

HARLOT'S GHOST | 819

The *95 percenters* was an obvious reference to West Virginia, but *Jebbies* took a while to interpret. I had always thought of Jebbies as Jesuits. Then I tried J.E.B. which brought me to J. Edgar Buddha. I was back with the FBI. Robert Apthorpe Ponsell had to be RAPUNZEL.

SERIAL: J38,771,405

ROUTING: LINE/GHOUL—SPECIAL SHUNT

TO: GHOUL-A

FROM: FIELD

12:32 A.M. JULY 15, 1960

SUBJECT: HEEDLESS

Continuing transcript of April 12:

WILLIE: Are you trying to tell me that you were in this man Flood's company for forty-eight hours and he didn't make one single pass?

MODENE: He took me around everywhere. To meetings with his people, to restaurants. Everywhere. Since he had me on his arm, everyone supposed I was his girl. That was enough for him.

WILLIE: But how did you hold him off?

MODENE: I told him I was in love with Jack Kennedy and that I am a one-man woman. He said that was okay with him. He has a singer, a blonde. She's famous, he said. "Her name would knock you on your ear." Then he added that he was faithful to her. I tried to get her name but he wouldn't give it.

WILLIE: How could he conduct business meetings in front of you?

MODENE: He and his friends talk in Sicilian, I suppose it is, and it must be a special dialect because when I said I was going to study Italian so I could follow what they were saying, I thought he would never stop laughing. "Honey," he told me, "you could go to school for twenty years and you wouldn't learn word one of my language. You've got to be born into it." That got me mad. Sam can get me madder from a standing start than anyone I ever met. I said to him, "Don't be so cocksure. I can learn

820 | NORMAN MAILER

anything."

WILLIE: You're naïve. This man is a gangster.

MODENE: Well, don't you suppose I've figured that out for myself?

WILLIE: Do you have any idea of what you're getting into?

MODENE: You'd have to be blind not to. Some of the people around him have shoulders as wide as a trailer truck, and broken noses that spread all over their face. And names! Scroonj, Two-toes, Wheels, Gears, Mustard, Maroons, Tony Tits, Brunzo. They seem so surprised when you remember their name. How can you forget them?

WILLIE: All you did in Chicago was go around with him?

MODENE: All over. So many nightclubs. He is so powerful.

We went into a restaurant and it was completely crowded. So a couple of waiters just lifted up a table with all the half-eaten food and plates on it for six people and carried that table into some vestibule. Those six people had to get up and move out there. Then they brought in a new table with only two place settings for Sam and me. He didn't even nod. He could lift one finger and the restaurant would be closed down. You know it. I felt terrible for the poor people who were told to move.

WILLIE: Did you really?

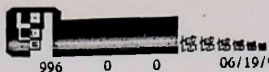
MODENE: I didn't really. I love being the center of attention and Sam will give a woman that. The truth is, I felt like Frank Sinatra. Everyone in the restaurant was watching the way I brought my fork to my mouth, and I do like that. I'm happy to twirl a fork when people are watching.

WILLIE: You should have been a model.

MODENE: I could have been a model.

WILLIE: You still claim that you're in no danger of having an affair with Sam?

MODENE: Put it this way. If I ever drank way beyond my limit, I might make that kind of mistake with him, but I did count my drinks. And Sam was a gentleman. We did a lot of talking, however, about the Kennedys. He hates Jack's father. He says, "Joe made more money in the liquor business than I did. You could take lessons from him on how to screw a friend. In fact, he screwed me," and Sam



HARLOT'S GHOST | 821

started laughing in his crazy way again. After which he wiped his lips carefully and said, "Jack might be the good guy in that family. He's not afraid to talk to the real people. But Nixon! Too hard to trust. Tricky Dick is in nose-deep with the starched fronts. The richies. Tycoons like Howard Hughes and the oil people. Those richies like to pretend guys like me don't exist. So, I might do business with Jack before doing business with Nixon. Only I might not. That brother of his, Bobby, wanted to make a fool of me in public. Maybe I can't forgive that. It's a long life, isn't it? I'll tell you an old Italian saying, 'Revenge is a dish.' When I know you better, I'll tell you what the second half of that one is." And he laughed again. I said, "It looks like you might have a problem." "Me?" he asked. "I don't have any problem that I don't have an interesting solution to," and he began to laugh all over again.

(QUERY: FIELD TO GHOUL-A—HOW DID BOBBY KENNEDY TRY TO MAKE A FOOL OF SAM FLOOD? SECOND QUERY: WHAT IS THE LAST HALF OF REVENGE IS A DISH?)

MODENE: Sam and I flew back to Miami early Monday morning, and Sam insisted on taking me around and shopping until evening when Jack would be coming by the Fontainebleau. Let me tell you. Sam knows how to shop. He can tell diamonds from paste at fifty feet.

WILLIE: Well, so can I. Even if I have no diamonds. (April 12, 1960—to be continued)

Will terminate for tonight and finish, if possible, by tomorrow night. If possible, please respond a.s.a.p. to the queries.

FIELD



171

SERIAL: J/38,776,214

ROUTING: LINE/ZENITH—OPEN

TO: ROBERT CHARLES

FROM: GARRULOUS

11:37 A.M. JULY 15, 1960

SUBJECT: DISHES

Answer to first query: From Select Committee on Improper Activities in the Field of Labor Management, Sen. McClellan, Chairman, 86th Congress, 1st Session, June 9, 1959, lines 18-672-18,681:

MR. KENNEDY: Would you tell us? If you have opposition from anybody, do you dispose of them by having them stuffed in a trunk? Is that what you do, Mr. Giancana?

MR. GIANCANA: I decline to answer because I honestly believe any answer might tend to incriminate me.

MR. KENNEDY: Would you tell us anything about any of your operations, or will you just giggle every time I ask you a question?

MR. GIANCANA: I decline to answer because I honestly believe my answer might tend to incriminate me.

MR. KENNEDY: I thought only little girls giggled, Mr. Giancana.

Answer to second query: OSS working undercover in Italy, 1943, did encounter the following piece of Sicilian wisdom: "Revenge is a dish that people of taste eat cold."

GARRULOUS

SERIAL J/38,780,459

ROUTING: LINE/GHOUL—SPECIAL SHUNT

TO: GHOUL-A

FROM: FIELD

11:44 P.M. JULY 15, 1960

SUBJECT: HEEDLESS

HARLOT'S GHOST | 823

Thank you for prompt response on queries. Continuation of transcript AURAL-BLUEBEARD, April 12:

MODENE: Actually, I could have kept shopping with Sam instead of rushing back to the Fontainebleau, because it was the longest wait for Jack. When he finally did arrive, I thought he might be on medication. His face was puffed and swollen. He smiled and said, "It's happened. My feet are starting to hurt." "It's all right," I told him, "you still look good to me." But when we kissed, I realized he was in no mood to make love.

WILLIE: That must have set you back.

MODENE: I felt close to him. What a compliment! To keep our date even when he's entirely wrung out. We just had sandwiches and wine. And he started talking again about the desert island.

WILLIE: I wonder if he and his wife will stay together if he doesn't become President.

MODENE: Well, as you can imagine, I've given a little thought to the subject.

WILLIE: Are you building up any expectations?

MODENE: I can only say I never felt closer to Jack. It was evening and we sat in silence. Then he had to go. He told me that it might be our last meeting for a while, since all his effort would be going into West Virginia now, and even if he wins that, there'll be nonstop days and nights of preparation for the convention in July. He seemed to get sad at the thought of how long we'd be apart, and we sat in the room and held hands, and he said, "I don't suppose there has been any time in my life that could have been less propitious for you and me than these madhouse months, but if it's really there for us, we will bear up. We will bear up, won't we?" he said, and I had to do all I could not to cry.

WILLIE: I feel like crying.

MODENE: The trouble is that I don't know what kind of life to go back to. After you've been around people like Frank and Jack and Sam, who are you going to date for an encore?

824 | NORMAN MAILER

WILLIE: I predict that Sam will take up a large role in the near future.

MODENE: Oh, no. While we were shopping, he told me the name of his girlfriend. It's Phyllis McGuire of the McGuire Sisters. He is off in Las Vegas right now seeing her. I'm all alone by the telephone. (April 12, 1960)

There are occasional calls to AURAL in the next two months, and references to long-distance conversations with IOTA and RAPUNZEL. It is evident, however, that such communications are becoming infrequent. After West Virginia, on May 10, IOTA did phone her. BLUEBEARD's subsequent conversation with AURAL (May 11) may be worth inserting.

MODENE: Well, he called me the same night. I could hear his political people celebrating in the background. He told me that he didn't think he could be stopped now, and was going to hold a vision—he used exactly that word, *vision*—of our reunion in Los Angeles after he won the convention. And he invited me to come out for the week of the convention.

AURAL: Are you appropriately thrilled?

BLUEBEARD: I was very happy he said that. And I feel at peace now. I know I can wait these next two months. I'm feeling awfully sure of myself again. (May 11, 1960)

18 | In the second week of July 1960, I discovered that I was not inhabiting the summer so much as I was living in the previous spring, for in my mind, I was following Modene through her travels between Miami, Chicago, and Washington;

HARLOT'S GHOST | 825

indeed, I only became fully aware of how removed I was from my own life when I walked into the officers' lounge at Zenith one July evening and there on the television set was John Fitzgerald Kennedy speaking to a press conference at the Democratic Convention. I watched with all the shock of passing through an occult experience. It was as if I had been reading a book and one of the characters had just stepped into my life.

It was then I recognized that the fact Modene was now at the convention in Los Angeles had not held as much reality for me as the account of her earlier activities I had been sending out each night to Hugh Montague.

Hearing Jack Kennedy's reedy voice on TV, however, put me through transformations. Time, I discovered, was no unimpeded river, but a medium of valves and locks that had to be negotiated before one could reenter the third week of July. It took a day before I began to call the Fontainebleau every few hours to see if Modene had returned. When she finally came back to her room on the evening of the ninth day, her phone was ringing as she came through the door. I am certain she took it as an omen and must have concluded that I was gifted with remarkable powers, for she immediately burst into tears.

Shortly after my arrival, forty minutes later, our affair commenced. The mermaid was hooked—a singular dislocation of metaphor! If the barb had been set, it was in me. I had never gone to bed with a girl so beautiful as Modene. If there had been nights I was not likely to forget in the brothels of Montevideo, they also revealed the trap in commercial pleasure; as my body encountered new sensations, so did the rest of me tear off in moral panic: To go so far, when one cared so little! With Modene, however, it took no more than a night to fall in love. If half of me loved her more than the other half, all of me was moving, nonetheless, in the same direction. I did not know if I would ever have enough of Miss Modene Murphy, and this passion was even larger than my anxiety that I was breaking the first commandment handed over by Harlot. If a sneaky had been planted in her room while she was away, then I was engraving my voice onto the tapes of the FBI. Even in the middle of our first embrace, I kept telling myself that they would at least remain ignorant of the name of Harry Field. For on my race over to the hotel after

826 | NORMAN MAILER

receiving her call, I had prepared a piece of paper on which was written: "*Call me Tom, or call me Dick, but Harry never.*" Of course, we embraced as the door clicked shut behind me, and stopped for breath and kissed again, and then she was crying when we finished, so I did not get to hand the note over for the first five minutes, and by then, since she was no longer weeping, but laughing as well, she took in the message and laughed some more. "Why?" she whispered.

"Your room has ears," I whispered back.

She nodded. She shivered. A wanton look came over her face. In the midst of loose mascara and smeared lipstick, she was lovely. Her beauty depended on arrogance, and that had just returned. If her room was bugged, she was, at least, a center of attention.

"Tom," she said clearly, "let's fuck."

I would know her better before I would know how seldom she used the word.

On that night, the more Modene and I learned about each other, the more there was to learn. I was not accustomed to being all this insatiable, but then, I had never made love before to the mistress of the man who might yet be President of the United States, nor to the girl who had had an affair with the most popular singer in America, nor to the woman who might be the lover of a brute overlord in crime: All that, and I had not fainted on the doorstep—a monster of resolve was on the prowl in me. I could not have enough of her.

When it was all over and we came down at last to a little sleep in each other's embrace, she whispered to me on awakening at two in the morning, "I'm hungry, Tom, I'm hungry."

In an all-night diner in the southern end of Miami Beach, down in the twenty-four-hour sprawl on Collins Avenue of all-night movie houses and all-night stripper bars, of motels that rented by the hour while their names hissed in their neon signs, we ate sandwiches, drank coffee, and tried to talk. I felt as if I were on a boat, and dead-sweet drunk. I had never been so relaxed in my life. It was only by a last inward tide of duty that I could introduce her to the idea that we needed a private code. She took to it immediately. The urge to conspire lived as brightly as a genie in her. We decided to meet in the bars of

HARLOT'S GHOST | 827

hotels near the Fontainebleau, but the name of each hotel would stand for another—if I spoke to her of the Beau Rivage, I would mean the Eden Roc; the Eden Roc would be the Deauville, and mention of the Deauville was a signal to go to the Roney Plaza. An 8:00 P.M. date would be for six in the evening. I worked out the transpositions in duplicate and handed her one of two pieces of paper.

"Am I in danger?" she asked.

"Not yet."

"Not yet?"

I did not know if I wished to come back to any world at all.

"Mr. Flood worries me," I said at last.

"Sam would not touch my fingernail," she said fondly.

"In that case," I said, "he might touch mine." I regretted the remark instantly.

"You know," she said, "I feel wonderful. My father was a motorcycle racer, and I think his blood is in me tonight. I feel high."

A black pimp at the other end of the diner was trying to catch her eye and in the absence of such contact was leaving his evil cloud on me.

I felt as if I had come into the place I had been expecting to enter all my life.

