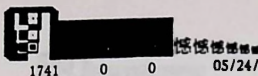
across the room, intercepts the drawing, and—I thought his heart would burst. I also passed through an instant when I expected him to draw his gun. I could feel the impulse clear across the room. Holding on to himself with an effort of will worthy of a boa constrictor's embrace, he seizes Libby's hand—by now, she's seen the drawing, too, and is *wailing*—and walks out with her. I have never witnessed any look of hatred equal to the bolt Bill Harvey threw at Burgess. 'I wish,' says Bill, 'I wish ...' He can't get it out. Then he does. 'Choke on a nigger's cock,' says Bill Harvey, and is out the door.

" 'The man has just given his blessing,' says Burgess.

"A month later Burgess is called back to London. From there he quickly decamps with Sir Donald Maclean for parts unknown, but, of course, it can be no place but Moscow. Maclean, also stationed in America, has had the most god-awful high clearance at Los Alamos. So, the question now was Philby. Could he possibly be working for the Soviets? We can't believe that. I tell you, he's too nice. I am hardly prepared, I'll confess to you. I even got out a three-page memo more or less to exonerate Philby. Noblesse oblige. I was less witting then. My memo also spoke of Burgess: I related that Guy joined us at lunch one day in a soiled white British naval officer's uniform, wholly unshaven, and proceeded to carry on about 'the damned exaggerations and over-claims in the technical data on American Oldsmobile's blood-sucking new Dynaflo transmission!' Burgess knows a lot about automobiles; he tells me as much. Also, Burgess brags of having been to bed on countless occasions with Philby's male secretary. It's virtually an FBI memo, those three pages. Gossip, no grit. But Philby, on balance, comes through my audit with more credits than debits.

"At this point, if not for Wild Bill Harvey, Kim might have weathered the storm. Possibly, given a few years, he could have worked back into MI6's good graces. Who, after all, ever heard of the KGB allowing two of their agents to live in the same house? Kim must be innocent of everything but bad judgment.

"Harvey, however, had his own memo to write. He had been putting together fifteen- and twenty-hour stretches on the files. That's always the other side of Harvey. Hard work. He was also pulling in whatever he could obtain from the best FBI



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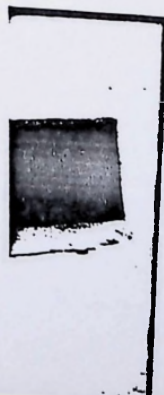
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counterintelligence. FBI had cracked a few Russian codes they were not about to share with us, but, old FBI buddies being what they are, Harvey did obtain one Soviet intercept that J. Edgar had been keeping under his monumental seat, and it made reference to a high British mole. The specifications fit Kim Philby well enough for the powers to accept Harvey's version rather than mine. 'Take back your Philby and try him,' CIA tells MI6. Which they now had to do, much as they hated the prospect. Philby got a draw at his MI6 hearing. No incarceration, but was obliged to resign. Poor Kim. I say 'poor Kim,' and yet, if he's guilty, he's the worst of all. In fact, I've come to the most reluctant conviction that he was KGB all the while."

Harlot took bitter savor of the Churchill before adding, "I'm afraid it was generally accepted that Harvey had proved superior to me on this case. Do you know, it wasn't long before he accused your honorable godfather of being a Soviet agent. It's Alger Hiss time, don't forget. Joe McCarthy is getting his good start in life. The nicer your family antecedents, the worse, I must say, you now look. So I was asked to take a lie detector test, and am fluttered all over the place, but pass. No incurable heart disease. And Harvey becomes one of our larger people. Why do I tell you this story?"

"I'm not sure I know."

"Because I wish to remind you one more time: The Devil is the most beautiful creature God ever made. Drink to Kim Philby, a consummate swine. Drink to your new Chief. God's own wild boar, King William, I do mean, William King Harvey. He's no Devil if beauty is the criterion."



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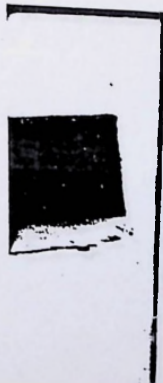
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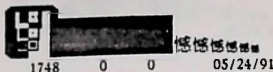
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1 | Dix Butler came by in a Jeep to pick me up at Tempelhof Airport. Once again I would share accommodations with four Junior Officers, and Dix was one of them. A few blocks off the Kurfürstendamm, in what must have been a substantial neighborhood before the war, our apartment was on the fourth floor of a six-story edifice, the only habitation still standing on its side of the street. In the stairwell, elaborate moldings full of cracked plaster gave way to plaster-board walls at the higher landings. Parquet floors showed swatches of linoleum. It was in accord with my first impression of Berlin—dusty, heavy, half-patched, gray, depressed, yet surprisingly libidinous. I felt depravity on every street corner, as real to me as vermin and neon lights.

I do not know if I can afford even one more reference to my sex life (which was still an empty ledger) but these days I was reacting to the presence of sex like a devil's imp in a sealed cylinder. As I came off the landing ramp from "Old Shakey," I had a unique experience. My first sight of the close-packed working-class streets surrounding Tempelhof produced an erection in me. Either the air, or the architecture was an





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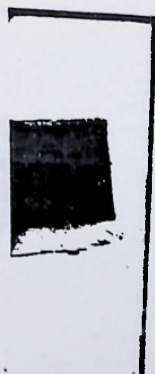
aphrodisiac, and panoramas of West Berlin went flying by the window like wartime newsreels of bombed cities. I saw buildings in every stage of restoration or demolition, half-destroyed, or going up in rubble-cleared lots that revealed the sheared-off backs of buildings from the next street. Billboards, bulldozers, cranes, trucks, military vehicles were everywhere. It seemed one year after the war, not ten.

As we drove along, Dix was discursive. "I like it," he said. "West Berliners have the quickest minds I ever ran into. New Yorkers are nothing compared to these people. I was trying to read a German newspaper on a park bench the other day, and this small neat dude in a pinstripe suit, professional type, is sitting across from me. He speaks up in perfect English, 'See that policeman over there?' I look. It's a cop, one more hefty Kraut. 'I see him,' I say. 'What's it to you, pal?' 'I bet,' says the stranger, 'that cop shits like an elephant.' Then he goes back to his newspaper. *Berlin*, Hubbard. They can tell you how the cop squats. Compared to them, we are sparrows picking seeds out of the horseballs, and the horse manure is everywhere. It's all ex-Nazis. General Gehlen who runs BND for the West Germans is one. He used to be financed by us."

"Yes," I said, "I know that." Was it ten years ago, sitting at lunch at Twenty-One, that my father had spoken of a German general who had been able to strike an agreement with U.S. Army Intelligence after the war? "Yes, I heard of him," I said.

"He also," said Butler, "got the word out to all the fellow ex-Nazis who worked with him on the Russian front. A lot of those guys jumped at the chance to find a good-paying job in postwar Germany. After all, the work is easy now. Anybody in your family who finds himself in the East Zone can furnish you information. But that's all right. Analyze the SSD, and you'll find East German Communists running it at the top, and half the Gestapo underneath. It's all bullshit, friend, and I'm having the time of my life."

Butler did not offer a word on what my work might be. I was left to discover such details bit by bit. For my first few days in Berlin I was occupied with obtaining accreditation for my cover job, and a cryptonym: VQ/STARTER. Considerable time was left to spend in our once-grand and now cavernous apartment.



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The furnishings depressed me. The bed in which I slept had a monumentally heavy mattress, as damp 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. By the second week, not only my drawers but my tabletop was being appropriated. Warned in advance that CIA personnel working in State Department or Department of Defense offices inspired resentment, 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 under four-power occupation.

Our treaty probably worked better than most, but no one in this 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 by phone or mail.

My more legitimate labors were performed *Downtown*. That was the name of a shed surrounded by barbed-wire fence, 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, under heavy sentry guard, was fenced about and sandbagged. Its machine-gun emplacements trained



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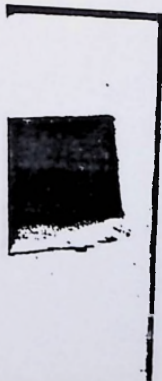
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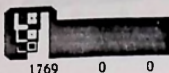
fields of fire down the neighboring streets. The place was certainly a redoubt, and might have kept the flag flying for a few hours if the Russians came over from East Berlin.

I spent my first week on the telephone at Downtown, aspiring in my intensely crammed German to pick up surveillance reports from the doorman, the barman, the headwaiter, and the *portier* of each leading hotel. In the beginning, it had not been routine for me to make a phone call on the basis of a quick orientation by a colleague—at last, I had colleagues!—and begin true spy work. So, for a time it was fun. Yes, the doorman at the Bristol, or the Kempinski, or the Am Zoo would tell me (usually in English considerably 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.

After a few days of checking twice daily through my long list of headwaiters and barmen for their pieces of information the task brought my early enthusiasm down to the sober responses we bring to a chore. Nor could I always divine whether Karl or Gottfried or Gunther or Johanna was East German or West German, one of ours, or one of theirs. If the barman had overheard a conversation of interest, I had to dispatch a memo to the appropriate desk. A case officer with more experience than myself would be sent out to debrief the bartender. Indeed, I did not even know yet whether this was done by way of a drink, or both men repaired to a safe house. Be it said that Dix Butler was doing such work. My new ambition was to get off the telephone (where I was beginning to feel like a man who sold space for classified advertising) and get out, be a street man.

On I stayed, however, at my telephone for ten days, until a call came for me to report to FLORENCE at VQ/GIBLETS. VQ/GIBLETS, I knew already, was Base Chief William King Harvey's home, the white stucco fort I had heard so much about. Harvey, as my colleague on the next telephone informed me, thought of this well-guarded house as Little Gibraltar, or Giblets, and FLORENCE was "C.G."—Clara Grace Follich was her name. She was William King Harvey's new wife.





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"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 semiretired, she watched over the maintenance of the safe houses. 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 or in and out of old elevators with clanging gates, and took out soiled towels and sheets (leaving food remains and trash and empty bottles for the chambermaid), and so serviced something like seven safe houses in as many neighborhoods. If three of them were new and clean with Swedish blonde-wood furniture and picture windows in new apartment houses, four looked just like the seedy carpet-stained hideout my father had taken me to in Washington.