19 | It would take two weeks before I found out why she had been so distraught on her return. Now that we were lovers, Modene told me less about herself than in our two short meetings for drinks. We could talk about her childhood and mine, about singers and bands, movies and a book or two—she did think *The Great Gatsby* was overrated ("The author doesn't

828 | NORMAN MAILER

know *anything* about gangsters") and *Gone with the Wind* was a classic, "although it took the movie to convince me of that."

I hardly cared. If we were married, her taste might be a hurdle of the first order, but then it occurred to me that I had never asked myself how much I admired *The Great Gatsby*. One was not supposed to wonder about that. Not at Yale. It was like asking yourself whether you were moved by St. Francis of Assisi.

We agreed, at any rate, on *The Catcher in the Rye*—"Heaven," said Modene, "although not a *great* classic," and that was enough to do with books. We ate and drank well. She knew every good restaurant in southern Florida. Whenever I had a day off, and there was more time now that HEEDLESS was up to date, we would (despite her long fingernails) go waterskiing or scuba diving in the Keys and spend Saturday night in the bars of Key West. It was amazing I did not get into fights. At bottom, I felt so green in the role of squire to an incredibly lovely girl that I would be on battle-alert whenever anyone looked at her. Hardly confident of my mastery of martial arts—the stint at the Farm had obviously not been enough—I was covertly measuring every conceivable opponent until I came to learn that one seldom got into a fight before one's woman provoked one. Modene forestalled such possibilities. I did not know exactly how she managed, but processing ten thousand or more people a year on an airplane may have had something to do with it. She was pleasant to strange men but not accommodating, and made it clear that I was her date for the evening and she was with me. So, I survived. I prospered. I may even have looked a little more formidable than I felt. I was, in any event, ready to die before I would ever yell, "You can have her, you can have her," and knew I would wonder forever if Dix Butler had been telling the truth.

We also drove to Tampa, and to Flamingo in the Everglades. If we would spend a day together as preparation for our night, part of the joy was to be together in a car. She loved convertibles. Soon, I was renting them. I had a principal I could never touch until I was forty which consisted of bonds issued by the City of Bangor in 1922. It had been passed on to me by my paternal grandfather, and I could use the interest, although by family protocol, I was not supposed to. Who knew why our



HARLOT'S GHOST | 829

family did what it did? I, at any rate, good Hubbard, always predeposited such interest. Now, parsimony would screech at me through each pole vault into the heaven of Modene Murphy. I was beginning to suffer so much from the gap between my richest and stingiest impulses that *Tom* Field began to dip into Harry Hubbard's accumulating interest to splurge on splendid meals and a rented white convertible.

How Tom and Mo loved to drive! Our weather was hot, rainy season was on, and I came to appreciate a South Florida sky. The sky could rest weightless upon you for a splendid morning, its bowl empty and blue over the Everglades like the great empyrean of the American West, but if Florida lands were flat, flat as water level, the sky had its own mountainous topography. Torrents of rain could approach as quickly as sunlit ravines fall into the unforgiving shadow of their cliffs. The changing shape of a cloud was, therefore, never to be ignored or you would not get the top up in time. Some cumulus sailed into one's attention off the spinnaker bellows of a tropical gust; other puffs curled on themselves like hooks prepared to gouge the fabric of the sky. Under a black ceiling of atmospheric wrath, storm clouds massed above one another in ranges and ridge lines that the land below could never offer, and insects were whipped by one's car stream into dark expectorations against the windshield, their small, exploded deaths still pitting the glass after gouts of rain.

How water could fall in southern Florida! One moment I might be close to doubling the speed limit, my highway no more than a long white arrow launched against the horizon; then, clouds would appear like hooded strangers. Ten minutes later, curtains of downpour would force me to the shoulder. A celestial rage, as intimate but almighty as a parent's wrath, would beat upon the metal skin of the car. When the rain ceased, I would drive through southern Florida with her head upon my arm.

We never talked about what had happened in Los Angeles. She did not refer any longer to Jack or to Sam. They seemed to have disappeared, and, given the size of her wound, I was not about to approach such questions. Sorrow and silence were her sensuous companions. I, well-used by now to mourning for Kit-tredge, could ride beside her without speaking for an hour at a



830 -1 NORMAN MAILER

time. I lived with the lover's optimism that silence brought us nearer. It was not until I began to suspect that her thoughts could wander while making love, that I came to realize how much of the beloved candidate remained with us. Sometimes, in the middle of the act, I could sense her mind going far away from me, and I would feel the subtle sense of pall that comes over a party when it has just passed its peak, and important people are getting ready to leave.

About this time, a letter came in from my father by way of the Quarters Eye pouch. It is characteristic of him that with the variety of means open for communication within the continental United States—pre-arranged pay phone to pay phone, Encoder-Decoder, special shunt code line, secure phone, standard Agency phone, and a number of other modes too technical to enumerate—my father employed an old OSS means. He wrote a letter, sealed it in an envelope, girded it about with three-quarter-inch strapping tape (half as strong as steel), stuck it in the daily pouch to wherever it was going, and was done with it. While it might have taken two experts half a week to steam loose such a chastity belt and restore the envelope, there were more brutal methods of interception. The letter called attention to itself and could simply be stolen. Not once in his career, my father would boast, had he ever lost a communication by this means of sending it—no, he would correct himself, once he did; the plane carrying the pouch went down—therefore, he was damned if he was about to give up dispatching his messages without the feel of his hand on a pen sending out his own words directly.

I read:

Dear Son,

I'm going to be in Miami on Sunday, and this abbreviated communication is to say that I would like to spend it with you. Since I don't want to get off on a wrong note, let me issue in advance the unhappy news that wife Mary and I, one year short of our silver wedding anniversary, are now, after six months of separation, entering the process of getting a divorce. The twins, I fear, have lined up on her side. I have assured Roque and Toby

HARLOT'S GHOST | 831

that the schism is, under the circumstances, comparatively friendly, but they seem bitter. She is their mother, when all is said.

We need not dwell on this news during my day in Miami. Just wanted to alert you. Let's kick up our heels and get to know one another again.

Fondly,
Cal

I had been looking forward to a day with Modene, and under the changed circumstances, even thought of introducing her to my father except (1) I was afraid he would steal her, and (2) I was pleased that he was going to give me this much private time—it seemed unique in our annals that he would spend that many hours with me.

Then Modene solved my problem by deciding to work that Sunday, and I was able to greet him alone when he came off the plane. He was looking gray under his tan, and spoke little for the first hour. It was only ten in the morning and he wanted to go directly to the beach. "I need a run," he said, "to get the office cramps out of my gut." I nodded glumly. "We do what you want to do," I said, and knew he was going to push me into a race. He always did. Ever since I had turned fourteen, he had engaged me in serious runs every time we were together, and every time I lost; I sometimes thought the greatest event in my father's life had taken place long before he was in the OSS or the Agency: It was that slot bestowed on him by the Associated Press as left halfback on the Second All-American Team of 1929. Of course, he never forgave himself for not making First All-American, but then, that was my father.

I had made friends with the pool guard at the Fontainebleau, and so I took Cal there and we used an empty cabana to change—I had had the foresight to bring extra trunks along—and then we went out on the beach for our run.

I was blessing Modene. If, among her charming contradictions, she maintained her long, silver fingernails at every cost to herself, there was also the lady who was competitive at sports. If I could introduce her to sailing and show her all sorts of

832 | NORMAN MAILER

improvements to her tennis game, she learned quickly, and high-board diving and speed swimming were proficiencies she could impose on me. When there was time, we would, at her insistence, run together on the beach. Short on sleep and always in the act of eliminating a little too much booze from my ducts, nonetheless I was more or less ready for a set of jousts with my fifty-three-year-old father, and he, I was both relieved and saddened to see, had the hint of an extra inch around his waist.

"We won't go all out," he said, "just jog for a while."

So we set off to the north on the unending sand of Miami Beach, wide and packed and much too hot already. To our left, on the side of the land, were the monoliths of the big hotels, white, shining, monumental, monotonous. The sky began to revolve just a little under the heat, and a narrow band of protest soon tightened around my skull at the inhumanities I was visiting upon the civil society of my body; on we jogged, side by side, for a mile, his breath coming unashamed and heavy, his sweat lining the curves of his powerful hairy chest, and I stayed even with him, determined that on this day, fortified by the unseen presence of Modene, I was going to beat him at last.

We turned around after a mile and a half, both of us tired and panting, both of us going along stride for stride, but now we no longer spoke. He did not ask me any longer how the tarpon and sailfish were taking to the hook on the sport-fishing cruises, he did not mention the seven-hundred-and-eighty-pound tuna he had caught on the first day out of Key West on a fishing vacation eight years ago, no, now he was silent, and I was silent, and the level sand began to feel like the longest uphill grade I had ever climbed while the sky overhead began to seem as unstable as a dance floor to a drunk. I knew we would run until one of us fell, or we finished up back at the Fontainebleau, and since I wouldn't quit, and he wouldn't, we kept running on that level, side by side, up the endless grade of sand itself, and neither of us dared to break into the lead for fear there was no reserve to call upon—one might gain three steps on the other and collapse. Then, as we came into the last few hundred yards, the long curve of the Fontainebleau three hotels away, then two, then one, we spurted, which is to say we each churned in the sand and ran one modest increment faster, and all the world was

HARLOT'S GHOST | 833

in danger of turning black before I won by five yards and touched the railing of the boardwalk at the point where we had begun.

It took fifteen minutes of walking up and down the beach before we were ready for a swim, and when we came out of the water, the race still unspoken between us, my father began to spar with me. It was open-hand and allegedly not serious, but he was an awful man to spar with. He was clumsy, he was unorthodox, he was fast for a heavyweight of his age, and he could not really scale down his punches. I had learned enough at the Farm to be quick enough to avoid most of what he threw at me, although his jab when he caught you with an open slap, did rattle one's teeth, and when I made the mistake of replying with a slap-jab of my own, he began to throw rights. He was just slow enough, and enough of an old-fashioned boxer, to give clear warning each time, but that alert was crucial because his body could still coordinate itself into the full heft of the punch, and each of the rights I slipped, or ducked, went by like a freight train. I had to content myself with throwing medium-stiff replies into his solar plexus until—and this was much to my happy surprise—he held up his hands at last and hugged the life out of me. "Kid, you've learned how to box, I love you," he said, and if he looked very pale under the tan, he was, with half of himself at least, honestly happy.

We finished by arm wrestling on one of the picnic tables at the boardwalk. This was *pro forma*. He always won with the right hand. No one in our family, or in the circle of our acquaintances, or for that matter in the Agency—at least by legend—had ever beaten him. I used to wonder what would happen if he and Dix Butler got together.

Now, he disposed of me with the right hand and the left. We did it again, and he beat me without pain in the right, and took a little longer on the left. By the third time, I gained a draw with my left arm, and we were both content.

"I'm proud of you," he said.

So, close to heat prostration, regurgitation, and stroke, we went for another easy swim, dressed, got back into my Company car—I did not dare to show him the white convertible I had leased on the interest of the Bangor bonds—and down we went

834 | NORMAN MAILER

to the Keys, going as far as Islamorada before our stomachs came back to ourselves sufficiently to feel hungry. At a fish-house joint whose deck gave separate views of the Gulf and the Atlantic; we got down to stone crabs and beer, and I was able to realize that all of the four hours spent until now was as much in the form of a personnel recruitment test as an inquiry into the capacities of his oldest and until this day, third-best-loved son. We just kept looking at each other, and smiling at each other, cuffing each other on the shoulder open-handed, and quaffing beer, digging with our two-tined forks into crabmeat about to be lathered with mayonnaise. God, we loved each other. "This damned Agency has done as much for you as I ever did," he said.

"No, sir," I said, "my father Cal Hubbard is not a fathead," and the memory of the day I broke my leg skiing came over both of us at once. And we beamed at one another like explorers who have crossed a continent together and now share a view of a hitherto unglimped sea.

"Rick, I need an assistant down here," he said, "and I expect you're the guy. I was hoping you would be, and now I believe that you are."

"I believe that too," I said. I was thinking of Modene. I had never loved her more. I knew more about her than anyone else in the Agency, and I did not know anything about the lady other than that I adored her, and she had given me some kind of strength I had never quite felt before. "Give me a tough job," I said, "and I'll be there with you."

"This one is tough enough," he answered. "First of all, it is absolute hush-hush. So let's start with that. I like everything about you, but for one element."

"Name it."

"Your friendship with Hugh Montague."

I cannot pretend that I was not surprised, but all I said was, "I don't know if we're all that friendly these days."

"Why was he having lunch with you at Harvey's Restaurant, then?"

"I needed his help on exile welfare." I went into explanations. My father's eyes were hard on me all the way in much the way they had kept up with my movements as we boxed. I do not know if he was wholly satisfied when I finished, and I was rueful

HARLOT'S GHOST | 835

that our splendid beginning for this day had now been bent to this degree, and was doubly rueful at the collateral intelligence provided by simple Washington gossip: I knew my father well enough to understand that he wanted a vow from me. "Anything you say," I told him now, "will not be repeated or in any way hinted at by me to Hugh Montague."

He held out his hand and shook mine with the grip he used to get at the marrow in your finger-bones. "All right," he said. "I'll brief you on Hugh. He's a great man, but at present, he worries the hell out of me. I can't prove it, but Allen may be feeling the same way. Bissell, of course, just can't abide Hugh Montague. They're a built-in cock fight. The trouble is that Hugh knows too much about everything going on. God, he's sitting on every crossroads in the Company. It's Allen's fault. Right from the start, Allen wanted one of us free and clear of all the others to keep an eye on everything, and report directly to Allen. That way Allen would have a hedge against our own bureaucracy running things without him. In consequence, Hugh has security overrides that allow him to pipe into what-all. His fief has become a goddamn spiderweb, an empire within the empire. And he is unalterable opposed to the Cuba op."

"Well, I am for the Cuba op."

"You damn well better be."

I was debating whether to inform my father about the work I was doing for Hugh, and decided I would not. A new instinct, immediately and incredibly alert, was telling me to work with Hugh and Cal, work with them both—each in his own enclave. It might be the first time in my life I could lay claim to a driver's seat. If I was appalled by the extradimensionality I was taking on for myself, I was also growing enamored—I confess this—with what might be the ultimate possibilities of myself. No, I had not fainted on the doorstep.

"In fact," said Carl, "I'm so opposed to Hugh's attitude at this point that when Allen asked me to take on a most special task, I told him that I would on the proviso that Hugh Montague not be given one whiff of it. Allen promised to go along with that."

I nodded.

"The line of communication," Cal said, "goes from Allen

836 | NORMAN MAILER

to Bissell to me. Now it's going down to you. I do have a case officer working New York and Washington, but now I need one in Miami. I will add you to the team. Circumscribed, wouldn't you say?"

"Yessir."

He squinted at a fishing boat bucking a chop in the channel between two far-off Keys. "Rick, I must admit that I am feeling very respectful of this operation. I haven't been off my feed as much since I was fourteen and knew I was going to start my first varsity football game at St. Matthew's, the youngest student ever to make the first team varsity there, I'll remind you. So, yes, if I wake up in the middle of the night, just between us, I'll tell you—yes, I do gulp air. Because the core of the Cuban op—and I can give it to you in one sentence—is that Allen has now decided that Fidel Castro is definitely to be eliminated."

Had he forgotten my secure telephone call to him? "That's common gossip around here," I said.

"Yes," said Cal, "you're dealing with Cubans. Any possibility, no matter how macabre or extravagant or sensational, is everyday gossip to them. But no Cuban believes deep down that he can knock Castro's hat off. We can, however. We can do just that, and we will.

"What about Toto Barbaro?"

"For now, ignore Barbaro. He has enough of a nose to want to get near to me. Follow no leads with him, therefore. Think of him as doubled. He probably is."

"Yessir." I paused. "Is there a timetable?"

"Castro is to be gotten out of the way by early November."

"Before the election?"

He looked at me. "Exactly."

"Can I ask how high up this goes?"

He shook his head. "Son, it's a lifework to understand this Company. You never stop learning how the gears fit. But there's one sense you must develop. We all gossip a little more than we should, and we are not above trying things out verbally to hear how they fall on someone's ear. Only, there are certain inquiries not to make. Real security depends on a key, one simple key. Unless you are told where a project was initiated, don't go looking for the source. You don't want to know. Because when you



HARLOT'S GHOST | 837

get down to it, we cannot trust ourselves. So I don't want to be informed whether this started with President Eisenhower, or Richard Milhous Nixon, or Allen himself. It's come down with enough force for me to think Allen cannot be the initiator, and I would warrant it is not Bissell. He prefers to take a clear order and work out the filigree. All right, you say, if they are talking of November, it must be Nixon. He's Action Officer for Cuba, after all, and he's bound to win the election if Castro is off the board by then and we have Cubans fighting in the hills. Still, we don't ask. Because it could be Eisenhower. When Patrice Lumumba came to Washington last month, the State Department treated him like Mr. Africa. They talked Ike into putting Lumumba up at Blair House—impress him with the fact that he was squatting in the shadow of the White House—but Mr. Lumumba is a revolutionary, and he didn't feel all that impressed. He and his people smoked marijuana constantly, and left their butts smudged all over the State Department seal in the ashtrays. Then Lumumba went in for a few witchcraft ceremonies with his trusted henchmen—lots of chicken feathers and blood, I hear—after which Lumumba had the consummate moxie to ask the State Department if they would provide him with a white prostitute, preferably blond. He wanted a little feminine company at Blair House. Well, Eisenhower is reported to have said, 'Castro and Lumumba have to be right out of the Black Hole of Calcutta. Can't someone do something about these people?' "

My father now shrugged. "That may have been all it took to kick off our Castro op, why, yes, it could have started with old Ike, or Nixon taking his cue off Ike's remark, but all I have received from Allen is the go-ahead to talk to Bissell. And all I got from the latter worthy was that a decision had been made to work with underworld figures. People who have lost their casinos in Havana. Top hoods, after all, with an investment in Cuba, would be likely to try such a job. No one would question that they were the trigger men for their own good and sufficient reasons. 'All right,' says Bissell, 'fill in the blanks.' 'Wouldn't care to vouchsafe a clue on how to start?' I ask. 'Up to you,' says Bissell, 'you know a good many people.' Indeed I do, but are any in category? I had a ridiculous couple of days, Rick. I've been

838 | NORMAN MAILER

in the Far East so long that I can find you a Hong Kong mechanic adept at pulling out toenails a millimeter at a time, but the sad truth is that I have a paucity of skilled low-life contacts in the U.S. I didn't know where to start. When it came down to it, I didn't know the right Americans. I even thought—and I'll disinherit you if you repeat this to anyone—that I might call on my old friend Lillian Hellman. She had an affair years ago with Frank Costello of which she is still very proud, and I thought maybe she would give me an introduction to the old tiger gangster boss. Lucky for me, I looked into it first. Costello is pretty much out of it these days. Along about then, I was called in by Bissell and handed the plumbing. I am to work with Bob Maheu, he tells me. Well, that's another matter. You're going to meet Maheu in Miami, I expect. Used to be FBI, now he's Howard Hughes' man. Has also done work for us. I teamed up with Bob Maheu years ago in the Far East and he's one incredible fellow." My father spent a moment contemplating his palms. "That's about the size of it. Hierarchically, I've got all the responsibility; operationally, I sit on the sidelines and wait for Maheu to report to me. It's not a situation I instinctively enjoy. And as for where it all started, well, Hughes comes to mind as quickly as Nixon. But I can't pretend that I'm happy. Hell, let's get the bill and drive back."

When we were on the road to Miami, he did expatiate a bit. "There are going to be a few meetings soon," he said. "I may or may not attend them. Maheu has his down and dirty contacts but I, of course, have to maintain some hygiene."

"Where is the role for me?" I asked.

"Harry, I can't promise in advance whether this job will occupy you for an hour, a week, or whether it will consume you. I honestly don't feel as if I have my own hands on it yet."

"I've never seen you so pinch-mouthed about things," I said. It was a large remark for me to make, but his gloom brought it forth.

"It's hellish breaking up with Mary," said my father.

We drove in silence for a while.

"It's all my fault," said Cal. "Mary had learned to live with my infidelities, but she couldn't bring herself to forgive me after I took a girlfriend into her bed in Tokyo one fine afternoon

when I thought Mary would be out shopping until evening."

"Christ Almighty," I said. "Why did you ever do that?"

He sighed. "I guess sex without risk can get to be an uncomfortably intimate transaction. Besides, every Hubbard is one part mad. Know what I'm proudest of? On New Year's Eve, just fourteen years ago, 1946, first New Year's Eve of the peace, just before I turned forty, I had sexual intercourse standing up with a girl I'd met that night at a party at the Knickerbocker Club." He paused, with enough pent-up confidence to extract my compensatory "Yes? What is so special about that?"

"We were doing it at four in the morning on the uptown end of the Park Avenue island that runs from 62nd to 63rd Street with about two thousand windows looking down on us, and cars going by, and I felt as strong as I have ever felt. A police car came along, and this Irishman stopped and stuck his head out the window and said, 'What the hell do you think you are doing?' and I answered, 'Fornicating, officer. We're fornicating till the cows come home, and a Happy New Year to you.'"

"What did he do?"

"Just gave one disgusted look—pure New York cop!—and drove on." My father began to laugh with the sheer enjoyment this memory would never cease to radiate from his past into his future, and when he stopped, the road still went up from the Keys, and I could feel him brooding again about the rupture of his marriage. When he spoke, however, it was of something else.

"You know, son," he said, "I happen to feel equal to what they're asking on this job. Once in the OSS, I was obliged to do away with a partisan who had betrayed us. I ended up having to kill him with my bare hands. A gunshot would have been too loud. I never told anyone until today." He looked at me. "Today is the day. Maybe I've lost a wife and gained a son."

"Maybe you have." I didn't trust myself to say more.

"What I mean by I never told anyone is that I never spoke before of the sense of realization you can get killing another human, I mean, that intimately. I didn't know if I was a good man or an evil man for a long time after. But, finally, I realized it didn't matter—I was just a hellion. So it isn't what we've got to do that gives me pause, it's that I don't have my hands on it. Not yet."



840

20 | On the same night, after my father flew back to Washington, I had a late date with Modene. She was returning to Miami on an evening flight, and we were going to a safe house. She did not like hotels. "Miami Beach is a very small world to its residents, and I am highly noticeable among them," she had told me.

After that, I chose a small but elegant place on Key Biscayne that had been leased to Zenith by a wealthy Cuban who would be in Europe for the summer. I was ready to gamble that it would present no problem for a few meetings. I used to pick her up at the airport in my white convertible and wheel us over Biscayne Bay along Rickenbacker Causeway to the villa off North Mashta Drive. We would spend our nights in the master bedroom, and waken in the morning to a view of royal palms, white habitations, mangrove shore, and pleasure boats in Hurricane Harbor.

I was, of course, balancing a set of lies between Harlot and the safe house desk at Zenith, but the risk seemed small. Hunt was the only intelligence officer in South Florida who had the right to ask me what I was using the safe house for, and while he would be routinely notified of the fact each time I signed a chit for safe-house use (and Hunt was the man to know a good address by its name—North Mashta Drive would certainly alert his attention), still, I was protected by our procedural restraints. The villa, for purposes of signing out, was merely listed as Property 30G. If I was using it a good deal, Hunt, if curious, would still have to look up its address and owner by way of a classified in-house manual: why bother? Given our hordes of Cubans, we were using safe houses all the time. So, I had little to fear. Once, in a dream, I did awaken long enough to see Hunt's ski jump of a nose peering around the master bedroom door to take in the sight of Modene and myself in carnal clutch, but that was a dream. I was impressed by how little distress I carried compared to what I would have gone through if it had been my first year in the Agency. Perhaps I was beginning to live with Harlot's dictum that in our profession we learn to get along with unstable foundations.

So I could feel pride in my illicit use of La Villa Nevisca. The



stucco walls were as white as any edifice on the South Florida shore, and its name in English, House of the Light Snowfall, proved worth repeating to Modene who exhibited such naïve pleasure in the translation that I began to wonder how long it had taken her father to get accustomed to his money. Sometimes, when her precise way of speaking—the product of years of elocution lessons—began to pall on me, I confess that I began to see all Midwesterners as simple. In defense of such large prejudice, I must say that whenever a building was possessed of charm, or a touch of history, she was too impressed. She liked windows with odd shapes, wood filigree porches, pastel-colored edifices in general, and romantic names—La Villa Nevisca was perfect! She was even impressed with replicas of Southern mansions in Key Biscayne. (It became important to me, therefore, not to compare her, ever, in any way, to Kittredge.) All the same, I could not keep from envisioning Modene's childhood on well-to-do Grand Rapids streets and concluded that her contempt for my low station in life—"I guess you're the poorest man I ever dated"—was more than equalled by her bottomless awe of my attainments: Yale, and a profession I could not talk to her about. I did not even try to tell her about St. Matthew's.

I am being unfair. She knew what she knew, and her self-confidence was absolute on certain matters. She loved to dance, for instance. After a couple of evenings together in a nightclub, however, we more or less gave it up. I was adequate on the floor, and she could have been a professional. If she showed me variants of the samba and the meringue, the cha-cha and the Madison, if she could go into a triple lindy off a double lindy, it was only to demonstrate her skill: She had no desire to raise my abilities through collaboration—it would make her feel *silly*, she explained. The aristocratic reflex of an artist was in her rejection: One does not wish to dull one's talent. In preference, forswear the art.

On the other hand, I came to recognize that my accent fascinated her. (She declared that she could listen to it all night with as much pleasure as if Cary Grant were speaking. I came to recognize that Cary Grant was her point of reference for people whose minds were occupied occasionally with niceties, and I understood then why she would not teach me how to

842 | NORMAN MAILER

dance, no, no more than I would spend a part of my life teaching her to speak. She spoke well enough. If it could pall at times on my ear, well, she had other virtues.

Once she said to me (and I heard echoes of Sally Porringer), "You're such a snob."

"Do you know," I said, "so is your dear friend Jack Kennedy." Then I could not resist the cruelty—"Wherever he is."

"He's trying to win an election," she answered, "so how could he have time for me? Of course, he doesn't."

"Not even for a phone call." My jealousy was scalding my heart as directly as boiling soup on a tender lap.

"He's not a snob," she said. "He has an intense interest in everyone around him. Unlike you, he's the best listener I ever met."

I was not. She would start to speak and my mind would wander over to her carnal virtues. I never saw her but in a cloud of sexual intent. I did not have to listen to her—she was so much more than what she was saying. Soon, we could go to bed, and then I would find her brilliant again, and delicate, deep and fierce, yes, dear, greedy, generous, warm, and her heart would be ready to melt in sorrow and joy, all this for me on any night when we could transcend each and every annoying impasse of the evening and get to bed. Then I did not have to worry whether I knew how to dance.

Libido may be inner conviction, but libido rampant is megalomania. My mind would tell me that I was the greatest lover she had ever had; somewhat later, libido, by three parts out of four consumed, I became again the man who did not know how to dance. Sinatra knew how. So did Jack. They knew.

"You're mad," she would say to me. "Jack Kennedy has a bad back. He got it in the war. We never danced at all. It didn't matter. I wanted to listen to him when he talked and I loved to talk while he listened."