C.G. was not a woman with much small talk, but then you were rarely in doubt of where her mind might be. She had a practiced hand at taking inventory of what was left in each safe house, and I noticed that she gave a different knock to each entrance door before inserting her key, presumably to alert any case-officer inside who might be debriefing an agent. At no place, however, on this day was there a response. Seven safe houses, empty of occupants, were in this fashion processed.

"I know what you're thinking," she said when we were ~~done~~. "That's a lot of safe houses to be lying idle."

"I guess I was telling myself something like that."

"When we need them, we really need them."

"Yes, Major."

"You didn't see any chambermaids today, Hubbard?"

"No, ma'am."

"If you had, you would have noticed that they are not spring chickens. 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 relation-





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ship."

"Please expand on that."

"Well, suppose one of the KGB agents who are trained lovers"—we had been given orientation about such KGB agents—"was to exercise a hold on the chambermaid, why, the KGB could obtain all kinds of access to the safe house."

"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."

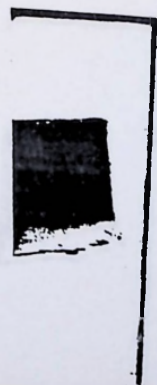
"My husband knows your father."

"My father has a lot of respect for your husband." All the while, I was wondering if Cal had sent his 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 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, if only by two weeks, he was soon on my telephone, and I was moved to agent traffic where I kept a log on which Communist officials were traveling back and forth from Poland, Czechoslovakia, and East Germany to East Berlin. This involved using agents' reports, and so offered a good picture of our network of observers in East Berlin: taxi drivers, 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 variety of input was fortified by daily reports from just about every established madam in West Berlin. In 1956, there was as yet no Berlin Wall, and so officials from the Eastern bloc were always crossing over for an evening of adventures in the West!

These were passive networks. Any recruiting of new agents was beyond the purview 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



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already implementing new actions because of what was learned that day.

A call came through at last. 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; 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 always 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 bulletproof vest). Still, there could be that one time when you came roaring up twenty seconds late.

Today, in the main office at BOZO, it would be easier. Many were 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, new arrivals, 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



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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 that 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, but if the Soviets were going to break this rule, it seemed to be Harvey's assumption that he was the man they would choose.

I was not old enough to know how pervasive such a fear could become. All I felt, when led into his office, was his power to intimidate. There were enough firearms on the wall to fill a gallery in a museum. Harvey sat at his desk, 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 he reeked of gin and sen-sen tablets.

Nonetheless, he gave an impression of strength. Rage came off him. 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 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 had reason to feel uncomfortable.

Harvey nodded. A cop has his preferences, and one of them is to meet people who are aware of his force. By looking uneasy, 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



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William Harvey. C.G., I had already decided, was from the Midwest, and there is a prejudice buried as deep as a tap root in the Hubbard fold. Midwesterners can have their share of virtues, but the fine ladies are all accounted for by the time western Massachusetts reaches New York State.

All the same, 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. Of course, I was not about to try to tell him this. I had just noticed on top of each of the three large safes in this office three prominent termite bombs. At his right hand was a panel with many buttons. Within his drawer must be other buttons. On the desk top was a red phone and a black and white striped phone that looked not unlike a landing craft just come in from Mars. I did not know which one of these buttons and instruments could trigger the termite bomb device, but it was evident to me that the room could be set 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 in-subordinate. '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 *saddlebags* come with your 201." That was the fearful



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word I had been awaiting. Saddlebags 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 here at Base. 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: 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."

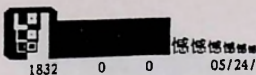
"Why?"

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.





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

In the next moment, however, I divined that VQ/CATHE-TER might be a cryptonym for the Berlin tunnel. It was not 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 able to maintain itself within allowable parameters?"

"I'm closemouthed. My cousins accuse me of being a bit of 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, and stuck it back in his holster. The butt of the handle looked out at 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?"

No one had told me anything. I had the feeling, however, that I would do well to reply. "They said you needed a gofer. A good gofer."

"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 gofer doesn't go out for coffee. He goes along for the ride."

"Sir?"

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





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"Yessir."

"You can get killed sitting next to me. Those Soviet rockets do the job. And their lookalike for our bazooka does not look like us at all. Their bazooka telescopes down into a cylindrical case about the size of a 300mm 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. Once again phlegm revolved in 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 lit a cigarette. His hands were the equal of his delicate mouth, and cupped the cigarette with finesse, two fingertips bringing the moist end to his cupid-bow lips which pursed forward to suck in a full measured heartbeat of smoke.

"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



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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 handgun work. We have an arrangement with the Army to use their pistol range in the NCO Club. 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.

2 | 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 practice, 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.

Nine A.M. on Monday morning I reported to Base Chief's office in BOZO, ready for the job, but I did not ride out in his black Cadillac that day. No call came. I 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



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about the networks in East Berlin. I was 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 had taken 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 place was in the code name he used, the Ukraine. "Tell the top asshole over in procurement—what's his name?"

"Ferguson," an assistant would say.

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

Besides the Ukraine, 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. Traveling with Chief Harvey was close to my idea of what it must have been like to ride around with General Patton. Maybe George Patton lived in Bill Harvey's mind as well. My father told me once that Patton could measure the fighting morale of an outfit by driving his Jeep into their perimeter. On one occasion, visiting a field hospital, he had slapped a soldier whom he believed was a malingerer. Something in the whine of the invalid's voice suggested to the General that the man was a carrier for a spiritual disease that 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

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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 not too tall, 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 shotgun on a mount between the front seats, and the security man in the passenger slot next to him held a Thompson submachine 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 inform you. 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 ruffraff a couple of years ago to throw a few stones at the Soviet Embassy in Bonn. It made the wire-services. Since then we assume that Wolfgang's been doubled."



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"By the East Germans, or the KGB?"

"Probably East Germans. Half the Krauts on our payroll are also feeding the SSD. Take that for granted. It's all right. Half their Vopos are working for us. 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 in unison, what do you deduct?"

"A storm is coming?"

"You have it, kid. 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 chunk of strange."

"Chunk 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 chunk: 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





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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 says it's okay to talk to him because he has clearance from the Americans. He, too, is working with 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 log of the 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 fly the contents of the Thirty-, the Sixty-, and the Hundred-and-Twenty-Day Back-Index 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, 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 make a count of their dish washer's pimples. In consequence, a lot of files were sent off at one 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. Can you believe it? Whole branches and bags of potentially crucial material were air-freighted over to the Document Room back at Cockroach Alley in order to obtain a little more room here."

Another sip on the martini. "So we have to find Wolfgang.





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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. They don't alert the newcomers to that fact. 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 Seventy-two-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



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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 frustrate 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 each week you get caught up in the crisis of the week. Other matters got me sidetracked. Besides, I know enough not 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 gofer 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 the I-J-K-L. They're still on the titty. Total bureaucrats. They can't wait for spring to paper-bag their lunch around the Reflecting Pool. Those people are soft as plop. They respond to unrelenting pressure. Get them on the trail of CLOAKROOM's shift of saddlebags. It'll take time. They will want to drag their feet. So, you 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 Seventy-two-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 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—

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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 might be playing their game for them. 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 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 is 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

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many cryps 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 ever admit to revealing your saddlebags 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 bullshit." That was worth a sip. The martini glass did a dipsy-doodle over some bumps. "Just call in your favors," he said. "Get those saddlebags 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? Don't keep trying to tell me that you didn't have one."

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

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

3 | Berlin, seen through the dark windows of Chief Harvey's Cadillac, provided at high noon 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 bulletproof limousines. It might be a sinister view of the world, but on this particular morning, I saw little enough of it. I was giving too much atten-



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tion to each word Bill Harvey uttered.

As Mr. Harvey finished laying out those procedures I was to use for a venture that could only produce success by the final entrapment of myself, the voice to come out of my throat, if hoarse, did not betray me further. 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 was 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 better. Hugh Tremont Montague and William King Harvey might serve the same flag, but 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 West Germans and East Germans might be more dangerous, but whether BND against SSD, or Montague versus Harvey, one's balance was still equal to one's wit. An unholy stimulation.

Of course, my inner life had its ups and downs. Back at my desk, outright rage at the unfairness of things passed through me so intensely that I had to go to the men's room and pat cold water on my face. Yet in the mirror above the sink no strain showed. Looking back at me was the seamless Hubbard expression. My older cousin, Colton Shaler Hubbard, custodian of the family legends once said, "With the exception of Kimble Smalldige 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 young man 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 sullen, as if yesterday's fatigues were still on my skin. Could I assume that the agreeable face I now presented to the mirror was protective coloration? 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-





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clubs. Over the last couple of weeks, I had traveled with him at night often enough to pick up a sense of how he worked. He had a contact 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. He served as a cutout between two of our case officers at BOZO and those of our German petty agents who could speak English. If Dix enjoyed full cover from one of our business subsidiaries, presenting himself to the natives as an American executive from an import brewery—"Just call me a beer salesman, Putzi,"—the staff at the clubs we visited had small illusion clouding their clear Berlin minds 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 in this milieu. Not only was he highly visible, but anyone who talked to him would come under suspicion from Germans who were anti-American. Since his agents did not seem to mind, I was certain most of his people had been doubled by the SSD.

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



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Berlin, to Café Warsaw. That's the place where they all hang out—agents, informers, contact men, cutouts, couriers, principals, even Russian and American case officers. Rodents go scurrying from table to table looking for the best price. West Berlin may be a spy market, but East Berlin is a bigger joke. Everybody is doubled and tripled. You can't even remember if they're supposed to be yours or theirs, and you know, buddy, it doesn't matter. They make up the stuff if they don't have it."

"Aren't you concerned that the SSD is polluting your input?"

"The SSD can't begin to pay what we do. Besides, I know who's working for them, 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,"—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 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 blond 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. And you say you are a divorcée. Good for you. Could you answer a question for me, 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. Sometimes he kept such dates. Sometimes his mood turned bitter at the very idea of women. He'd get to his feet and we would move to another club. At Remdi's, on 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 Nürnberger Strasse, a cellar pit for jazz, then on to the Kelch in Prager Strasse. There, a great many men dressed as women. I hated that, hated it with all the Puritanism lurking in the family blood, but Butler enjoyed it. Then we would move on. 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 hatcheck girl, a quick notation in his pad which he ostentatiously tore off to send to the bartender. Seeing how displeased I was at his technique, he 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 middle-aged 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 a while. "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 1:00 A.M. in a Berlin club. His features, merry and cruel, his blond hair, his height, his physical force, his clear-cut lust for

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plunder must have spoken to that other, victorious time when the dream of godlike power imbued with pagan magic lived in many a Berliner's mind. 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 young ladies who looked no more than fourteen, and of 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, and the woman could 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, 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

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had been opened to my dungeon. I hardly wished to come face to face with the depth of the problem now; it defaced 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 told him I had a venereal disease. Clap, I muttered.