"And Frank? Frank doesn't dance?"

"It's his profession."

"Dancing?"

"No, but he understands it."

"And I don't?"

HARLOT'S GHOST I 843

"Come here." Lying in bed, she would kiss me, and we would commence again. I would scourge the fourth part of my libido. Next morning, I would be in a towering depression. It would seem to me that I was nothing but a pit stop in the middle of a race. Kennedy would be back; Sinatra might always return, and Giancana was waiting. How crude were my emotions now that they were exposed to myself!

I do not know how well I was prepared, therefore, when a communication on open circuit came in from Harlot on August 1.

SERIAL: J/38,854,256
ROUTING: LINE/ZENITH—OPEN
TO: ROBERT CHARLES
FROM: GLADIOLUS 10:05 A.M. AUGUST 1, 1960
SUBJECT: BABYLONIAN PARTOUSE
Call me on SEEK.

GLADIOLUS

His conversation was brisk: "Harry, I had one hell of a time collaring this transcript. It's BLUEBEARD—AURAL on July 16th of convention week in Los Angeles. Buddha has kept it not only in Special File, but Select Entry. Still, I plucked it forth. Pressure points pay off."

"How soon," I asked, "can you get it over to me?"

"Will you be at Zenith four o'clock today?"

"I can be."

"Expect my man at your desk on the dot."

"Yessir."

"Are you mermaid-witting yet?"

"No, sir," I lied, "but on the way."

"If it takes too long, it will accomplish less when you get there."

"Sir?"

"Yes?"

"Partouse. It's Parisian slang, isn't it?"

"You'll see soon enough."



844 I NORMAN MAILER

At 4:00 P.M., a man I recognized as one of the two baboons who had been in Berlin with Harlot four years ago, came into my office, gave a short nod, handed over an envelope, and left without requesting my signature.

"July 17, 1960. AIRTEL TO DIRECTOR FROM FAC SPOONOVER, subject SELECT, transcript of conversation between *subject* and *friend*, July 16, recorded 7:32 A.M. to 7:48 A.M. Pacific Time."

MODENE: Willie, I need you. Please listen. It just blew up with Jack.

WILLIE: It just blew up? It's nine-thirty in the morning here. So it must be seven-thirty your time. What's happened? Not one phone call from you all week.

MODENE: What I mean is it blew up last night at three in the morning, and I haven't slept since. I'm waiting to get on a plane. I'm at the airport. I didn't sleep.

WILLIE: What did he do?

MODENE: I can't tell you yet. Please! I've got to be orderly about it.

WILLIE: You really are upset.

MODENE: He put me up at the Beverly Hilton all week and said I was his guest, but I felt awfully tucked away. My room wasn't super-perfect, and I never knew if I was going to be alone with room service or he would call me out late at night.

WILLIE: Did you go to the convention?

MODENE: Yes. He had me in a box. Only, I think it was the number-four box. There was the Kennedy family in the first one, and family and friends in another, and then there was a third where I saw a good many important-looking people in a box next to mine, but my box was odd. Some of Frank's friends were installed there, whereas Frank was in the Kennedy family box. My box was second-rate people, I don't know how to describe them. Boston politicians maybe, gold teeth, although not that precisely crass. And one or two women I most certainly did not like the look of. Very expensive hair-jobs, like. "Do not ask who I am. I am the mystery woman."



HARLOT'S GHOST | 845

WILLIE: But you did see him?

MODENE: Of course, Nearly every night.

WILLIE: How many nights did he miss?

MODENE: Well, three out of seven. I used to wonder if he was with one of the women in my box.

WILLIE: He must have been feeling equal to dynamite.

MODENE: One night he was so tired I just held him. A wonderful glow coming off. So deeply tired, so happy. One night, he was wonderful. Full of energy. His back, which usually bothers him, was feeling absolutely relaxed. Jack Kennedy is one man who should have the right to go around with a healthy back, because it's just right for him.

WILLIE: He probably had a shot of painkiller. I've heard that rumored.

MODENE: It was a consummate night and I had nothing I wanted to keep in reserve for myself. But then I didn't see him for the next couple of nights. Then, the day they chose Lyndon Johnson for Vice President, Jack was very tired and I just held him, but last night . . . (pause) Willie, I don't want to turn the faucet that opens the waterworks.

WILLIE: If you can't cry around me, you are in double-duty trouble.

MODENE: I am in a public place. At a pay phone. Oh, damn, it's the operator.

OPERATOR: Will you deposit seventy-five cents for the next three minutes?

WILLIE: Transfer the call to my number, Operator. It's Charlevoix, Michigan. C-H-A-R-L-E-V-O-I-X, Michigan, 629-9269.

MODENE: On the last night, the parties went on forever.

Toward the end, Jack took a group to a friend's suite at the Beverly Hilton and he whispered to me to stay, so I hovered around the edges, and that is an embarrassing position. I stayed as long as I could in the bathroom fixing my hair, until it was down to a few of his top political workers and himself and me, then I drifted into the bedroom, and he came in, and sighed, and said, "At last, they are all gone," and I went into the bathroom again to undress. When I came out, he was in bed, and I couldn't



believe it—there was also another woman, one of the ones I had seen in the convention box. She was just about out of her clothes.

WILLIE: My God, is he taking lessons from Frank?

MODENE: I went right back into the bathroom and dressed and by the time I came out, the other woman was gone. I couldn't stop shaking. "How did you ever find the time to manage all this?" I asked. I was awfully close to screaming. I couldn't bear it that he was so calm. He said, "It did take a bit of juggling," and I came very near to slapping him. He must have seen the look in my eye because he said he hadn't done it to offend me, he just thought this part of life was an enhancement. "An enhancement," I said. "Yes," he said, "it's an enhancement for those who can appreciate it." Then he told me that he once loved a French woman very much who delighted in such arrangements, even had a name for it—*la partouse*. P-A-R-T-O-U-S-E. If you were ready for it, there was no harm done, he said, although obviously, as he could see by my reaction, he had certainly made an egregious error.

WILLIE: Egregious!

MODENE: Yes. I said, "Jack, how could you? You have everything," and he said, "It's all over so soon, and we do so little with our lives." Can you believe that? He's such an Irishman. Once they get their mind fixed, you need a pickax to break into the concrete. He started to fondle me, and I said, Let go, or I am going to scream." And I left him there. I went to my room and drank Jack Daniel's until dawn. I didn't answer the phone.

WILLIE: Oh, Modene.

MODENE: I'm not even drunk now. I am cold sober. There is too much adrenaline in me. He had the gall to have eighteen red roses sent up to my room with a bell-hop. Just before I checked out. It had a note: "Please forgive the stupidest thing I've ever done!" Well, I want to tell you, I spent well over a hundred dollars and ordered six dozen yellow roses to be delivered to him right away, and signed, Modene. He'll get the message.

WILLIE: Does he know about Sam's yellow roses?

HARLOT'S GHOST I 847

MODENE: He certainly does. I made a point of telling him.

I liked to tease him about that.

WILLIE: It sounds to me like you're cooking up a welcoming party for Sam.

MODENE: I don't know. I have to see what kind of mood I'm in when I get back to Miami.

WILLIE: We're going to have some crazy time if this guy gets elected President.

MODENE: Willie, I'm hanging up. I don't want to start crying.
(July 16, 1960)

I had an odd reaction. I asked myself whether I would ever try to bring another woman into bed with Modene, and knew I would not, but that was only for fear of losing her. If she ever brought a woman to our bed, well, that I might like very much. There were times, especially lately, when—St. Matthew's be damned—I thought we were here on earth to feel as many extraordinary sensations as we could; perhaps we were supposed to bring such information back to the great Debriefers in the sky.

Soon enough, however, I began to recognize how much real anger I was holding. It seemed to me it was all Sinatra's fault, and I could understand my father's propensity for terminating life with one's bare hands. What a pity that Sinatra would not come through the door of my cubicle at Zenith at this instant—my rage was in my fingers and as palpable as a ball of clay. I muttered to myself, "Modene, how could you have done this to us?" as if she was as responsible for her past as for her present with me.

Yet, time, soon enough, picked up and went on again: We made love, we pretended Jack Kennedy did not exist. It was almost a viable proposition. I did not know whether she saw me as a dressing station in the great hospital of love's wounded, and I was the pallet on which she could recover, or whether she loved me magically, which is to say, had been struck by love on the night she returned to Miami, and I was her man. She kept speaking of how good-looking I was until I began to peruse my face in the mirror with the critical self-interest of speculator going over the daily listing of his stocks each morning.

All the while, I was trapped in work and fearful of the day

848-1 NORMAN MAILER

when the baboon would show up at the desk with new transcripts from Harlot and I would learn that she was seeing Jack Kennedy again.

21 | About the middle of August, Hunt made a move he had been preparing for some time, and our Frente leaders transferred their operation to Mexico. It was considered by Quarters Eye a necessary piece of camouflage for the oncoming operation, and Hunt welcomed it. His children, having finished their school term in Montevideo, were soon coming back to America with Dorothy, and I think he had been facing the difficulty of locating good lodging here when costs in Miami were prohibitive. Now, he and Dorothy might find a villa in Mexico City. Besides, he could feel once again, as he had in Montevideo, that he could run his own show.

Back at Zenith, left in charge of the Political Action Section, I actually moved up to a larger office with a window. If it looked out across a crabgrass lawn to our wire fence, our guardhouse, and our gate, and there was no more to see across the road than a spread of low, flat-topped modern buildings belonging to the University of Miami, and so, *qua* window, was but a mean gain, still, I had taken my first step on the rung of hierarchical ascension.

Otherwise, the new job was no boon. I now had to watch over Hunt's unfinished business in addition to my own. This included public relations concerning the Cubans who were arriving daily in every kind of boat. Given the ties we had developed to individual reporters on the Miami newspapers, we now could count on a feature story every few weeks about exiles who had just floated over from Havana on rafts newsworthy for the

HARLOT'S GHOST I 849

crudity of their construction. Some consisted of no more than a platform of two-by-eight planks lashed to oil drums welded together, and the thought of this journey across one hundred and eighty miles of open water from the port of Havana to Miami was awesome, and so diverted attention from the less exceptional fact that the great majority of our exiles were still coming in on airlines from Mexico and Santo Domingo. Then, late one moonless night, while out on the patio of La Nevisca, I watched a power boat tow a full load of people and two rafts out to sea, the sight barely visible by starlight, and next morning, lo, the rafts had floated in again, the press was called, and one of the people I had personally registered two weeks ago at Opa-Locka, a particularly engaging curly headed young Cuban, would grin at me the following day from the front page of the second section as if he had just arrived. I was learning that in publicity it was obscene not to lie. Of course, I felt no great moral stirrings—I just wished that Hunt had briefed me better. The virtue of military operations, I was deciding, was in the whole simplicity of the decision to win.

Meanwhile, Hunt stayed in touch by cable and phone. From across the Gulf of Mexico, he still attempted to control the work handed over to me. I was now nominally in charge of his sector of agent recruitment, but many of our activities bore few dependable returns. It was easy to find agents who would take our pay, but how many in our pool of gossip-mongers, untrained idealists, petty criminals, unsuccessful pimps, marginal businessmen, new Cuban shopkeepers, boatmen of all varieties, exiles waiting to be shipped out for training, ex-soldiers from the Cuban army, and Cuban-Americans from the U.S. Army, plus a super structure, if you could call it that, of Cuban journalists, lawyers, respectable businessmen, and career revolutionaries could give us accurate information? "Our agents," as Hunt pointed out, "tell us what they think we want to hear."

Meanwhile, in August, hurricanes were building in the Caribbean, Calle Ocho was springing Spanish signs in neon, new arrivals were sleeping on our recruiting-house porch in downtown Miami, and Quarters Eye circulated a handbook among Zenith personnel listing the hundred and more exile organizations in the Miami area, a work of redundancy, since we



850 | NORMAN MAILER

had made the same compilation at Zenith. I was also sitting in on committee meetings with other case officers trying to work up an operative procedure that would shape the exiles into self-policing groups who might weed out the Castro agents in the exile community. FBI reports, which we also circulated at Zenith, put the number of such DGI men at two hundred. It was an in-house joke. Three months ago, the number had been the same. There was every expectation that three months from now the FBI would still be speaking of two hundred DGI agents running amok in Miami.

Then, early in September, another envelope banded about with strapping tape came in the Quarters Eye pouch.

It began:

I'm enclosing a letter from Bob Maheu. If you can't bury it in a safe place, destroy it. I have a copy.

Dear Mr. Halifax,

This is to inform you that I have met with a well-recommended top banana of the Mafia who calls himself Johnny Ralston. Since he has his own expropriated investments to recoup, he is, to say the least, well motivated.

Naturally, I went into this lunch as a representative, per your suggestion, of some wealthy figures who are willing to pay for an authoritative stroke to the tune of \$150,000. Well, the Ralston gentleman can be acerbic. He threw back the name of Meyer Lansky. "Meyer has a price out," he said, "of one million dollars for the same job."

"Yes," I assured him, "but once you are successful, you have to collect it. Do you care to be the man who has to ask Meyer Lansky for that amount of money?"

Since I taped the conversation, let me give you the rest directly.

R:How can I trust your people to be good for one-fifty?

M:We will put it in escrow.

R:Yeah? Why are you in this?

M:Because of feelings of serious obligation to this country. I have been told that you have similar feelings of patriotism.

HARLOT'S GHOST | 851

R: Fucking A I do.

M: Well, this can be your opportunity to demonstrate sincerity in regard to these alleged sentiments.

R: I will lay it on the line: I feel so patriotic I would like to obtain my citizenship. Fuck your hundred-fifty thousand bucks—I want those citizenship papers. I am tired of traveling around with so-called pseudonyms, and being pulled in and generally mishandled by so-called immigration officials.

M: Your citizenship can be arranged.

R: Yes, and I have been doublecrossed before. I want it arranged up front.

M: There is no way such an arrangement can be promised in advance. After the event, you would have every leverage for obtaining your desired result. And, in addition, you would have one hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

At this point in the lunch with Ralston, there is a malfunction in the recording that goes on for a few minutes. Probably I pressed too severely against the back cushions, a regrettable hitch to be avoided next time.

While I cannot recall in detail that transpired over this gap, I can assure you that I did my best to convince him he could depend on "my people" to get what he wanted.

Son, let me cut in here. Never trust Maheu altogether. He's enough of an old hand to know how to flex his butt while wearing a sneaky. I suspect he excised some of the tape. I would presume it covers his admission to Ralston that the "wealthy figure" he's representing is the Agency. Obviously, it is to Maheu's tactical advantage to let Ralston in on such a matter because the Company is certainly better situated than private individuals to obtain this dubious fellow's citizenship. (Although, God knows, we could have a spot of trouble there with Immigration.) In any event, once Maheu returns to the tape, Ralston is considerably more amenable and agrees in principle to come aboard. He does, however, tell Maheu that he has to meet "the guy who talks to you. I want to shake hands with the real stuff."

852 I NORMAN MAILER

This enclosure is merely to keep you advised. If any observations are stimulated, pass them along. I do wonder what Ralston's real name might be.

HALIFAX

The next morning, I received a coded memo from Harlot sent over a medium-security circuit.

Buddhists report that one Johnny Roselli, a close associate to a friend of our Bluebeard, met with Robert Maheu for lunch at the Brown Derby in Beverly Hills. Unfortunately, no reliable sources were available. That most curious meeting leaves me therefore in Ponder Gardens.

GREENHOUSE

In the way of FBI euphemisms, "reliable sources" were tape recordings. Obviously, the FBI had been able to do no more than take note of the luncheon. Hugh, however, had given me a leg up on my father. Once again, I walked down the hall, obtained access to VILLAIN, and punched into it for Johnny Roselli. A good deal came back.

JOHNNY ROSELLI aka Johnny Ralston, aka Rocco Racuso, aka Al Benedetto, aka Filippo Sacco. Born in Italy (Esteria) in 1905, immigrated to the US in 1911, grew up in Boston, ran numbers, is reputed at age 12 to have assisted a relative in burning down a house to obtain the insurance.

First arrest, 1921: narcotics peddling.

In 1925, Filippo Sacco becomes Johnny Roselli. Claims Chicago for his birthplace. Works with Al Capone on liquor shipments.

Reported expert at extortion, gambling, labor racketeering, Roselli becomes a West Coast cohort of Willy Bioff and George Brown

of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees and Motion Picture Machine Operators. Early in World War II, Roselli became close friends with Harry Cohn, head of Columbia Pictures. Lent money by Cohn at no interest to buy into Tiajuana Race Track, Roselli, in gratitude, purchased matched twin star rubies and set in matching rings for Cohn and himself. Both men still reputed to wear such rings.

When Sammy Davis, Jr., was conducting a "torrid" love affair with Kim Novak, Roselli, as a favor to Cohn, is reputed to have convinced the Negro singer to forgo further favors from Cohn's number-one blonde star of the period. It is reported that Sammy Davis, Jr., blind in one eye, was told by Roselli: "Cool off on the blonde, or you'll lose the other eye." Davis complied.

In 1943, Roselli served 3 years, 8 months of ten year prison term for extorting reported two millions plus from the film industry. On release, became the Top Coordinator for Las Vegas and Southern California rackets. His appointment was overseen by Sam Giancana, reputedly head of Mafia's Grand Council.

Roselli is now known as Don Giovanni of the Mafia. Ambassadorial in appearance. Is called the Silver Fox. Reputed to be a loner. Has family but never visits them. Has, however, put his younger sisters through college.

Physical description: Slim. Medium height. Well-chiselled features. Silver-gray hair. Reported credo: "Never threaten me. I have nothing to lose."

I sent this printout to my father by SPECIAL SHUNT/ HALIFAX, and added a note that I had looked up RALSTON in VILLAINS and found nothing, but happened to come across

854 | NORMAN MAILER

ROSELLI AKA RALSTON, a fortuitous accident since there were thousands of entries under R, and often incomplete cross-checking of name.

Next day a call came in from Cal on open phone. "Get thee to a nunnery at 4:00 P.M.," was all he said, and it meant, "Call my private line from an outside phone at 1:00 P.M. When I reached him during my lunch break, he was as garrulous as if he'd just had three cups of coffee. "Thank you," he said. "I call that collateral support of the best sort. I went right over to K Building to bring Bissell up to date on the meeting between Maheu, and—now that we knew who it was—Roselli. Thank you. I didn't feel like telling Bissell that Maheu was meeting someone whose name I could not offer. Well, Rick, right there in Bissell's office was Allen Dulles, and, of course, he couldn't resist looking at what I'd brought over on Johnny R. I could see that Allen was reading the printout upside down. For that matter, Bissell kept the paper well out on his desk in order not to obstruct Allen's view." My father began to chuckle. "Have you practiced reading upside down lately?"

"Not daily," I said.

My father laughed even louder. "Son, in OSS days we used to believe that was the only ability you needed other than a little moxie."

"Yessir."

"Allen has made it clear he's to be kept one watertight compartment away from all of this, but, just the same, he couldn't resist comment. 'Well,' he said, 'these are fishy waters, aren't they, Cal?' 'Damned fishy waters, sir,' I said. He smiled. 'Cal, I'm just going to make one remark: Use your judgment. Use your judgment, Cal, because it's always kept you out of the very worst trouble, hasn't it?' 'No, sir,' I said, and we both laughed."

Now my father grunted, Harry, what do you think?"

"If anything goes wrong, the tar is on your fingers."

"All the same, this one appeals to me. It's lopsided, but it's fancy, isn't it?" he said, and added, "I wonder if you can find out where the lunch took place. Maheu was staying at the Beverly Hills Hotel, so it could have been the Polo Lounge."

"I'll do some research," I told him.

HARLOT'S GHOST | 855

SERIAL: J/38,961,601
ROUTING: LINE/QUARTERS EYE—OPEN
TO: HALIFAX
FROM: ROBERT CHARLES 10:46 A.M. SEPT. 6, 1960
SUBJECT: RESTAURANTS

I presume to take up Company time and encoders sufficiently to bring you up to date on Los Angeles restaurants you might like. Romanoff's, the Brown Derby, and the Beachcombers are the three main candidates, and if you want to narrow it to one, I'd pick the Brown Derby. I hear via the Yale grapevine—an old classmate, of all things, is working for Harry Cohn—that that's where the cognoscenti go.

ROBERT CHARLES

On the next morning, another letter bound in strapping tape was in the pouch for me:

Sept. 7, 1960

Son:

Your restaurant guide is most useful. It helps to bring a transcript to life. I will assume it is the Brown Derby (which I know well) but for purposes of cover we will call it La Scala, because that is the watering hole I enjoy the most in the Beverly Hills area.

Now, this preamble may be to hide my slight paternal embarrassment at not filling you in on all the details of Maheu's first meeting with Roselli. Such reserve is *pro forma* since you had no real need to know, but, considering your good work lately, it makes me happier to bring you up to date. Roselli has a friend named Sam Gold whom he needs to take into the project. So he claims. Gold has deep contacts in our target country. Next question is whether Sam Gold happens to be Meyer Lansky or Sam Giancana. I've had a talk with the case officer I've assigned to work on this in Washington and New York, an ex-FBI worthy I believe you know. Says he had you in training, one dour but most capable gent named Raymond Burns, Bullseye Burns. According to Ray, these Mafia boys have the predictable habit of

856 | NORMAN MAILER

holding on to their first names while using a false last name with the same initial, viz—Johnny Ralston for Johnny Roselli. Sam Gold puts us on track for Sam Giancana. Maheu, however, warns me not to assume Lansky is out of the game—Sam Gold could also be the redoubtable Meyer. Whoever he is, Gold is ready to come in. I assume that the mobster who recaptures the gambling casinos will then have a clear and dominating position in the syndicate.

For the interim, a meeting has been set up at the Plaza Hotel in New York on September 14 involving Maheu, Roselli, and Bullseye Burns. Since Roselli insists on meeting a "top-drawer associate," it is up to Bullseye to rise to the occasion. On the Maheu agenda is a subsequent meeting in Miami with Sam Gold also present. I plan to attend that one in a monitorial function. Will pop in as a friend of Bob Maheu's and have a drink with his Joes.

Forgive this garrulous old goat, but after nigh to twenty years of code groups and Seek phones, it is agreeable to spread out. Keep the Hubbard fortunes prospering, son. Yours, and love,

Dad

On the next day, another message came from Cal:

Sept. 8, 1960

Son:

Someday, if your literary ambitions remain intact and you write a history of this epoch, do not ignore this August 7th, 1960. It is the date when Castro expropriated American property in Cuba. Good old Fidel. He might as well have swatted a bumblebee on Dwight D. Eisenhower's bald pate. Ah, these rude swarthy guys with beards! Inasmuch as Fidel has read enough Marxist tracts to know what this is going to call for, he obviously thinks he's a savior; that would account for his outsize arrogance.

To business: I enclose a copy of Maheu's report on the Plaza meeting at Trader Vic's.

Dear Mr. Halifax,

If you want to keep Ralston happy, feed him barbecued spareribs and ami-tai drinks. The restaurant din, however, made for low-level accuracy in our recordings. Neither Mr. Burns' take, nor mine, has proven satisfactory. I am, thankfully, a longtime hand at keeping mental notes when there are obstacles to viable recording. So I offer my recollections of the proceedings, and place reliability at 90 percent for substantive matters, and 60 percent, at least, on precise word-to-word reconstruction. On the other hand, given the noise, our Bureau *friends* could not possibly have tapped in.

Ralston sized up Case Officer Burns quickly, and although speaking quietly, was, in fact, so direct as to be rude. Ralston said: "Take no offense personally, fellow, but I can see you are on the kiss-ass level. That is inadequate for this operation. Pass the word to your boss: Do not try to fuck me over. Try meeting me instead."

I must say that the language came as a shock since Ralston, in appearance, is as silky and well gotten up as George Raft.

Burns had to spend time assuring Ralston that the next meeting would be on a "higher level" and was a good soldier about it, but from old days in the Bureau together, I know his temper. Raymond Burns has a virulent hatred of hoodlums high and low. I do not wish to denigrate old "Bullseye" since I am aware of his bulldog tenacity and other sterling virtues, but for liaison with Ralston, we cannot anticipate any hope of future compatibility.

Sample: "That is a great ring on your hand," said Raymond Burns.

"Are you in the market for jewelry?" asked Ralston.

"I just want to get a job done," said "Bullseye."

"Remember," said Ralston, "it's all in the nostrils. You do not pick your nose, and you do not try to stick your fingers up my nose. Ignore what I am wearing."

Raymond had the massive discipline to be silent, and I kept pursuing the main subject. In response to my inquiry, Ralston finally stated that our next meeting would take place in Miami Beach at the Fontainebleau, September 25.

858 I NORMAN MAILER

"Can't we make it sooner?" I asked.

"No way," said Ralston. "I have to get two good-sized people together."

We proceeded to modes and methods. Ralston said, "You don't want a fire hose for the job. This can't be St. Valentine's Day."

"Why not?" I asked, precisely to force the answer.

"Because they don't build the cars fast enough in spic town."

This resistance may give you pause. My understanding from our initial meeting is that you want the signature of the operation to suggest the Mafia. Five hoods with machine guns would offer a clear message to the world that gangland did the job.

These fellows, however, want none of that. I think we have to forgo the most useful option. The question may then arise whether we still want to work with these particular elements. While I, of course, make no recommendation, it is clear that Ralston has also thought along these lines, for then he said, "We have all the contacts needed to get to El Supremo."

"What method do you propose?" I answered.

"Pills," said Ralston. "Powder it into his chow. He'll be sick for three days before he gets sick enough to call for a priest." We ended by agreeing the pills would be passed on to Ralston on September 25, at which time it might be advisable for you to meet him.

Sincerely,
R.M.

A note from Cal also followed this memo:

I'm naturally concerned. We'll have to make haste to be ready by the 25th. The order, via suitable intermediaries, has been placed with the Office of Medical Services, and the cooking-up is now in train—a metaphor I cannot resist mixing. In any event, Medical Services will probably have to use some of the

more exotic labs in TSS, and there is no possibility that Hugh won't sniff out some of this. The question is: How much?

HALIFAX

22 | By the middle of September, I had sublet an apartment, and Modene and I entered our first crisis.

It began with a change in her schedule. Due to a temporary shortage of stewardesses in the Southwest, her base, she informed me, was to be shifted to Dallas for a few days, and she would have to absent herself from Miami for four nights in a row.

If I sensed she was lying, I kept such bad news away from myself. She would call me at my new lodgings every evening around eight with detailed accounts of the day's trip: once she telephoned from New York; on the following night from Dallas; once she went to Memphis and back to Dallas on the same day. She underwrote these trips with tales of passengers who had been particularly good or horrendous.

By the fourth day, I could believe her no longer, and checked a few of our airline manifests. Given the number of exiles who flew on Company business to New York, Washington, New Orleans, Mexico City, and points south, not to speak of the alert that was always on in Miami for Castro agents coming into southern Florida, we had a number of Agency contacts at the airport. It took our pool secretary no more than fifteen minutes and two phone calls to bring me the information that Eastern Airlines stewardess M. Murphy had been on four-day leave and would be returning to town this evening, September 14.