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

"It's a strain resistant to penicillin."

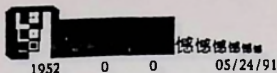
He shrugged. "Every time I caught a dose, I'd get evil," he told me. "I used to love sticking it in a woman, drip and all." He fixed me with a look. There was, as always, an extraordinary light in his eye when he talked about how low he was. He never looked more splendid than at such times. "You know, that was when I would try my damndest to get into 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 bejesus out of us. But when we got older, we would count up how many of Dad's bitches we fooled around with behind his 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 mixed pleasure with official rounds and charged off his personal 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 enemies, not our own folk.

Dix acted, however, as if his status were privileged. He



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showed more disregard for rules than anyone in CIA I had encountered so far. On the night I spent with my father in Washington, I had talked about Dix, but Cal was not impressed. "One like him comes up every month from the Farm," he remarked. "A few get through. Most go down in flames."

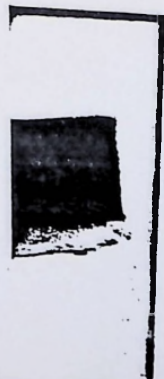
"He's exceptional," I told my father.

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

I was interrupted from thinking of this conversation when Dix remarked, "What's on your mind tonight?" I was not about to confess it was the assignment to unmask KU/CLOAKROOM. I merely smiled and looked around the Balhaus Resi. What a polyglot of human resources! I had never seen so many people with odd faces. Of course, to be a Berliner was not unequal to having one's features set at a slant—the collective physiognomy was reminiscent of the sharp edges on a cabinetmaker's tools (not to speak of the entrepreneurial glint you could find in the dullest eye). The band at one end of the dance floor had the mien of musicians who have played through the burning of the Reichstag, the death of von Hindenburg, the rise and fall of Adolf Hitler, the Allied bombardments, the Occupation, the Berlin Airlift, and they had never had to change 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 bring to 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 yoyo talks



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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 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 horsey laugh and argued doggedly 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 by his next gambit. "Would you care to hear a long story about me?" he asked.

"No."

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

"All right, but not too long," she said.

"At the age of fifteen," Dix declared, "I was in excellent shape. I lied 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 blond girl who had blue eyes and fifteen-year-old plump little turn-up tits." When Susan Pierce showed her annoyance, he said, "Don't be offended. They were



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innocent, those tits. Weren't even all sure 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 riffraff. 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 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 mine when the first sip 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.

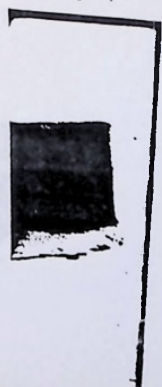
"He was huge. I was big, but this old boy was huge. He had a face you could put up against the bumper of a flat-bed truck and the face alone could push the truck uphill." Susan began to chuckle. "I was not demoralized, you understand. I was boss of my own equipment, thank you. So I said, 'Fellow, I don't know if you are aware of this or not, but that happens to be *your* arm on *my* girl.'

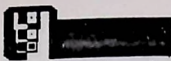
"Well,' he said, 'what are *you* planning to do about it?'"

"I smiled. I gave a dumb country-boy grin like I had nothing to do but get lost. Then I 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 top of his nostrils 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 tranquility.

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





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"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.' 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."

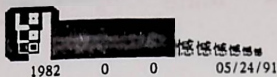
Susan Pierce laughed as if something very far within had just caught on fire. "Oh, golly," she said, "oh, golly." Then she kissed his cheek. "You're cute. You're such a fool, but, do you know, you're cute." Proprietary lust for him appeared in her face.

After a few minutes, it was obvious there was nothing more for me to do than say good-night. 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.

4 | At 4:00 A.M. a gallon of German beer took the ride of the Valkyries through my urinary tract. Awake, after two hours of unconsciousness, I felt marooned in a neon desert of





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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 lay on my heart like a mustard plaster. William Harvey was on the trail of KU/CLOAKROOM.

I did my best to calm this panic. Before I left for Berlin, Hugh Montague had 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, and Technical Services was mined, layered, and veneered with security. My immediate past had been effectively laundered.

All this Harlot bestowed on me as a farewell present. Now, none of it seemed that substantial. I was suffering from the worst form of paranoia a man in my profession can undergo—I was suspicious 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 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 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. I had clearance there to the key for a secure phone. Staring out upon the last of the night, the Department of Defense all deserted around me at that hour, I made a call to the secure phone that Harlot was authorized 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 reconstituted—which gave it the hollow timbre of words heard through a long speaking tube.

Quickly I explained my new assignment. His reassurance was firm. "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





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to me when I was your age. You'll use it in your memoirs, supposing we ever get permissive about memoirs, that is."

"Hugh, not to disagree, but Harvey is already starting to 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 to be assigned. It happens all the time. Some of our best trainees expire in just that manner over at TSS. 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 how devoid he is of culture. He may bully you a bit, but in his heart he will know that people like Harry Hubbard do just such left-handed things as delve into Lautréamont while waiting for assignment 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. Merely furnish him a 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 enjoy a little uncertainty." He seemed about to hang up.

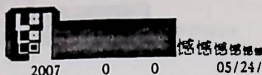
I must have laid one harsh note, however, on the empyrean of his calm, for next he said, "You remember our conversation concerning VQ/CATHETER?"

"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 supposed to know nothing about CATHETER but that it's a cryptonym."





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"Bill Harvey is broad-gauge paranoid. Such people think associationally. 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."

"Well, thank you, Hugh."

"Don't feel sorry for yourself. If you're obliged to take a few chances before you're ready, all the better. You'll be twice as good on your next job."

I got through the day. I sent a cable to West Berlin Desk in Washington, notifying them that Chief of Base wished to readress 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 figured she would go for my little tale."

"Is that why you told it?"

"Of course."

"Was that the real story? You told another version at the Farm."

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

"Why? Does 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."

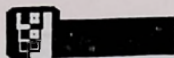
"I might."

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

"I won't go."

He began to laugh. When he stopped, he said: "I wanted





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a piece of Susan Pierce. But I had to recognize that my initial approach was laden with error. I was presenting myself as too sure of myself. You don't make it with that kind of girl unless she can feel some superiority to you. So I tried to make her feel sorry for this dude."

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

"Because she's arrogant. Shame is one emotion that girl never wants to feel. She has 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, 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—curiosity leaned on my gut 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 reinvigorated 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 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.





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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. Then, I tied him to a chair, stole his handgun and a carton of ammo, put all I owned in one cardboard suitcase, and was out the door. I knew just as 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 year than most people acquire in a life. The war was on. The soldiers were far from home. So I became the stuff women looked to. I could have passed for nineteen, and that helped. I would hit some new good-sized town 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 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 satisfied women behind me in Arkansas, Missouri, and Illinois. I was mean and sweet, and that is a difficult combination to improve upon.

"I couldn't have enjoyed life more. I'd pick up a girl or a woman, and then I would park the car on a side street, ask the lady to wait while I visited a friend for some money, and I would walk around the corner, get into the first car whose door was unlocked, jump the ignition, drive over to the store I'd selected,



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slip a stocking on my face just as I walked in the door, and would hold up the proprietor and empty the cash register. The best time to do it was two o'clock. No lunchtime customers then, and the cash register full of the noontime sales ready to go to the bank. In one minute, I'd be back in my stolen car, face mask off, and two minutes later, I was depositing the stolen car back around still another corner from my own car, at which point I'd return to my daddy's heap, get in, and tell the new friend, 'We're fixed for money now, honey.' Sometimes we'd even hear the sirens going around the business district as we left town. 'What's that?' she would ask. 'Beats me, Mrs. Bones,' I would tell her. I'd choose a tourist cabin camp before I was ten miles away, and I'd hole up with the female for twenty-four hours, or whatever interval she could manage. Six hours or forty-eight. We'd eat, drink, and fornicate. 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. 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, Hubbard, 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

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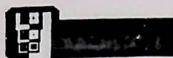
hole in a sheet. The girls would then give samples of oral technique. You'd have to guess which girl was on the chomp. Not easy. Leave it to chicks. They could mix their styles. Just to confuse us."

"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 home-burglary. Better than robbing a store. It ticks off crazy things. Cleans out any settled habits you might believe 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. 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 large. 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. For fact, 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. Since the Company is a clam-bar, I expect to have enemies up to here," 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 is 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 often hysterical. They could select you by mistake. That was one fac-



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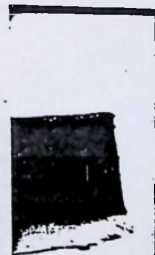
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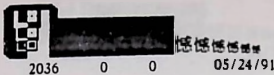
tor. The other was my sixth sense. The war had just ended. Time to move. So I got drunk one night and enlisted in the morning. Lo, I was a Marine. Three years. I'll tell you about that sometime. The rest is history. I got out, went to the University of Texas on the GI Bill, played linebacker from 1949 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. I finished college and tried out for the Washington Redskins, but I smashed my knee. Whereupon I followed Bill Harvey's advice and signed up with my peers—you and the rest of the intellectual elite."

"Is that when you first knew Bill Harvey?"

"More or less. He liked my style of play on special teams. I got a letter from him when I was still with the Redskins. We had lunch. You could say he recruited me." Butler yawned suddenly in my face. "Hubbard, my attention is wandering. My tongue is turning dry." He stared around the room, his restlessness licking at my calm. Then he signaled, and we left for another bar. 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. I could not get away from the knowledge that the search for KU/CLOAKROOM was going to be with me through every drinking bout and hangover for quite some time.