Jealousy lives for the facts. Meeting Modene in downtown

860 | NORMAN MAILER

Miami, I felt purposeful. It was late, and we went at once to my new apartment in Cocoanut Grove on the second floor of a small made-over Spanish Colonial house, and I made love to her before we had done any talking, a military matter; if our bridges were blown, it was crucial to get new pontoons across. So I knew what it was to be desperate with love. I fucked in hate. There, in my own modern, furnished apartment which I could desperately not afford, I was desperately in love with half of me, and that half could find but half of Modene. Speak of being drawn and quartered by love, I remember looking with hatred at her long fingernails. They had ruined pieces and parts of many evenings for us, those fingernails lacquered, even elegant on the upside, patched and splinted beneath. The fingernails belonged to her vision of an exotic (if still unrealized) dragon lady who shared very little of her existence with that other girl who lost her temper when she could not beat me at tennis, poor Alpha-girl with her handicap. Alphie had to wear gloves to protect her nails, and what with adhesive tape and putty fillets on the fingertips for underpinning, paid for it at a rate of about two lost games a set, and still ripped her nails. She wept over that, more, I suspected, than she would ever cry for me, furious tears at the wasted hours and contradictory purposes of those mandarin nails, but how well she could use them at night by the light of a candle in a restaurant, how perfect was the poise of her cigarette in its holder, yes, her spiritual roots, I decided, were as far from one another as the orchid and the weed.

On this night when she came home, I did not speak of what I knew. If I was not incapable of killing her, all the same, I never could. Was that what it meant to be desperately in love? She made no effort to explain why after four days and nights of the hardest dislocations of her former flight schedule, she had no time off, but, to the contrary, would be out again tomorrow on a Miami-to-Washington-and-back-to-Miami in the same day, only to be booked like that for the next two days as well (an unheard of gymkhana—seven working days in a row!), no, she must have known I was bright enough to calculate that she had been on some species of vacation, yet I learned no more until a week later when a BLUEBEARD-AURAL transcript was delivered to me at Zenith by GHOUL's resident baboon. Modene

HARLOT'S GHOST I 861

had spent the four days in Chicago with Sam Giancana. Polishing the transcript, I could see that Willie's curiosity was at least equal to mine. Had Modene slept with Giancana?

No, Modene insisted, she had not gone to bed with Sam. She had come to like him. "Frankly, Willie, he is all too human."

"Do you feel sorry for him?"

"No. He is too strong for that. But there is sorrow in his life."

"Such as?"

"Stop cross-examining me."

Their exchanges became repetitive. I compressed their conversation to manageable length and offered Harlot a portrait of Giancana.

WILLIE: Did he take you to his home?

MODENE: Absolutely.

WILLIE: Is it a palatial mansion?

MODENE: No, but it's elegant on the outside and very well built. Like a fort. Lots of careful stonework. And it's way out in Oak Park.

WILLIE: North of Chicago?

MODENE: Yes. Oak Park. I impressed Sam when I said to him, "This is the small town where Ernest Hemingway grew up." "Who is this guy Hemingway," asked Sam, "one of your boyfriends?" and of course I said, "Wouldn't you like to know." And Sam said, "You think I'm one whole hog of an ignoramus, don't you? Well, we got newspapers out here. I see this man's name, Hemingway; Hemingway and me, we're the two most famous people in Oak Park," and he started to laugh. He always laughs the loudest at his own jokes. I guess he's been living alone with himself for a long time.

WILLIE: The house. What's the story on the house?

MODENE: Will you wait? Inside, it's nothing fabulous. Small rooms, heavy Italian furniture. Down in the basement there's one room without windows that is his office. It has a long table for meetings, I guess. But he also keeps a breakfront cabinet down there with some amazing glass pieces. He is a collector. You see another side of him

862 | NORMAN MAILER

altogether when he reaches in and takes out a piece. His finger movements are so delicate. Willie, if I were ever going to have sex with Sam, this is exactly what would initiate such impulses.

WILLIE: So one thing did lead to another?

MODENE: Stop.

WILLIE: Why won't you tell me?

MODENE: Nothing to tell.

WILLIE: What did you do at night?

MODENE: He loves piano bars. The smokier, the better. He calls for a number and then he sings along with the pianist. Only, Sam keeps changing the words. You know: "Why won't you take all of me? Me and you and all of me. Just put out the lights and go to sleep." The poor pianist. Sam has a voice like a broken foghorn. I couldn't believe it—I was having fun.

WILLIE: Did he get serious?

MODENE: Yes. He told me about his mother's death. I found that heartbreaking. She saved his life, you know. When he was about five and growing up in the Italian slums of Chicago, she heard a car come whipping around the corner, and there was Sam playing in the gutter. His mother leaped out to get her child back on the sidewalk and got hit by the car. She died. I felt so sorry for Sam. Then he told me about his wife. She was very delicate. She was born with a weak heart, and her family, although an immigrant Italian family, must have been a cut or two above his because all her folks looked down on him. And then, to top it off, he had been in jail for car theft. When he came out, he and his wife were so poor that they lived in a cold-water flat and sat around the stove and held their two little girls and toasted orange peels for candy. And one of the little girls had a weak heart too. It was all kind of touching. You see, before she knew Sam, his wife had a fiancé but he died early. So, she was always mourning the dead fiancé. It took a long time for Sam to feel like the true husband.

WILLIE: That's so clever of him.

MODENE: Why?

HARLOT'S GHOST | 863

WILLIE: He's letting you know that he can put up with the idea of Jack Kennedy.

MODENE: He keeps calling me Miss Classy.

WILLIE: I wonder if he's afraid to go near you. Because of Frank Sinatra. What if he doesn't stack up by comparison?

MODENE: Willie, you are so inaccurate. In the first place, Sam knows I would never tell Frank. And in the second, Sam would be a different kind of lover. Much more emotional.

WILLIE: I am sorry, but Sam sounds lugubrious to me.

MODENE: Well, he's not. He can make you laugh till you don't stop. He told me a story about Bobby Kennedy, when Bobby was getting ready a couple of years ago to have Sam called up before the McClellan Committee. Do you remember the McClellan Committee?

WILLIE: Yes. They investigated crime.

MODENE: Well, Sam made a point of getting himself decked out like the cheapest kind of gangster, you know, suit and shirt all black, with a silver tie, and the moment he came into Kennedy's office, he knelt and fingered the wall-to-wall carpet and said, "This would be great for a crap game." Just then a lawyer came into the room and Sam grabbed him, patted his back and thighs and yelled out, "Don't get near Mr. Kennedy. If Bobby gets killed, they'll all blame me."

WILLIE: I guess it is kind of funny.

MODENE: Absolutely. I needed a break in the mood.

WILLIE: Pardon me for asking, but what's wrong with Tom?

MODENE: Nothing. I don't want to talk about Tom.

WILLIE: Will you tell him you saw Sam?

MODENE: Certainly not.

WILLIE: Are you sure you won't? You said the more jealous Tom became, the better he was as a lover.

MODENE: This topic is, as of now, exhausted.

On open circuit next day came a message from GLAUCOMA inviting me to use the secure phone.

"Those girls, Harry," were Harlot's first words, "do go all

864 | NORMAN MAILER

over the place, but it proves useful. I now can assure myself that Mr. Giancana is one hell of a liar. I've had a little research done. He was never saved by his mother. It was his stepmother who was killed in the car accident, but she was saving her own son, Sam's little stepbrother, Charles. Giancana's real mother had died years before on a somewhat less heroic termination. Infection of the uterus."

"Yes, he is a liar." In fact, I could not believe the intimacy of his lies. A man who was ready to break your legs should not have to lie about his mother.

"Moreover," said Harlot, "Giancana did not go through any shenanigans in Bobby Kennedy's office. One of my people checked with a former McClellan staff member, and it develops that a gentleman named Joey Gallo was the comedian on that occasion. Sam merely appropriated the story."

"Yes, a total thief."

"Now, who is this Tom that little Miss Bluebeard refers to? Is he conceivably of the Tom, Dick, and Harry fraternity known as Field?"

"Yessir."

"You are telling me that you have hooked the mermaid?"

"It happened most recently."

"Why didn't you tell me? Why is there no material on this?"

"Because our lady is not at all forthcoming, sir, and I don't wish to rouse her suspicions."

"Well, get started, boy. Giancana may be using her as a courier to Kennedy. Be a good Tom and try to find out if the girl is carrying any messages."

"I'll try," I said.

"Do better than that."

"I'll try," I said. "It's going to take time and luck."

"Plus a cold tit," he said, and hung up.

23 | How was I to tell Harlot anything about the affair? Must I confess that good orgasms were what Tom and Modene were after? Modene had never been able to come with a man before. So she told me, and I believed her. Could I not? How she could come! I do not know what amalgam of her alcoholic father and her socially ambitious mother contributed to the whole, but now I knew why women at such times always filled me with awe. If certain ladies, Sally Porringer, most notably, could remind you of a sledgehammer assaulting a wall, Modene came from her fingers and her toes, her thighs and her arms, her heart and all that belonged to the heart of her future—I was ready to swear that the earth and the ocean combined at such moments in my beautiful, athletic, and fingernail-tortured girl. I would feel her body pass through me, real as my own existence. So I made my peace with her lies. About the time I despaired of ever being able to cozen, elicit, trick, bully, or otherwise stimulate a confession out of Modene, she, perversely, offered me one. It was the first of several to follow, and reminded me of our first meeting.

"Do you remember Walter?" she asked me one day.

"Yes."

"I feel like telling you about Walter."

I had enough sense not to say: "I'd rather you tell me about Jack." Instead, I nodded. We were in bed, and cozy; we could speak of small horrors as though they were on the other side of a window.

"Do you still see Walter?" I asked.

I looked forward to enjoying her reply that she did not, but instead she said, "Yes, I see him sometimes."

"Now?"

She nodded. She could not speak. I wondered if it was from fear she would burst into laughter at the expression on my face.

"Since I last saw Jack," she said at last, "since the convention, I have seen Walter again."

"But why?" I did not make the next remark, and then I had to. "I'm not enough for you?"

"You are." She only paused for a moment. "Except that there must always be two men in my life," she said. She seemed

866 | NORMAN MAILER

pleased with this fact, as if she had invented a fail-safe for any and all emotional disaster.

"Then you have been seeing Walter all the time you've been with me?"

"No, just a few times. Just so I could feel there was someone else in my life. It allows me to enjoy you more."

"I don't know if I can bear this," I said.

"Well, I couldn't see Jack. He did something I didn't like. Would you be happier if I had been with Jack instead?"

"Yes," I said, and knew at that instant why jealousy is so perverse an emotion—it enriches our wits in ways no other addiction will provide—"yes," I said, "I would rather you had seen Jack."

"You are lying," she said.

"No," I said. "At least I could compare myself to someone worthwhile."

"Well, maybe we can do something about that," she said. "Are you inviting me to start up again?"

"You couldn't. I don't know why you broke with him, but your pride is hurt. I know that much."

"Oh, I could never approach him," she said, "unless I was asked to. Unless there was some kind of external reason."

"There are no external reasons," I told her, "in matters such as this."

"Well, there are. Suppose a good friend asked you for a big favor. Would you oblige?"

"You are being awfully abstract," I said.

"Suppose this good friend wanted you to pass a message to someone you weren't talking to anymore."

"The recipient would still believe you were looking for an excuse to approach."

"Yes," she said, "that is true unless he happened to be in touch with the other person in the first place." She yawned sweetly. "Can we make love?" she asked.

Her confessions, for this night at least, were at an end.

I sent a message to GHOUL—SPECIAL SHUNT next morning. It read:

HARLOT'S GHOST | 867

Every reason to believe that RAPUNZEL and IOTA maintain contact through BLUEBEARD. Will try to discover the content of such communications. Foresee implicit obstacles.

FIELD

Harlot's reply:

If it takes weeks, well, you've gotten me used to walking around in the same old clothes.

GLOCKENSPIEL

24 | Sunday, the twenty-fifth of September, my father came to Miami on the earliest plane out of Washington, and with considerable anticipation, I accompanied him to a meeting with Robert Maheu at the Fontainebleau. I say anticipation because Maheu had become a legend in the Agency. Given our detailed compartmentalization, that was no routine achievement. An ex-FBI man who now maintained his own private detective agency with Howard Hughes for a flagship client, Maheu could lay claim to more than a few professional feats. I had heard of a monumental job he had pulled off in 1954 for Richard Nixon who was then, in the interests of an American oil group, looking to complete a multi-million-dollar coup at the expense of Aristotle Onassis.

It is possible Maheu was even more renowned among us for the pornographic movie he was reputed to have made on black-

868 | NORMAN MAILER

and-white film with two assistants, a man and wife from his office serving as actors to represent, respectively, Marshal Tito of Yugoslavia and a large-bosomed blond mistress. Excessively grainy, streaked with light, the movie was filmed by choice under abysmal conditions. No one could later declare to a certainty whether the pornographic lover was or was not Josip Broz Tito of Yugoslavia, a calculated photographic result since the end product—a few stills—was circulated by us among carefully selected circles in Europe as a means of discrediting Tito.

On meeting, Robert Maheu looked to be the most elegant private detective in the nation. He was wearing a pin-striped suit with a vest and a wing collar, his windsor knot was immaculate, and I would have taken him for a continental banker with a particularly expensive mistress.

"I'll be going down the hall in a little while to have a chat with our new friends," Maheu remarked, "and the news I've received from them is that Santos Trafficante will be present with Sam and Johnny today."

"Good Lord," said Cal, "Trafficante from Tampa?"

"Sam has brought him in. Says we can't do it without him. Of the three, Santos does maintain the largest resources in Cuba."

My father nodded. "What are the chances," he asked, "of taping your meeting?"