5 | 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





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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 to every 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, my role 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), the job soon expanded to on-hand note-taker, intraoffice communicator of unhappy orders from the boss, plus monitor of the wastebasket product of significant hotel rooms in West and East Berlin delivered by chambermaids on retainer. There was also covert book-keeping of our disbursements for special operational expenses, and various other payoffs 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



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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. Because he could not recognize the names of the variety of different arms and commodities flown into East Berlin from Moscow, Lenin-grad, 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 other hand, one stubby finger extended, would be guiding his eye down a cargo manifest to which the translator had affixed the required numbers. Sometimes, when he wished to take notes, he would put the martini glass in its holder, or worse, pass it to me, 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 form. His mutterings sputtered in my ear with the agreeable sound of cracklings in a frying pan. "Twenty-six 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 2681 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 ninety-six 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

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office at GIBLETS. The sides had been covered in cork to give him a four-wall 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 traveled 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 attaché 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, and if he wasn't working on the radio-telephone, or extracting the essence from another swatch of papers, he would tell stories.

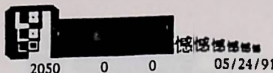
I once dared to remark to him that every leader I had known in the Company told stories. While the vast experience backing this remark was limited to Mr. Dulles, my father, Harlot, and Dix, Mr. Harvey did not ask for substantiation, but contented himself with replying: "It's biologically adaptative."

"Explain that, would you, Chief?" I was managing at last not to use "sir."

"Well, the work assigned to the kids in this particular army is unnatural. A young stud likes to know what's going on. But they can't be told. It takes twenty years to shape a trustworthy intelligence operative. Twenty years in America, anyway, where we all believe that everybody from Christ—our first American—on down to the newspaperboy is trustworthy. In Russia or Germany it takes twenty minutes to get a new operator ready to trust nothing. That's why we go into every skirmish with the KGB under a handicap. That's why we even have to classify the toilet paper in the crap house. We must keep reminding ourselves to enslave the poop. Still, you can't put too many limitations on the inquiring mind. Hence, we tell 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.



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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 suffers 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 fifty days a year. Magpie for two weeks in summer." He winked.

I wonder if this was not a prelude to informing me about VQ/CATHETER. I think he was beginning to find it difficult to live next to me every working day yet not be able to brag about his number-one achievement; besides, I was developing a need to know. My presence certainly got in the way of CATHETER-related conversations on the car radio. So there came a day when I was given clearance, and a new cryptonym, VQ/BOZO III-a, to classify me as an assistant in the high-clearance shop of BOZO himself.

It took another week to get to the tunnel. As I had surmised, Harvey made his visits at night, and often with visiting military celebrities, four-star generals, admirals, members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Harvey did not bother to restrain his pride. I had not seen such pleasure in an achievement since my father introduced me in 1939, at the age of six, to William Woodward, Sr., whose stable had won the Kentucky Derby with Omaha in 1935. Four years later, Mr. Woodward was still glowing at the mention of Omaha's name.

In turn, Harvey was not about to downgrade the beauty of his operation. I heard him describe it for the first time on an evening which commenced with me riding shotgun in the front seat of BLACKIE. We had a three-star general in the rear (who was, so far as I could make out, on a tour of NATO facilities for



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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 bulletproof 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.

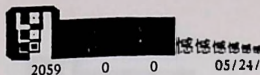
All the while, Bill Harvey kept telling the General about problems faced in the building of the tunnel, sending this monologue over his shoulder. I was hoping the General's hearing was good. Familiar with Harvey's voice, I could barely pick up his words. Since the General managed, however, to share a rear seat without giving any acknowledgment that I was present, I soon began to enjoy his difficulties with this 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 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 Altglienicke. 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 an unaccountable phenomenon showing up in the Soviet's aerial surveys. Not when we're tunneling into East Berlin."

"There was a lot of concern about that at 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, from below."



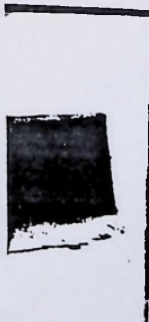
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"Isn't that a fact?" said Harvey. "I had a selling job here to Christmas. Mr. Dulles said to me, 'Can we refer to this behemoth as little as possible in writing?'" Harvey kept talking and driving, pushing his tires through many a tight turn with as much aplomb as a 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 how do you slap it together in such a way that your next-door neighbors have no clue? This sector of the border 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 soil. To dig the tunnel we had to excavate approximately fifty thousand cubic feet of dirt. That's more than three thousand tons, equal to several hundred average truck loads. But where do you dispose of that much earth? Everybody in Berlin has 360-degree vision. Every Kraut can count. Heinie is looking to supplement his income through the power of his observations. Okay, 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 with a unique 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, 'look at those Americans pretending to build a warehouse, when they have an AN/APR9 on the so-called warehouse roof. And, look, Hans, the warehouse is heavily protected by barbed wire. The Americans are putting up a radar-intercept station. Ho hum, one more radar-intercept station for the Cold War. That makes no big history.' Well, General, what the East Germans and the KGB didn't know is that we 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



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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 commence excavating the tunnel. Our cellar space proved adequate to receive the fifty thousand cubic feet of dirt we had to dig out. That, General Packer, was an elegant solution." He whipped around a car, cut back in the face 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 primly, "not to discuss cryptonym nomenclature."

"Right. I find that a reasonable stance."

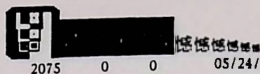
"We're here," said Chief. At the end of a long, empty street that passed between empty fields on either side, we could see a large low warehouse in silhouette, back-lit by automobiles passing along the belt highway on the East German side. The warehouse had its own small floodlights around a barbed-wire 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 passing sounds of the cars and trucks on the Schöenefelder Chaussee beyond. Their hum rolled through the night like ocean surf, and yet those vehicles knew nothing. Our warehouse would attract no more attention 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."



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"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 150 Ampex tape recorders—Mr. Harvey provided the number—moving in forward or reverse, electronic beeps signaling the conclusions or commencements of telephone conversations produced an aggregate of sound that stirred me in the same uneasy fashion as some of the more advanced electronic music I had listened to at Yale.

Was there one telephone dialogue between the East German police and/or the KGB, and/or the Soviet military that was not being captured at this moment on one or another Ampex? Their humming and whirring, their acceleration and slowdown, were an abstract of the group mind of the enemy, and I thought the Communist spirit must look and sound like this awful room, this windowless portent of Cold War history.

"Everything here is just a small part of the operation," Harvey said softly. "It's quiet now." He led us to a huge sliding door, pulled it back, and we strode down a ramp into an even more airless space, barely lit by an occasional overhead bulb. I could sniff the faintest odor of contaminated earth. What with the ramp, the minimal illumination and walls of dirt impinging on either side, I felt as if we were descending to the inner passage of an ancient tomb.

"Damnedest thing," said the General, "how you get to notice the sandbags after you buttress a dugout. Some sandbags smell good; others, you hold your nose."

"We had troubles," said Harvey. "Fifty feet into the tunnel-dig we encountered earth encumbered with stench. It scared the constitution out of us. There was a graveyard just south of the projected tunnel which we certainly had to avoid since the Sovs would make *mucho* propagandistic hay out of Americans defiling





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German graves if there was discovery. So we aimed to pass to the north, although the graveyard offered more suitable soil."

"Yet even so, there was a stink you had to get rid of," said the General.

"Nope." I do not know if it was my presence, but Harvey, if technically outranked by the General, was in no manner going to say "No, sir."

"What did you have to get rid of then?" insisted the General.

"We could live with the stink, but we had to divine the source of the odor."

"That's right. You guys in Intelligence ought to know how to work your way into a stench or two."

"You bet, General. We located it. A typical engineering nightmare. We discovered that we had invaded the draining field of the septic system built for our own warehouse personnel."

"*C'est la vie*," said the General.

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 duckboards below. I felt an hypnotic vertigo, not so much disagreeable as magnetic—I had to go down the ladder that led to the base.

It descended about eighteen feet. There, at a cupboard on the floor, we exchanged our shoes for boots with heavily cushioned soles and put all our loose change away. A finger to his lips, as if he would draw all errant echoes into himself, Harvey led us along the duckwalk. The hypnotic, magnetic—I now called it the *honorable*—vertigo continued. Lit by an overhead bulb every ten or twelve feet, 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 walls of sandbags on either side. Amplifiers, set at intervals on the sandbags, were wired into lead-sheathed cables that ran the length of the tunnel. Harvey whispered, "Carries the sap from



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the tap to the bucket."

"Where's the tap?" whispered the General back.

"Coming attractions," Harvey replied as softly.

We continued to walk with 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 been proceeding down the long entrance to a god's ear. "A church for snakes," I said to myself.

Our path proceeded not much more than a quarter of a mile, but I felt as if we had been walking along the tunnel floor for the best part of a half hour before we came to a steel door in a concrete frame. A maintenance man accompanying us brought forth a key, turned a lock, and pressed four numbers on another lock. The door opened on silent hinges. We were at the terminus of the tunnel. Above us was a vertical shaft rising some fifteen feet into the dark.

"See that overhead plate?" whispered Harvey. "Right above, is where we made our connection to the cables themselves. That was one delicate deal. Our sources told us that the KGB sound engineers at Karlhorst sealed nitrogen into their cables to guard against moisture and had attached instruments to monitor any drop in nitrogen pressure. So, just about a year ago, right up above us, you would have been able to witness a procedure comparable in delicacy and tension to a world-famous surgeon going in for an operation never before attempted." Standing next to him, I tried to conceive 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 the line, it would have shown up on their meters. Just like a nerve-jump. So, ultimately, it was a crapshoot. But we brought it off. Right now, General, we are connected into 172 such circuits. Each circuit carries 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

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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 buys spies to tell them lies.'"

"No, sir, not anymore," said General Packer.

On the ride back, Harvey sat in the rear with him, 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. They gave me 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, but the Joint Chiefs did want to know a few things."

"Such as?"

"Such as how much of the take is kept here for immediate processing and how much goes back to Washington. Are you in a position to give us twenty-four hours' notice if the Soviet army is 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. I leaned toward the driver to light a cigarette, and managed 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."

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Now, reinstalled 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 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. Why don't we wax the floor with some serious booze and recuperate?"

"I never turn down a drink, Chief."

6 | Once we were back in GIBLETS, 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.



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She had greeted us at the door, made our drinks, and tip-toed 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.

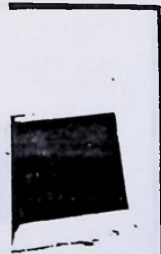
"Be double sure. Want to know the kind of individual C.G. is? I'll give you an idea. A woman living in the Soviet sector left a baby on the doorstep of a Company officer down the street. Right outside his home! I won't tell you the fellow's name because he went through a lot of flak. Why did this East German woman pick a CIA man? How did she know? 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 heartstrings, right?"

"Right."

"Wrong. You don't take anything for granted. Not in our work. 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 froufrou—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."



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"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 a few feathers.' So I dedicated myself this evening to selling CATHETER to General Asshole. Do you know why?"

"Not yet, exactly."

"Because even the Joint Chiefs' flunkies live high on the military hog. They have battleships to visit and nuclear warning systems. It's hard to impress them. They're used to touring underground facilities as huge as a naval station. 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. Right here in Berlin we don't spot check more than one-tenth of one percent of our total take, but 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 would 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 even get wind unless we break a little over in their direction, and we won't fart 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. And it is a mistake to reveal any Russian weakness 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

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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 I belong to their team, or Pentagon won't value us. Anyway, it may be 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? Where is he now?"

"In 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, drew it, and began to pare his fingernails, all the while looking me over through bloodshot 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 a heavyweight, or somebody's in total panic of me. I smell VQ/WILDBOAR in the woodshed."

"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 our effectives in London. Tomorrow morning, you start calling them. If KU/CLOAKROOM assumes that he can hide in London, he is going to learn what a ream-job is all about."



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"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.

7 | It was close to midnight. I had seven hours before the rites of execution would commence. On leaving GIBLETS, I made a quick decision to find Dix Butler and drink the night through, and the first half of this proposition took considerably less time than the second. Right off, I came upon Dix in a small club we 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 not an agent 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 bartender. He was uncharacteristically polite with her and never tried 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 dyed 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

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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 between 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 practiced German and English with each other. Occasionally she would ask, "*Du liebst mich?*"

"Ja," I would reply. 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 mich ein bisschen.*" She had a gutty voice which I enjoyed, for she employed it with 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 kiss of congratulation 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.*"

Now that I had become the official sweetheart, I was entitled to hear gossip. Ingrid informed me that Maria was kept by a rich protector. When I relayed this to Dix, he promptly returned a dividend. "The gent that Maria shares her apartment with," he said, "happens to be a rich middle-aged 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

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opened and Freddie and Bunny McCann came in. Freddie (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 Agency 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. Freddie 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." Assuring him that no such entity existed—"they're all circuses or morgues"—I came 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 Lawton, is in the Consulate here, and he's just about trapped us on the banquet list. Solemn stuff. When it comes to vulcanizing a chicken, the Germans are quite our equal."

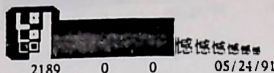
"The Back Door might amuse you," I said.

"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.

"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.



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"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 look for 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.

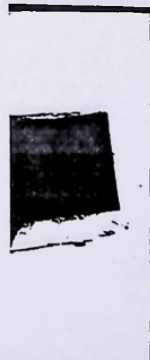
He looked at her. "Actually, I learned about Scotch the other day. In this place. From the bartender over there. Maria. I asked her, 'What is it about guys who drink Scotch?' and she said, 'You do not know?' I said, 'I do not know.' 'Oh,' she said, 'that is not so hard. Guys who drink Scotch have *given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

"I suppose the shoe fits," said Freddie McCann.

There was a pause.

"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



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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 more of our oxygen.

"You bet what?" she said:

He was not about to give up. "I bet you and me," he said, "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.

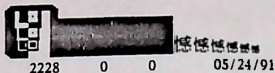
"Would you mind if I danced with your wife?" Dix asked.

"I believe it's up to her."

"She'll say no," said Dix.

"You're absolutely right," said Bunny.

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



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"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 separate hues 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 forth. "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 was 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.



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"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.

8 | 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. In 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 KGB; and there, in the far building to the left with its one light, was that a safe house that belonged to us? Had I helped to stock it on the day I made the rounds with C. G. Harvey? I do not know if the emanations of the dead had altogether ceased to stir beneath the Berlin rubble, but I had never been more aware of the bones compacted in this city.

Butler did not say a word. Walking along at his quick pace, I felt him coming to some decision, but what it was I had no idea until I recognized that our route was coming about and we were returning in a long circle to the Kurfürstendamm. I now felt tied to him in all the protocols of violence. He would not injure me provided I accompanied him, but I must convoy him through the night.

Six or eight blocks from the lights of the Ku-damm, he

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turned into another alley. "Let's look up one of my sources," he said. He spoke beneath a streetlamp, and there was a smile on his face I did not like, as if the first of my payments had commenced. It was the most peculiar smile, evil, I thought, yet he had never looked so young. "Get set," he muttered, and banged on a heavy wrought-iron gate in the wall of a small building. A doorman in a black leather overcoat and a black leather cap came out of a room on one side of a short arched tunnel behind the gate, took a look at Butler, slid the latch, 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 jockstrap 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

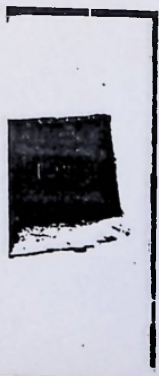


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himself, he suddenly gaped his mouth wide, drank, sputtered, choked, began to sob, began to snicker, and to my horror aroused a stirring of cruelty in myself as if he were supposed to be there for urinating upon.

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 Cupid's mouth and a deep cleft in his chin. His skin was so white that 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 complementary 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 ear to listen, and when there was no reply, the creature 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.



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"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 goddamn 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.

"That's where the war is fought."

"Yes. In that bar."

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

"Do you pretend to be 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."

"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?" I repeated. My discomfort kept

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shifting 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 safe houses.

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?"

"Not as a friend. I've merely offered facets 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. Didn't I tell you? My big brother used to corn-hole me. From the time I was ten till I was fourteen. Then I knocked him down, and he stopped. That's what they



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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," 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?"

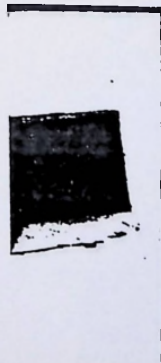
"Till whenever. Till I would do it."

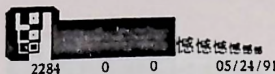
"Do you know, I think you would."

I nodded. I could not speak. Too much fear was in me. It was as if I had already 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. I wish you had something more to hold on to—you might not be so desperate."

If my father had uttered those words they could not have been more painful. 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 demanding that one consecrate oneself thereafter—no matter how unsuited and unprepared—to a life of revenge. I knew, however, that I could not





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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 does not exist until the first is attempted. So I decided to frighten you into putting out for me. But that don't work. So, 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. "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." When I still made no move, he added, "Goddamn it, 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. But he had told the truth. I was too timid to live in such a way. He could leap from woman to man to woman, on top, on bottom, or hang from



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his heels. He was 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? 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.

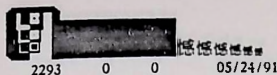
Instinct took me to Die Hintertür. Stalking night streets with a full erection must have served as my vector. An empty taxi passed, and although I needed to walk, on impulse I hailed him and thereby arrived at the nightclub just as the steel shutters were coming down, and Ingrid, small pocketbook held in one of her square hands, short and ratty fur coat on her shoulders, was shivering on the curb in the 4:00 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, 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 bischen* (so much like "ambition") kept one small part of me in a state of standoff 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. 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,

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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 while they debated 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 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 nightclub 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 divorcées 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, 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. I sat beside her in twitchy detumescence while she



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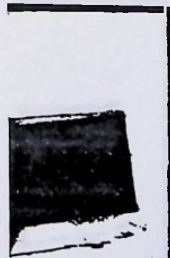
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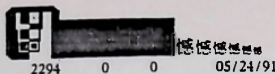
slogged down a vast mug of beer, thereby communicating to me in twenty minutes how profoundly one might, over twenty years, come to dislike the eating habits of a mate. Poor Ingrid. The Back Door, as she put it to me with a toothsome grin, never allowed their help enough of food and drink to produce more than a goat turd for the other back door. On this night, therefore, in which my own sphincter had almost played a prominent role, 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 Tempelhof, 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 harmonium 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 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 offered another such bulb, and the bed presented a coverlet in the full palette 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 *wei Marken*?" she asked. When I found a coin, she put it into 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.





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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 daguerreotype, 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 log to throw on the fire.

By the light of the twenty-five-watt bulbs, I saw revealed, without preliminary, my first vagina. As if I were 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



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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, and all at once: the inside of her belly was one's first station in heaven, but another part of me was offended. What mean auspices—what a foul initiation! I hardly liked the odors 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.

So I hovered between, half a lover entering the hypnotism of love, and half an onlooker doomed to observe myself in the act of 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 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 all erection could be gone; then there came a few minutes when the sweat stood on my neck. In this chill half-heated icebox of a chamber, standing, feet on the floor, while a strange young woman was laid out before me on the bed, no heat gathered in my loins. I was lost in a perpetual-motion machine, I was in the purgatory of desire, and I humped and I pumped beneath a pall, 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 began to revolve in me 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, and had a glimpse 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 newlyweds and she was examining the features to face her in years to come. Then she spoke: Tomorrow at work she would inform Maria. That was the sum of her first speech. 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 of me, 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.

9 | I never did get to sleep next day. A taxi ride at dawn dropped Ingrid off at the shabby seven-story apartment house where she lived, then a stop at my apartment, a shower—I was off to my job.

If I had hope that Bill Harvey could have forgotten his last conversation with me, it was at once 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?"

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

I had by now developed enough sense of Company security to anticipate the 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 out of bounds to go around the rim. If the procedure was time-consuming, I undertook it nonetheless with no disdain. Exposure to the shenanigans of the cellar bar had led me to see why foreign outposts of the Company were not encouraged to communicate directly with each other. Given the amount of deviant behavior in the world, communications along the rim could become damnably exposed—far safer to feed all messages into the hub and out again.

So I was soon engaged in the webwork of prearranging 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 is 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 uneasy 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.



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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."

"Yessir."

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

"Yessir."

"Bill Harvey. Jesus!"

He hung up.

While I did have some idea that SM/ONION was not going to be found in London, I still had to proselytize 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 not know the rank of Charley Sloate and I must address him as an equal. I had certainly been too meek with Otis.

It was a firm preparation, but Mr. Carey was not in London. His secretary, however, was pleased to be talking over a secure phone "This," she said, "is the first time for me, Mr. Sloate. I hope you won't take it personally, but you sound like you're down in a well. Do I sound sort of ghoulish too?"

"We will improve on closer acquaintance."

"You're funny."

"Thank you."

"May I say whatever I want to over this phone?" she asked.

"It's safe."

"Well, Mr. Carey is in America. Can he assist you from there?"