"Mr. Halifax, a few weeks ago, I might have been able to. But now, after several get-together, I've become too friendly with these fellows. I tell you this not as a question of where my loyalties are—they are, of course, with us—but rather as a practical matter. It simply won't work. Giancana and Roselli are feelers. They test your biceps, they run their hand down your back. In effect, you can't shake hands without getting frisked."

"Is an attaché case," asked Cal, "too obvious?"

"They clam up," said Maheu, "at the sight of one. I have to go in clean. But, as you know, I've trained my memory. I can save the high points for you."

Perhaps he did. When he returned to my father's room two hours later, it was to tell us that Giancana was stoked up.

"'Robert,' he said to me, 'I have used a couple of names in my day. Cassro is one of them. Sam Cassro. I used Cassro before

I ever heard of Castro,' Roselli actually whistled. 'You must be destined for this,' he said. Giancana answered, 'I have had the same thought myself. Destiny. Robert,' he said to me, 'I hate Castro. I hate that syphilitic, murdering bastard. I am ready to do it, Robert.'

"'Good,' I said.

"'I am ready, except for one practical matter.' Then he paused," remarked Maheu, "and gave me a very sly look. 'Maybe,' Sam said, 'the job is not necessary. I have heard it from the inside: The guy with the beard is syphilitic. He will not live a year.'

"'Trafficante cut in at this point,'" said Maheu. "It was the first time that he spoke, but I will underline my observation that even Giancana listens to him. 'Castro,' Trafficante said, 'has 360-degree vision. With all due respect to Sam, I do not think Fidel Castro is all that ridden with syphilis, since his brain seems to be working very well these days.'

"'Giancana was not ready to reply to that. After all, Trafficante has personal knowledge of Castro.'

"'Just how,'" asked Cal, "does he have personal knowledge?"

"'Castro kept him in a Havana prison last year. Deluxe accommodations from all I hear,'" said Maheu. "So Giancana changed the subject. He picked up this Sunday's *Parade*, which happened to have an old mug shot of him, and said, 'Can you believe how fucking ugly they make me look?' Roselli jumped right on this, of course. 'A conspiracy,' he says, 'to tell the truth.' Giancana goes, 'Ha-ha.' Then he stands up and pokes Roselli in the chest with a finger. 'The fact of the matter,' says Sam, 'is that they got a fellow on these magazines, a worm they keep in one of the closets who comes out and crawls over fifty fucking photographs they got of me, and when he finds the *worst*, the worm pisses on it. Then these other newspaper creeps come in and sniff his piss—here's the photograph we want, they say, sniff, sniff, and they print it. Always the worst photograph,' says Sam."

"'You have total recall,'" said Cal.

"'Just about,'" said Maheu. "I like this side of meeting with the boys. They are funny. Trafficante pops into the conversation to say, 'Think of the impact you make on people, Sam, when they

870 1 NORMAN MAILER

finally meet a good-looking fellow like you.' "

"This is entertaining, I must admit," said Cal, "but what was substantive?"

"Very little. These fellows sidle up to a proposition. They keep their business vague."

"We have a target date for late October. At the latest, early November."

"Comprehended. The little shipment we discussed has been handed over to them. They assure me they are going ahead. They refuse, however, to divulge specific plans. There was some talk about a young lady who is the girlfriend of a gunrunner named Frank Fiorini who has been active in the Cuban exile movement. Apparently, she had an affair with Castro a year ago, and now this Fiorini is trying to convince her to go back to Havana, pop into Fidel's bed, and drop a powder into his water glass. As backup, they are relying on a restaurant where Castro eats often, and the headwaiter is sympathetic to us. Nothing, however, has been nailed down to my satisfaction. We have no choice but to depend on people who can be as reliable or unreliable as they choose to be. I will not pretend this is a sound operation."

"When do I get a look at your buddies?" asked Cal.

Arrangements were made for him to drop into the Boom Boom Room tomorrow near midnight. Richard Nixon and John Fitzgerald Kennedy would have had their first debate by that hour, and Maheu would be eating with Giancana.

"Fine," said Cal. "I have a host of errands in Miami tomorrow."

"What they were, however, he did not impart to me.

Late on Monday night, so late that it was early Tuesday morning and Modene and I were sleeping in our new king-sized bed, I received a call from my father. "I'm wondering about the hygiene at the Fontainebleau," he said, "inasmuch as I am calling you from my room."

"If you haven't brought your own bug-killer, assume the infection approaches plague levels."

"Oh, we can cope," said Cal. But I could sense how drunk he was. "It's easier than getting up to go to a pay phone."

"Couldn't we have breakfast tomorrow?"

HARLOT'S GHOST I 871

"I'm gone with the dawn, old buck." He coughed his heavy cough. "I'll pouch you a line."

It was just as well he did. When I removed the strapping tape, it read:

Son—

I was introduced to His Nibs as a sportsman acquaintance of Bob Maheu's. "Sportsman, huh," asked G., "what do you go out looking for?" "Big game," I told him.

"Like Hemingway," he said.

"Yes," I said.

(Have to tell you—we were scorching the air with our mutual adrenaline.)

"Mr. Halifax is an old friend of Ernest Hemingway's," said Bob.

Giancana, I must say, took that one up. "I'd like to meet your friend," he said. "Hemingway and me got things in common. I know the burg where he grew up."

"Yes," I said, "Oak Park."

He stuck out his hand as if now he could trust me. "Oak Park," he said, "you got it."

I asked his opinion of the debate. "A richee versus a guy who's sucking up to the richees. Take your choice, Mr. Halifax."

Bob said, "Mr. Gold is for Jack Kennedy."

"On points," said Giancana, "I score it. More mileage with the richee."

After I said goodnight to them, I was up for a while in the other end of the hotel, their Poodle Lounge, dreadful name for a place to get drunk in—I expect the ladies room is called Tinkle Time. At any rate, Maheu came by for a nightcap and told me Giancana is obsessed with the way Castro spoke for four hours today at the UN, same day—get it!—as our Presidential debate. Giancana said to Maheu, and I quote Robert's masterful Rules of Recall, "How are you going to kill a guy who can talk for four fucking hours? If," said Giancana, "you stick a shotgun up his ass and pull the trigger, he won't even fart."

Son, that had me laughing like a banshee. If you remember, I called you up. For five minutes it must have seemed awfully

872 | NORMAN MAILER

important to me to get that arcane piece of hoodlum savvy over to you. How drunk, oh Lord, how drunk. The bones won't take it much longer.

It's hard to explain, but I rather like this Giancana. He gives me the confidence (on the most casual level of conviction, of course) that he knows as much about his business as I about mine. Let's hope I'm right. I do wish security didn't keep me from getting a little closer to him.

Yours,
Cal

In Post Scriptum:

As you've gathered by now, I am something of a hands-off executive. I cannot tell you how many tiems a day I send up blessings to Tracy Barnes and Dick Bissell for catching the brunt of administrative chores on this venture. Even so, I expend sixty minutes each morning reading cables-in, and another thirty for cables-out, every blessed working morning, and double on Monday. I think it is for this reason that I write letters, and preferably late at night, when my demons and old ghosts argue with me over who owns the prime turf of uninterrupted sleep. I tell you this in case you have similar troubles. A good letter organizes the mind. So, if the mood comes on you, give me the rundown which, given our larger preoccupations, neither of us got around to last weekend, concerning your daily Zenith stint now that Howard Hunt is in Mexico. Even more, give me some idea of what Howard is really up to out there. The verdict at Quarters Eye is that Hunt is too ambitious, and so never sends the bad news until he is absolutely obliged to.

Incidentally, use the pouch. Address it: EYES ONLY, HALIFAX. Bind it with the right tape, needless to say.

DAD

I did not try to gauge whether I had a conflict of loyalties. It was enough that my father wanted me to write to him. On the suspicion that he also wanted some sense of my development as an intelligence officer, I decided to risk my best analysis of Howard's Mexican situation.



873

25 |

Sept. 28, 1960

From: Charles to Halifax:

Since Hunt left Miami on August 15, he has been making a thoroughgoing attempt to establish the Frente in Mexico City, but is having trouble. The political facts, as I receive them from Howard by cable or phone, will doubtless prove old news to you. I will, all the same, proceed on the assumption that I may pass along a few new items.

The core of the problem is Win Scott. I know Mr. Scott is one of our most esteemed Station Chiefs, but my guess is Howard was off to a built-in bad start once he brought an operation into Mexico City that was not directly under Scott's jurisdiction. In addition, the Mexican government—again my assessment comes from Howard—is over-impressed with Castro's potential to stir up the revolutionary sentiments of the populace, so they are hardly about to welcome Cuban exile movements. Howard has lost whole working days getting Frente officials through Mexican customs when they try to enter the country.

Another item: The Frente rented an office near the Zócalo to set up a weekly newspaper, *Mambi*. It has been prey to daily persecutions via fire laws, substandard working conditions, foreign labor restrictions, trash removal fines—the usual.

In the meantime, Howard, who certainly likes his perks, has had to put up with a rent he terms "wholly excessive" for a small furnished house in Lomas de Chapultepec. The cover story he imparts to old social friends is that he has resigned from the Foreign Service because of disagreements with the leftist drift of our policies in Latin America and is now hard at work on a novel. In the course of picking up the threads of these bygone relationships, Howard has also managed to recruit an American businessman with old Agency ties to work on a contract basis. This cut-out has rented a couple of safe houses where Howard can meet with the Frente. Under no circumstances, however, are the Cubans allowed to learn where Don Eduardo lives. Since Howard was known here under his own name on the earlier tour, he obviously has to use it again to buttress his cover story,



874 | NORMAN MAILER

and so the separate lives of Don Eduardo and E. Howard Hunt are not permitted to encounter each other. This generates a considerable amount of daily travel for him. Howard made certain the safe houses were on the other side of the city from where he lives.

Needless to remark, paranoia has not lessened in the Frente. Distrust of the U.S. abounds. The leaders may be in Mexico at our request, but the body of their movement remains in Southern Florida; hence, they claim our real motive is to elevate them into figureheads for world opinion, yet remove them even further from the men who command the invasion force. It is those men who will now presumably become the future leaders of Cuba. Given this premise, Howard has had his hands full at more than one ugly meeting. Moreover, of the five Frente directors, Barbara is the only one who is not here now. He went back to Miami a month ago on an errand, and the others can talk about little else but Faustino's failure to return. Hunt has been importuning me to get on Toto's tail.

Barbaro, when I do see him, is strangely evasive. I say strange because he not only swears that he will go back to Mexico as soon as he can get his affairs in order, but is strangely wistful about it. I think he would really like to, but cannot, is trapped. Howard is convinced by now that Barbaro is engaged in a criminal caper involving considerable money. Howard says we need a Miami-based agent who can get the goods on Toto, and I have been chasing through stacks of three-by-fives. Sad to relate, the most promising of the candidates, if I can recruit him, is not even a Cuban but a former Uruguayan Communist who used to work for me in Montevideo. I was instrumental in getting him flown out to Miami one step ahead of the local cops and his former Party associates. His name is Eusebio "Chevi" Fuertes and he now works in a Miami bank that launders some of our money for the exiles. Barbaro, incidentally, uses the same bank, which fact brought me to consider bringing Fuertes into this.

I must tell you that I hesitate to employ him. I had a reunion with Chevi last night and it gave me pause. He is all but pro-Castro, so if I did not know him well, I would not go near him. In Montevideo, however, he acted in much the same manner,

HARLOT'S GHOST | 875

forever deriding the possibility that America, being capitalist, could ever have a decent motive. Yet, no agent was more valuable to us in Uruguay for enabling us to keep on top of the local Communist Party. When it came down to it, he hated the Communists even more than he hated us. Of course, if you have some agent you would prefer, well, so would I.

Incidentally, Fuertes has already provided me with one extraordinary piece of local news. It seems everyone in the Frente, Barbaro most of all, is terrified of a wealthy Cuban millionaire named Mario García Kohly who is a devout Batistiano, considers Castro equal to Satan, and sees the Frente leaders as concealed agents for Castro, and therefore subject to assassination. Kohly has ties with a former Cuban senator named Rolando Masferrer who maintains an army of thugs and ex-assassins from the Batista days; they are holed up in a place called No Name Key which Kohly owns. Via Fuertes, I hear that some of our Agency people (certainly unknown to me) have been trying to put together a private invasion army for Kohly, and provide him with boats. If successful, it would be a disaster, I think, since their victory would produce a civil war. (Of course, I may be seeing too small a part of the picture.) Fuertes, whose instinct for gossip impresses me as salient, adds that the *deepest* rumors in the exile community assert that Kohly's support comes from the White House. Not the top, but awfully close to it.

I must say that with Hunt gone, I have been so busy that I did not expect this letter to prove as enjoyable as it did. I persist in hoping that some of my stuff has *stance* for you.

One looks forward to your next visit.

Your health,
Harry

26 |

Sept. 29, 1960

Dear Dad:

It appears that I do enjoy writing to you, since here is another letter on top of yesterday's, and I am keeping my lady friend—about whom I will tell you one of these days—waiting. She is not a lady to cool her heels.

I want, however, to say more about my meeting with Fuertes. I need your reaction to his trustworthiness.

First, a word about Chevi's appearance. When recruited three years ago in Montevideo he was an exceptionally handsome fellow, slim, rather muscular, and a knockout with the ladies. Becoming an agent altered him drastically. He ballooned in weight, grew an extra-long, down-raked handlebar mustache (semicomical), and was otherwise a slob.

Here in Miami, he is still much overweight but has become a dude. Wears tropical three-piece suits in off-pastels. Panama hats. He smokes Havanas with Habanero aplomb, and looks more Cuban than the Cubans.

While I will make no claims to Bob Maheu's powers of recall, I believe that what I will offer you here is substantively accurate (90 percent). I did take notes as Fuertes spoke.