"I don't believe so. When's he coming back?"

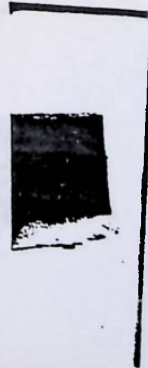
"Oh, it's at least a couple of weeks. He and his wife are getting a divorce, and he's over there to divide the property. It's a difficult time for him."

"Could you do something for me?" I asked.

"I'd be glad to."

"We're trying to locate a Company man who's been assigned to London. All we have is his cryptonym."

"Mr. Sloate, I'd love to be of help, but that kind of access is closed to me."





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"Yes, I thought it might be."

"In fact, I received a reprimand from Mr. Carey because I wasn't careful enough. You won't repeat this?"

"No."

"Well, once or twice, I let slip his real name while talking to his colleagues, and that is a negative mark. I knew they were aware of the selfsame real name, so I wasn't as properly careful as I should have been about cover."

"I have trouble with such stuff too," I said.

"You're nice." She paused. "Will you ever get to London?"

We chatted about whether I would ever get to London. She assured me that it was a good place for Americans.

I was down to Mr. Crane, the go-getter. On the assigned time for ASTOR (Approved Secure Telephone Rendezvous), I encountered the voice of the man who would indeed help me.

"Yes," he said, "Crane on the line. I've been waiting. How is big BOZO?"

"Well, he's fine. Working hard."

"Great man. You tell him I said I would do anything he wants, and this is before I even know what it is."

"He'll enjoy your trust in him."

"Tell him I've learned a little more about poker since he took me down to my BVDs."

"Is that a warning not to get into a game with him?"

"Mr. Sloate, you'll learn at the feet of a master. And you will pay for it." He cleared his throat. Over the secure phone, it sounded like a motorcycle starting up, and I thought of the myriad of electrons scrambling and unscrambling themselves to the sound. "Hit me with the task," Mr. Crane said. "Harder the better."

"Person in question has been trying to locate one of our people, a Junior Officer Trainee, who's been recently assigned to London. His cryp is SM/ONION. We don't know his cover name or names."

"That should be the adverbial duck soup." He laughed at his own qualifier. Given our instant amity, I laughed with him. Now, we sounded like two motorcycles riding around in a large barrel.

"Need it today?"



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"Preferably."

"Did you pick up any refills on this umbilical?" he asked.

"Yes. We have Repeat-Access at 1800 to ASTOR."

"Way to go. I'll call on the minute at 1800."

It was now a quarter to four. I had time to reach Harlot. To enter his secure telephone, there would be no need for ASTOR. I would be speaking directly to Washington. At BOZO, however, one still had to log in every secure telephone call, and I did not want to use William King Harvey's log book for such a call. It would be necessary, therefore, to take a trip over to the Department of Defense where I still kept my desk even if I had not approached it in three weeks. On the other hand, DOD was half across the American sector from BOZO, and we were almost in the rush hour. Moreover, their phone might be in use. I decided to carry this operation as far as I could on my own.

Crane came back on the line at six. "I won't," he said, "give you definitive returns until tomorrow, but we don't seem to have an SM/ONION. Nor a scallion. Nor a rutabaga. Not in London town."

"Does London include all of Great Britain?"

"You don't think the Brits invite the Agency into every village with a mill, do you? London is about all of it. We've got a Consulate slot in Manchester." He stopped. "Plus Birmingham. A bloke in Edinburgh. Ditto Glasgow." He grunted.

"I appreciate your effort," I said. "I hope our troubles didn't impinge on your afternoon."

"Well, I thought I was going to have to stand up my golf foursome, but this is London. The drizzle turned into a down-pour. No golf. Nothing lost."

"That's swell," I said.

"Charley Sloate, let me tell you. Our check-out will continue tomorrow, but BOZO's target is not going to be found on teacup liaison to some one-thousand-year-old color guard in Edinburgh. Target ought to be right here in London. However, we've pursued such inquiry already. Negative."

"Check."

"Where does that leave us?"

"My principal still wants SM/ONION," I said. "After all, ONION can't have an SM unless he's in England."

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"Technically, he can't."

"Technically?"

"We're secure on the penmanship, right?"

"You mean this phone?"

"I mean this is *ex officio*. You're not memo-ing any of our palaver, I assume."

"I wasn't intending to."

"All right. Hear this: Cryptonyms can develop a life of their own. But, I never said that, Charley Sloate."

"I follow you."

"How important is all this, anyway?"

"I can't tell you because I really don't know."

"Inform our friend that I am ready to step up the search. We can keelhaul our files with search vouchers into the defunct cryptonyms of personnel who are still with us in London. That's a big load of wash. London Chief may query Headquarters, D.C., as to why Berlin Base has a meatball up its giggle. Does His Bigness want the onion that much? I'm happy to do the work if he does."

"I'll see him tonight."

"Good. Hear from you in the morning."

"By the way," I said, following an inspiration I had not owned even an instant before, "is there some possibility that SM/ONION is on detached duty to the English?"

"You mean Liaison to MI6?"

"Well, something of that order."

"Can't be Liaison," said Crane. "All the saddlebags at Liaison were checked out today."

"Might ONION be in a more committed activity?"

"Special duty?" He whistled. Over the secure phone, it sounded like a bear wheezing in a cave. "I don't know if we can penetrate such cover. Yet, that could be the answer."

In the evening, I had five minutes with Bill Harvey. He was taking C.G. to the opera. He was also swearing as he finished troweling his studs into a starched and pleated shirt.

"Total tap-out, you're telling me," he growled.

"No. Mr. Crane did have one interesting lead. He thinks ONION may be on special duty with MI6."

"Fearsome," said Harvey. He started to shake his head. His

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phlegm came up. Extracting a wet-tipped stub of a cigarette from his lips, his hand wobbled over to a standing ashtray and released the butt. His torso shook from the cough. The taffy machine started. He hawked his product into the ashtray to follow the cigarette, and like a leech it slid its way down the standing tube to the cuspidor at the bottom. His suspenders hung to his knees. I mention such details because in Harvey's presence it took that much to make you aware of anything more salient than the workings of his mind.

"This is a true son of a bitch," he said, "if it has real wings." He nodded. "Sit down. C.G. and I may just have to get to the opera a few minutes late. I have to think it out. Look at what this scenario signifies. First, an alleged file clerk is shifted all around Washington, then is shot out to Korea, slipped back to London, and now is placed on Special Duty to MI6. We could be talking about a bang-and-bust specialist they had tucked onto a siding in the Snake Pit for a couple of weeks. Why not? A demolition expert hidden in the Snake Pit? But what did he blow up so imprecisely that they have to send him flying around the world? What is his connection to me? Why is he now in England working for MI6? Could it have any tie-in to Suez? Shit! I happen to like Wagner, believe it or not, and I'm not going to hear much *Lohengrin* tonight. Are you free to meet me here after the opera?"

"I'll be on hand."

"SM/ONION assigned to MI6. I have a lot to kick around."

So did I. I descended to my cubbyhole office in GIBLETS, put all my papers on the floor, set the alarm for 11:00 P.M., and went to sleep on my cleaned-off desk.

This evening nap allowed me to recover from my hangover, and I awoke with good appetite and a desire to see Ingrid. I had hardly time, however, to make myself a sandwich from the ice-box in GIBLET's kitchen before I could hear the motor of BLACKIE-1 coming back to the paved turnaround in the rear of our sandbagged villa. By the look on Mr. Harvey's face as he came into the galley, his bow tie off, his dinner jacket open to show the handles of his revolvers, I gave up any notion of getting over to Die Hintertür in the next hour or two.

"Well, we arrived so late we had to promenade down the

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aisle just before the overture commenced," he said. "C.G. is plenty irked. She hates running that kind of gauntlet. Those Krauts hiss at you. The damndest sound. Little pissy noises. *Psss! Psss!* I had to squeeze by an old biddy in a diamond tiara, and she was *sssss*-ing away, so I whispered, "Madame, we are the sons and daughters of Parsifal."

I was obliged to return him one blank look.

He grinned. "When in doubt, sow confusion. Strategies of Poker, Volume One."

"I heard today about your rep in poker."

"Which unqualified son of a bitch let you on to that?"

"Mr. Crane."

"He means well, but he can't play. If I claim any edge at the game, it is that occasionally I can read a mind." He burped. Mr. Harvey's gut utterances were like guided tours to his alimentary canal.

"Hubbard," he now said, "I like my mind to be clear. I hate impedance."

"Yessir."

"This situation with CLOAKROOM. It's lodged in my brain. Is it or isn't it penny-ante?"

"I suppose that's what we're trying to find out."

"The worst obsessions," he said with some gloom. "begin with the smallest things. Hell, the brain even has the same hue as an oyster. By which logic, every obsession is a putative pearl. All the while I was listening to the music, I was also running down my options. I've given up on any big American bang-and-bust man whom the Brits are grooming for Cairo. The Brits would never accept the idea that we have better technical personnel than they do. Too much pride."

"Where does that leave us?" I asked.

"Ready to do it by the numbers. I broke my own rule tonight. In these matters, you weigh hypotheses, you don't juggle them. You don't start with your largest possibilities. You paw over your small scenarios first. Check?"

"Check."

"All right. The very smallest. Let's say the whole thing is a fiasco from day one. It involves no more than some poor asinine kid who has a rabbi. Some rabbi high enough upstairs to know

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the ropes. KU/ROPES. Was somebody trying to tell me something right from the start?" He paused, he took a beat just long enough for my heart to lose its beat, and then went on. "Let's assume, if this is the case, that CLOAKROOM's poor performance on the cable concerning Wolfgang was an accident. I took to this possibility for a while because it was simple. I'm a great believer in Occam's Razor. Did they teach you that at Yale?"

I nodded. Before I could offer my contribution, he stated, "The simplest explanation that covers a set of separate facts is bound to be the correct explanation. Check?" he asked.

"That's about it." Actually, Occam's Razor, as I remembered it, went: *Pluralites non est ponenda sine necessitate*—excess cannot exist without necessity—but I wasn't about to substitute my erudition for his.

He burped ruminatively. "Our simplest scenario does not, however, manage to tell us why so much effort has been put into protecting CLOAKROOM. So I reject it. Too small. Something else is going on. Is CLOAKROOM part of a team? If so, what kind of rig are they rolling? First subhypothesis: They are the Let's-Give-the-Shaft-to-Bill-Harvey gang. Larger subhypothesis: One of our kingfish in D.C. is working a Berlin caper and it involves Wolfgang. I'm excluded. That makes me nervous. Wolfgang is one loose end, and I may be the other. Let's say it's time for a drink."

He got up, went to the icebox, took out the makings, and mixed a batch of martinis: he filled his shaker with ice, poured in a quarter inch of Scotch, poured it out, then loaded the pitcher with gin. "The best Chicago hotels make it this way," he informed me. "The bar at the Ambassador, and the one at the Palmer House. You have to use good gin. The Scotch adds that no-see-um flannel taste you're looking for. Slips the job down your gullet." He drank off his first fill, gave his glass another, and passed me one. It did slide down. Smooth fire, sweet ice. I had the disconnected thought that if I ever wrote a novel I would call it *Smooth Fire, Sweet Ice*.

"To resume. You enter my mental life this afternoon with Mr. Crane's hypothesis. SM/ONION may be in MI6. Ingenious. That certainly explains why we can't locate him at London Station. But it slings me off into my worst vice: premature intellec-

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tual ejaculation. I get too excited by hot hypotheses. If I ever went to a psychiatrist, he'd discover that I want to fuck an elephant. I have fucked, parenthetically speaking, everything else. Female, that is. But these martinis will have me writing my memoirs before long. It's the passing blaze when the gin hits your system. I am not off the track, Mr. Hubbard, merely taking on steam. Those Heinies were awful at the opera, *psss, psss.* "

He lay back for a moment and closed his eyes. I did not dare to hope. I knew if I put all my mental efforts into concentrating upon his need to fall asleep, and failed to hypnotize his spirit, I would be good for not much more once he opened his eyes.

"Very well," he said, "I reject the idea of a demolition expert on loan to MI6. For all I know, the British are now planting bombs under Nasser's balls, but, as I say, they would not use one of our men for that, and, in addition, it takes us further away from Base Berlin. So, all through *Lohengrin* I was marching myself in the other direction. Since I can't explain what kind of CIA man could be inserted so far up into MI6 that he's untraceable by us, I employ an old Hegelian trick I acquired back in law school: turn the premise upside-down. What if this slippery slime-ball Señor Cloakroom-Ropes-Fragment-Onion is a young undercover operator for the English who has managed to bore his way into the CIA?"

"A mole? A mole working for the English?"

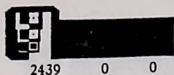
"Well, they just about managed that once with Burgess and Maclean. I don't even want to get into Mr. Philby. It'll ruin these martinis."

"But those men weren't working for the English. They were KGB."

"All Europeans, if you scratch them, are Communist. Amend that. Potentially Communist. There is no emotion on earth more powerful than anti-Americanism. To the rest of the world, America is the Garden of Eden. Unmitigated envy, the ugliest emotion of them all."

"Yessir."

He took another refill from the martini pitcher. "Let us suppose a group in MI6 was able to insert a small self-contained network into our ranks." He burped tenderly, reflectively, as if his stomach might be entering a regime of peace. "Go ahead,"



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he said, "play devil's advocate."

"Why would the English go to such lengths?" I asked. "Don't we continue to pool some information with them? I think they have more to lose if such a venture were ever exposed than they could possibly gain from infiltrating us."

"They're still in pretty bad odor with Washington. We can't forgive them for building a royal pavilion to cover Philby's ass. Why, it was their way of saying, 'Our worst Englishman means more to us than your best detectives.' At present, we have stuff they need to know that we won't trust them with. We can't. Not so long as they are fatally inept at spotting KGB penetrations into their highest places. If I hadn't been there to sniff out Philby, he could have climbed all the way to the top. He was penultimate level already. The Russians have demonstrated this ability time and again to recruit young Englishmen for lifetime jobs. The best young men. It's as if you, Hubbard, had been *made* by the KGB back in college, and joined the Agency precisely to work for the Russians. Ugly to conceive, isn't it? For all we know, it's going on right now. This much, I do postulate. The tricky Brits have the motivation to get into our fanciest plumbing. It would give them a way of expressing themselves. Creative bastards. Even if such an English mole is only loyal to Britain and never to the Soviets, we're still hanging by our fingernails. Because let there be one KGB agent working near the top of MI6, and he will get wind sooner or later that they have a mole in our midst. He will find a way to obtain the product and pass it on to the Sovs."

I was appalled how my inspired suggestion to Mr. Crane that SM/ONION might be attached to MI6 had now been transmuted into a threat to the West.

"Fearsome," repeated Harvey. "Awesome. But I'll find out. There are a couple of Brits in this town who owe me beaucoup favors."

"I don't see it," I said. "If the British have placed a mole in the Company, why would they call him back to MI6?"

"Oh, they can slip him out again. Keep one step ahead of us—as they have already. I expect they panicked. Once I got on the trail, they decided to tuck him back into MI6 for safekeeping."





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"As of now," I said, "this is your leading hypothesis?"

"As of now." He stopped in the middle of sipping his martini. "But what do we do next?" he asked.

"That's what I don't know."

"Why, we return to the old hypotheses. We plod through them again. One by one. From the simplest to the most elaborate. Only an empty hypothesis fails to improve on second look."

"Check."

"So I, Hubbard, am going back to the smallest. Do you recall it?"

"Yessir."

"Expatiate."

"Whole thing a fiasco from day one."

"And?" he asked.

"Involves some poor kid who has a rabbi on high."

Now he looked me in the eye. Over the last few weeks, I had been waiting for this. He was renowned for his ability to look at you as if he were already dead and you would soon be. His gaze offered no light, no compassion, no humor—just the dull weight of evenhanded suspicion.

I bore up under this examination, but by the time he looked away, my hangover had returned. The gin so recently added to my blood had gone bad. Nonetheless, I took another drink. "Yes," I said, "that was your first hypothesis."

"Right. I asked you to separate out any Juniors you knew who went from the Farm to the Snake Pit. Then, I told you to acquire their crypt through the Bypass."

"Yessir."

"Have you done that?"

"I may have been remiss."

"All right. I know how busy you've been. We're all remiss. Tomorrow, however, you get on the talk-box to Washington, and bring me back names."

"Check."

"Did you ever set foot in the Snake Pit?"

Was this the crux? Some instinct told me to say "Yessir."

"Yes," he said, "I've heard you were seen on those precincts."

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"Well, I barely set foot there," I said. "I guess we can start, however, with me."

"What was your cryptonym on the days you went into the Snake Pit?"

"Don't you remember, sir? I told you that I can't reveal that saddlebag. It's from Technical Services."

"Nonetheless, you walked into the Snake Pit with your cryptonym."

"Yessir."

"Would they have a record of that?"

"I have no idea. I did sign an entrance book."

"I could probably triangulate your cryptonym from that. But let's save time. Unreel your last set of remarks, will you?" His eyes were now as calm and open as window glass.

"Well, sir, all the while I was waiting for clearance at Technical Services, I was instructed to use the Snake Pit for job cover. My roommates in Washington were under the impression that I went there to work every day. In fact, to implement such cover, I was given a pass to enter Snake Pit premises, and for a couple of mornings I did try to look busy. I'd take out a file, walk it down the corridor, take it back. I guess it was analogous, you could say, to my so-called job here at the Department of Defense."

"Which of your fellow trainees did you happen to run into on these excursions?"

"That's what I can't remember. I've been racking my brain. I don't recall a soul." That, at least, was true. I was the only one from my training platoon to be sent there.

"But you yourself did no real work in the place?"

"No, sir. None."

"All right. Let's call it a night."

"Yessir."

"Make those calls to Washington in the morning."

"Done."

I started to leave. He held up a hand. "Hubbard, at present, I subscribe to the MI6 hypothesis. But I still am going to take a hard look at you. Because this is the first occasion on which you've told me that you expended a little shoe leather in the Snake Pit."

"I'm sorry about that, sir. Will you believe me. It was so

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minor, I never thought about it."

"Well, don't stand there looking like Judas Iscariot. You've worked at your job for me. I don't turn on people for too little. Only when they flunk a lie-detector test."

"Yessir."

I got out of the room without rattling the knob. My inclination to look for Ingrid had disappeared. It was Harlot I needed. There was no choice now but to get myself over to the Department of Defense, and use the secure phone. For the first time since taking a course at the Farm, I employed evasive tactics, riding a taxicab from GIBLETS up to Charlottenburg where I got out and walked for half a mile before doubling back on my route in another taxi, which took me within a few blocks of Defense. It was, I discovered, impossible to be certain that one was not being followed. An empty street took on shadows, a taxi ride at night was dazzled by the reappearance of certain cars. I made the determination that I was 80 percent certain I had not been followed, even if my emotional state was ready to put it at even money.

Harlot, whom I had the luck to reach with no delay, was home for dinner. He listened to my account, paying particular attention to the episode with Butler and Wolfgang, then to my conversation with Crane, and my distorted confession to Bill Harvey about the Snake Pit. I considered telling him about Ingrid as well since it was unlikely she would not occasionally have information to sell, but I chose not to. First things first,

"All right," he said when I was done, "Harvey is obviously paying attention to the largest and smallest scenarios, MI6 and you, dear boy."

The "dear boy" brought its own metallic hum to the secure phone.

"Yes," I said, "I've come to that conclusion, too." My voice must have been croaking its way through the Scrambler-De-scrambler like a squall of gulls.

"I'm going," said Harlot, "to tip the scales in favor of MI6. I have a friend there. He'll come through for me. Harvey will be pointed toward our British compeers for the next couple of days."

"What will happen when he can't find out who it is?"

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"He'll come back to you."

"Yessir."

"I'll tap into Bridge-Archive, meanwhile," said Harlot, "and obtain a few cryptonyms you can claim to have picked up from the Bypass. Just a few harmless Snake Pit drones. We'll choose types who are more or less your contemporaries, so as to keep Harvey convinced you're taking care of his assignment. Do you, by the way, happen to know anyone's cryptonym?"

"I do," I said, "but is that fair? A friend's career could be injured."

"It's never going to get to that. I have just made a decision. You are in this bouillabaisse because of me. Since I have legitimate Company business in Berlin, with Mr. Harvey no less, I'm coming over."

I did not know whether to take this news as a promise of succor or the guarantee that my fortune had just slipped a little further into peril.

"For the nonce," he said, "do get Mrs. Harvey to talk about her husband's decision to move from FBI to CIA."

"She wasn't married to him then," I said.

"I certainly know that. I just want to obtain a notion of the story Bill Harvey told her. Try to keep the lady close to the details. Install a sneaky on your person."

"I don't know if I could feel right about that," I said. "She's treated me well."

"You sound like the little sister I never had," said Harlot.

"Hugh, with all due respect, and I respect you . . ."

"Harry, you're in a hard game. As of this moment, I would hope you cease whimpering. Your conscience led you to this profession. Now you are discovering that your profession will oblige your conscience to see itself all too often as deplorably used, contemptible, atrocious, mephitic."

"Mephitic?"

"Pestilential. I would not be in the least surprised if iron, assuming iron has sentiments, feels much the same way when it is obliged to consign its sulphur to the furnace in the course of being annealed."

"I'll do it," I said. I did not know if it was a matter of steeling my conscience, or whether I was privately pleased by the assign-

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ment. Something new seemed to be stirring.

"Get the details," said Harlot. "The more details, the better."

"She's a closemouthed woman."

"Yes, but she does love her husband. Or so, at least, you tell me. Every injustice visited on him, therefore, must be packed into her memory. Once the closemouthed start to speak, you can find yourself on the face end of a cataract. Since J. Edgar Buddha seems to have been his usual gracious self in the manner he told Bill Harvey to get lost, do work on her sense of outrage."

"Please give my best to Kittredge," I said.

"Of course."

"Hugh?"

"Yes?"

"What if I were to locate Wolfgang? Assuming that the cellar-bar fellow was Wolfgang."

"Good point, Harry. Prepare the ground. I may want to look him over myself."

"When will you be here?"

"Figure on a week at the outside."

As we hung up, it occurred to me that the situation could come to issue in much less time.

No matter. I was too excited to sleep. Instead, I went in search of Ingrid, but it was her night off, and Die Hintertür was empty. I sat at the bar and flirted with Maria who, in turn, teased me about Ingrid. She had obviously received her report.

"That's all right," I said. "I'd rather be with you."

Maria returned her mysterious smile. I do not know what amused her, but two days later, along with everything else, I came down with a dose of gonorrhea.

10 | At the military infirmary where I went for treatment, I saw Dix Butler. It was the first time I had encountered him since our night on the town, and he offered a quick guide to sexual etiquette: no reference was made to the episode in the safe house. For social purposes, it did not exist. Instead, he offered a joke about our mutual ailment, and I was relieved that he took it lightly. I didn't. I had hesitated to come to an American infirmary because my name would be recorded. On the other hand, our regulations carried serious demerits for failure to report a venereal disease. Ostensibly, no notation of this visit would go into my 201, but I was dubious.

If I did choose the official route, it was due to the medical orientation given Junior Officers on reaching Berlin. We were told it was inadvisable to seek out a West Berlin doctor since one never knew when such a person might not also be an East German agent. The SSD kept an up-to-date list of State Department and Agency personnel. Since local doctors had to report all venereal diseases to West Berlin health authorities, and since such files might as well be regarded as open to the East German police, your case could end in the hands of the SSD. They could blackmail you because of the failure to report your infection to the Agency facility in the first place. That proved to be one convincing argument.

All the same, it violated a sense of privacy to introduce CIA to my infected member. I wanted to be alone in all my shame and pride (it was, despite all, a manly disease!) and I did not wish to offer the particulars of my night. At the infirmary, moreover, I was asked to name the woman who had passed it on to me. "I don't know," I replied. "There've been a few."

"List them."

I delivered a few names—an imaginary Elli, Käthe, Carmen, Regina, Marlene—and located them in different bars.

"Better slow down with your sex life," said the medic.

"You're only young once."

"You come back venereal again, and it goes on your 201. Second time puts the tag in the file."

"Check."

I was tired of saying "Check." Dix Butler's presence reas-

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sured me. He had come to the infirmary, too, and knew presumably how to act in this sort of matter.

"Did you ever mention to Bill Harvey that I was at the Snake Pit?" I asked as we were sitting in the waiting room.

"I did."

"When?"

"Three, four days ago. Uncle Bill phoned to ask me."

"You know, I was only over at the Snake Pit to establish cover."

"Is that a fact? What were you covering?"

"You won't repeat it?" I said.

"Not unless there's another inquiry. I'll tell you, boy, I take my lead from Uncle Bill. He picked me for this slot over a bagful of other trainees."

"Well, I was over at Technical Services."

"With Rosen?"

"I never saw Rosen."

"I keep getting letters from Rosen. Long as manuscripts. He goes on about his work. It's certifiably insane. He spent time watching a whore in San Francisco through a one-way mirror. She had to slip different drugs into johns' drinks to see which drops would get the dupe to blab the most."

"Would you let me look at Rosen's letters?"

"If he's fool enough to put it in writing, why can't I show it to you?"

And, presumably, since I was fool enough to tell Dix about my job at Technical Services, he would see no reason not to repeat it to Harvey. I felt as if I had brought off a nice pocket-sized maneuver.

I was encountering a few changes in myself. If I had fallen from favor with King Bill, I did not feel weak so much as the possessor of a peculiar kind of strength. I do not know if the annealing of my conscience from iron to steel was already well begun, but I felt not unlike a soldier who has trained with considerable trepidation for a year, is now in combat, and finds it, to his surprise, a superior life. One could be dead in a day, or in an hour, but one's worries, at least, were gone. One's senses were alive. Small relationships took on meaning. I might never see Ingrid again, but the urge to protect her was instinctive.

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Combat, I was discovering, left me close to laughter, and full of sorrow for the brevity of my life (in this case, my career) but I was feeling cool.

Harvey had established my new status on the morning after my last nocturnal telephone conversation with Hugh Montague. "Kid," he told me, "I'm putting a crimp in your access."

"Yessir."

"Can't say how long this will ride. I hope it's resolved soon. There is one piece of luck for you, anyway."

"Sir?"

"Crane was on the line at eight this morning. He spent the last two days arguing with MI6. At first they gave no return. Then they assured him there was not one drop of onion juice on the floorboards. Six hours later, 6:00 A.M., London time, they woke him up with a phone call to his home. 'Hold off,' they told him, 'it's complicated. Can't say more.'"

"So SM/ONION is in MI6," I said. At a minimum, Harlot had made one crucial phone call.

"Looks like it, don't it?" Harvey said.

"Well, sir, I'll hang out in chancery as long as you want me to, but I can't see . . ."

"Kid, hold your water."

"Mr. Harvey, if there's nothing more forthcoming from MI6, and there probably won't be, I could be out on a limb for keeps. You might as well saw it off now."

"Don't estimate what I can and cannot determine."

I had an inspiration. "May I advance a guess?"

"You probably won't get an answer."

"You're going to put MI5 onto MI6." Of course. He would know any number of people in MI5 from his days in the FBI.

"I may take a reading or two," he confessed. I was amazed, given his new suspicions, that he would tell me this much, and yet I felt as if I understood him. He liked me. I had been a good pupil. If he was forever asking me to *expatiate*, the truth was that he did a good deal of it himself.

By late afternoon, Harlot moved again. A cable came to me from Washington listing the names of three people who worked in the Snake Pit. Their cryptonyms accompanied them. It decoded as QUALITY EQUALS SMITH. RUNDOWN EQUALS ROWNTREE.

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EASTER EQUALS O'NEILL. KU/CHOIR.

KU/CHOIR was one of my old Washington roommates, Ed Gordon. I was appalled at the open nature of Harlot's message and the effectiveness of the move. Ed Gordon, if queried, would of course deny that he had sent the cable, but, indeed, who would believe him? Supposing he had satisfied my request for a few Bypass cryptonyms, could he admit it? Poor Ed Gordon. I had never liked him much. He was half-bald at twenty-eight, had a deep blue shadow from a heavy beard, shaved twice a day, and had spent a lot of time at Villanova debating whether to apply to CIA or FBI. He was also pedantic and refused to lose an argument. Poor Ed Gordon. His testicles could be lost in this argument. Yes, I felt as hard-nosed as a combat veteran. And good. I had food to feed King Bill before concluding work for the day. He looked over the three cryptonyms, and grunted. "How did this stuff reach you?" he asked.

"Sir, you don't want to know."

"Maybe I don't." He handed them back. "Can you get any more?" he asked.

"Not from my primary source."

"Try for a secondary. My Washington people can eyeball a couple of these boys after we vet their files. But since the real actor looks to be over at MI6, it will have to wait. I'm taking off tonight to see a man in southern Germany."

I had the notion that Bill Harvey was going to Pullach, just below Munich, where General Gehlen kept the BND Headquarters.

"You won't be airborne for long," I said.

He shook his head. "I'm driving. It can be done at night under five hours, checkpoints and all, but you have to keep to 150, 160 kilometers most of the way. The martinis don't hurt. A little sleep, and I'll be ready for my man in the dawn."

"I wish I could go with you," I blurted out.

"Kid, let's not get delirious."

"Who do you have for my replacement?"

"There's one backup I always count on."

"C.G.?"

"She's coming along." He made a point of shaking hands with me. "See you in a couple of days. Have some product for

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me."

"Mr. Harvey?"

"Yessir?"

"Please don't tell C.G. that I'm *persona non grata*."

"Kid, you're a fucking prize," he said.

I left him at his desk under the thermite bombs. They were now as familiar to me as the expressions of lugubrious relatives.

I had not, however, been back at my apartment for more than a few minutes when the phone rang. It was Harvey. "Pack a bag," he said. "You're coming."

I started to thank him, but he cut me down. "Hell, no," he said. "it's not me. It's the fellow I'm going to visit. He requested that I bring you along. Says he met you in Washington."

"He did?" Now I couldn't conceive of who it was. Might it be Harlot? Had he arrived and gone directly to BND Headquarters? Was he, in effect, declaring our liaison? Harvey's next speech, however, took this supposition away.

"How you met him is more than I can figure out," he said.

"The Kraut don't get to Washington that often."

11 | We didn't leave until midnight. There looked to be difficulties in refueling. Harvey did not wish to use any of the U.S. Military gas stations on the route since some—particularly at night—were manned by civilian Germans, nor did he take to the idea of an impromptu stop at some army base where we'd have to wake up one or another Supply Sergeant to get the key to the storage tank. "Last time, I lost an hour that way," he grumbled. "The goddamn key was in the Sergeant's pants, hanging on a hook in a whorehouse."

"Bill, must you make a history out of everything?" asked