I must say that it is disconcerting how much he knows about us and what we're up to. He is a born coffeehouse type and frequents all the Cuban restaurants, from Versailles on down to the lowest hangouts on Calle Ocho. He not only sweeps in gossip, but, a born intelligence man, evaluates it. On the day I invited him over to a safe house, he knew, for example, that September 19 was the date we set for completion of the Guatemala training camp, and the site is called TRAX and will train an exile brigade of 400 men. He is off by thirty here—it's 370, by my, and I expect, your count—but, then, says Fuertes, there is room for expansion.

With no difficulty, he lays out the sociological components of TRAX. Ninety percent of Brigade trainees, he tells me, are students and professionals of middle-class background. Ten percent are workers, peasants, and fishermen. (That is certainly

HARLOT'S GHOST | 877

correct—I've been at the recruiting stations.) He can even specify trainee garb and weapons, to wit, combat fatigues with black baseball caps, and grease guns. All correct, Chevi. Where do you get it? But we know. To Cubans, revolution is a family matter, and everyone talks to everyone in the family.

Chevi did surprise me with his next statement. "I calculate," he told me, "that on the day of the invasion there will be no more than 1,500 men."

I smiled back at him. I didn't have a clue myself. I decided, however, to play devil's advocate, and said, "It's impossible. That number of men could not take Cuba."

"They could," Fuertes told me, "if Castro is truly detested by the masses. After all, Batista was hated, and Castro required less than a thousand *barbudos*. Of course, now the realities are different."

He proceeded to give me a lecture. When Castro was still in the hills, there was but one doctor for every two thousand people. "There's an old Cuban saying," he informed me: "Only the cattle are vaccinated." Then came a somewhat leftist presentation. (I believe his statistics, but distrust something in the liturgical aspect. Still, his figures did startle me.) Under Batista, 4 percent of the Cuban peasantry ate meat regularly; 2 percent ate eggs; 3 percent, bread; 11 percent, milk. No green vegetables. Rice and beans everywhere. Half of the homes on the island were without toilets of any kind. Yet, in Havana, there were traffic jams and TV sets. To be a Habanero was to believe that Cuba was an advanced Latin American country. Havana, not Cuba," he remarked, "is the spiritual center of your exiles. They are all middle class."

"You sound like a man who is for Castro," I said to him.

"No," said Fuertes, "as always, my heart is divided." I must warn you that he is not without a Latin penchant for rodomontade. "The man who spends his life engaged in a contest between his right hand and his left hand is always choking within," he said solemnly.

"Why are you not for Castro?" I asked.

"Because he destroyed the liberties. A man like me, placed in Havana, would be dead or in the underground."

"Then, why are you not against him?"

878 | NORMAN MAILER

Right here he began an interesting, if long-winded, disquisition on the nature of revolution and capitalism which is guaranteed to irritate the hell out of you.

Capitalism, says Fuertes, is essentially psychopathic. It lives for the moment. It can plan far ahead only at the expense of its own vitality, and all larger questions of morality are delegated to patriotism, religion, or psychoanalysis. "That is why I am a capitalist," he says. "Because I am a psychopath. Because I am greedy. Because I want instant consumer satisfaction. If I have spiritual problems, I either go to my priest and obtain absolution, or I pay an analyst to convince me over the years that my greed is my identity and I have rejoined the human race. I may feel bad about my selfishness, but I will get over it. Capitalism is a profound solution to the problem of how to maintain a developed society. It recognizes the will-to-power in all of us."

As you must have gathered by now, he is in a state of beatitude when he can sit in a chair, drink an *añejo*, and pontificate. So he posed a dichotomy I had never thought about before—the fell difference between the dumb and the stupid. "It is a profound difference," he said. "The dumb are weak mentally, and that is sad, but final. The stupid, however, have made a decision to be stupid. They exercise a willful negative intelligence. Their need-to-power is gratified most easily by obstructing the desires of others. Under Communism, where the present is presumably sacrificed for the future, the stupid stop up all the industrial pores. Slovenliness and inefficiency are their secret pleasures. Under capitalism, however, a greedy but stupid man is faced with a painful choice. So long as he remains stupid, he cannot satisfy his greed. Often, therefore, he is obliged to open his mind to be large enough to find some way to thrive. So, men who would be obstructive under Communism become instead, under capitalism, successful pricks and rich shits."

Not resting for a moment there, Fuertes next said, "On the other hand, the Communist cadres are indispensable to Castro. Without them, his revolution would be wholly disorganized. With them, he has a bureaucracy capable to some degree of running the country."

"Then you are not saying that Communism is bad for Cuba?"

HARLOT'S GHOST | 879

How hard it is to bring him to focus. "No," he says, "I am not certain. I paid a visit six months ago. The women impressed me. You should see how they look in their red blouses and black skirts when they march and sing in unison. Communism is solidarity for them."

I must say that I was thinking at this moment of Howard's description of the same ladies. If I recollect, Howard called them "as cacaphonous as a tribe of she-goats."

"Indeed," said Chevi, "these women are profoundly moving to me. They have a sense of their own existence that they never had before. Castro has a visceral sense of how to provide theater for the masses, magnificent, grandiose, political theater. Why, when Batista fled Cuba at the end of 1958, Castro did not rush to Havana. He started from the Sierra Maestra, and stopped in each major city on the route to make a four-hour speech. Overhead would be a large black helicopter. It was a sensational choice. The angel of death above, and equal to the liberation. Death was a fundamental part of his revolution. Of course, the women understood. The Spanish mentality perceives us as here on earth to bleed and to die—that is the given. If there happen to be more doctors, more education, more decency in the economic details, well, what a trinity—blood, death, and progress—a revolutionary program for Latins."

"Why," I ask him, "isn't that equally obtainable with the exiles? They are far to the left of Batista, but they are also for freedom as well." (I must say—having been around the Frente—that I sounded a little undercooked to myself.)

"Yes," said Fuertes, "but can any radical improvement be accomplished without a reign of terror? Castro answers in the negative. The only human motive more powerful than greed, he suggests, is terror. If the exiles take back Cuba, the corrupt who are among them—most numerous, I promise you—will form a network of greed. They will triumph over the idealists."

"So you are back with Castro?"

"I am with neither, I am with both. I am for myself."

We discussed pay. He wants a great deal, \$300 a week. Plus bonuses. I believe he is worth it. Fuertes obviously likes to inhabit two worlds at once, but I think I can manage him if he is inclined to work a double game.

880 | NORMAN MAILER

Please advise.

HARRY

My father's answer came the next day. The envelope read:
EYES ONLY ROBERT CHARLES.

Communication of Sept. 29 received:

Your Uruguayan bonanza sounds like a sophisticated Communist to me, and a complete double-dealer. He is so corrupt, however, that the money may keep him in line. I will approve if you obey certain basic procedures:

1) No more political discussions with him. He could be probing your attitudes and passing them on.

2) Keep to limited objectives always. I will send you specific assignments. Do not stray. He will give you the kitchen sink when all you want is one washer. Get him down to the washer. I will, of course, test his take by whatever corroborative opportunities are available to me.

3) Never get too close to the guy too much. I don't care if you did save his life.

4) Absolute case-officer protocol. *Never* connect him to anyone in Zenith or Quarters Eye without advising me in advance.

5) The first objective to use him on is the fat Cuban you took to dinner. Call the fat Cuban RETREAD.

6) Let's choose BONANZA as the saddlebag for your wind-bag friend.

HALIFAX

27 | Before I could have another conversation with Chevi, Howard Hunt flew back abruptly to Washington, and obtained permission from Quarters Eye to return the Frente to Miami. Since it was Cal who authorized the move, I assumed my letter had contributed to the decision, although as I soon learned, one of the safe houses in Mexico had been discovered by the Mexican police, and given the minimal talents of the Frente leaders for eluding a tail, our other safe houses would soon be as useless.

So, Howard brought the gang back to Miami. He was gloomy. He could assume a demerit on his record, and Dorothy was hardly pleased at the disruption this had caused in the life of their children. Schools would have to be changed once more. Besides, Howard was using his living quarters in Miami for working situations. To protect Don Eduardo's cover, was he to ask his daughters to take on other last names as well? It was hopeless. The Hunts had to suffer a temporary separation, and Dorothy rented a house in the environs of Washington while Howard kept his apartment in Miami. Of course, they now needed new fictions to explain to relatives in America why they were living apart.

His woes did not sweat his temperament. If I had been under any impression that I was covering his absence with efficiency and dispatch, he soon set that vanity packing: My record-keeping was exposed for what it was, passable, and when it came to the laundering of exile funds, Howard was not pleased with the number of transactions I had assigned to couriers (in the hope, as I tried to explain, that payment by hand rather than by check would avoid bank transfers, and cut the trail). The problem, of course, was that there were few available couriers we could trust with large sums. It usually came down to me, and I had enjoyed wearing money belts with sums as large as a hundred thousand dollars in them. Indeed, part of the pleasure revealed itself one night when I managed to have the money belt on, even as I was undressing for Modene. The knowledge that her slightly mysterious lover was carrying wads of cash managed to ignite new afterburners in Modene and in me—yes, I liked being a courier.

882 | NORMAN MAILER

Hunt would have none of that. It was irresponsibly dangerous. Let word get out, and one could get robbed or killed. There were ways to transfer funds by written order that could still close the trail. For that, he had a more experienced courier available, a fellow named Bernard Barker. He would introduce me to him.

I had made other mistakes as well. The lesser members of the Frente with whom I had been dealing in Howard's absence had begun to work out some military plans. They went into considerable development of detail—the site of potential landings, gradients of the beach, potential casualties, and in the course of that, I had looked at many a map of Cuba, all eight hundred miles of the island, and I began to enjoy various problems in logistics and strategy. Hunt, however, explained to me that military discussions with the Frente had to be seen as a harmless exercise, entertaining to one's sense of irony. "I recognize," said Hunt, "that it is tragic for some of these Cubans to remain innocent of their tactical impotence, and I am going to have no pleasure in explaining this condition to them when the time comes, but, Harry, face up—the key factor we confront is the DGI agents sent in by Castro. Remember our early conversations? These DGI agents are bound to pick up Frente plans and pass them back to Havana. So keep tipping your input toward disinformation. This operation is too important to leave it to Cuban generals."

"I know you're right," I said, "but it does get to me."

"Ethics, Harry, has to be subservient to the mosaic."

I was thinking of the boatmen. A portion of my labor had gone into calling various boatyards from Maryland down to Key West and across the Gulf from Galveston to Tampa; we were in the business of buying used powercraft. Each night, boats were going out with Cuban exiles, some to plant explosives, others to infiltrate a few people back into Cuba where they could link up with underground organizations. A boatman might be getting killed right now as we spoke. I sighed. It was hard to know whether history was a chart you could study, or a tide.

One morning not long after Hunt's return, I received a call from Dix Butler. He was coming to Miami for a short visit. Could we have dinner?

My first thought on hearing his voice was that Modene must

HARLOT'S GHOST | 883

not meet Dix. Love, I decided, was all too determined to explore one's courage or the lack of it. I actually moved a supper date with Modene over to a late date in order to keep her away from Dix.

Butler, however, came off the airplane in a flat mood, and did not get around in any hurry to explaining his mission in Miami. In fact, we did not leave the airport while I was there. We drank in the nearest lounge.

"How long here?" I asked.

"Two days. I'm looking a couple of people over."

"Can I ask who you are working for?"

"Negative."

We drank for a while. We barely talked. Neither of us brought up Berlin. We were acting like men between whom nothing much had ever taken place. All the same, his flat mood menaced the air.

Out of a silence, I asked, "Are you still with Bill Harvey?"

"I might be." He took a full pause. "I might not."

"What is Bill up to?"

"Count on it," he said. "Whatever it is, it is crazy enough for King William."

We laughed—somewhat experimentally.

"I assume," I said, "that he's now in Washington."

"Decent assumption."

"Are you working for him?"

"Is your name Arnie Rosen?"

I had forgotten how powerful was Butler's jab.

"In fact," said Dix, "that's how I found you. Through Arnie Rosen. Ask *him* what I'm doing. *He* probably knows."

"I assume you are working for Bill Harvey."

"I might say no. My work is peripatetic."

He was wearing an expensive gold watch and a tropical silk suit that must have cost five hundred dollars. His shoes certainly did.

"Can you tell me where you've been the last three years?"

"Laos."

"The Golden Triangle?"

"It's the mark of an asshole to keep asking questions," said Dix.

884 | NORMAN MAILER

"If," I said, "you told me what you are here for, I might be able to help you."

"You can't," he said. "I'm looking for a couple of Cubans who can handle weapons, steer a boat, live off the jungle, fear nothing, manage their rum, and thrive in filth. Got any recruits?"

"You'll find them."

"Let's wipe this conversation." He literally passed his hand over his face before he said more equably, "I have a couple of appointments to get to."

"Good," I said.

He stuck out his hand. I shook it. He did not try to destroy my metacarpals. He contented himself with staring into my eyes. I suspected he had been drinking since morning. "We're all in it together, right?"

"Yes," I said.

"Do you respect Castro?" he asked.

"I think I do."

"I hate the son of a bitch," he said.

"Why?"

"He is a year younger than me, and he has done more than I have done so far."

I thought of making a joke, but he was too serious. "Look," he said, "at any given moment, there are something like twenty superior people on earth. Castro is one of them. I am another. God, or whoever it is—it could be a fucking committee for all I care—has put us twenty down here on earth."

"Why?" I asked. "To torture you?"

He laughed at that. He was merry for a moment the way a lion would be merry if the wind blew in one good unexpected whiff of carrion. "You," he said, "are making decent efforts not to be stupid."

Well, indeed, I was glad I had not brought Modene.

"Still," he said, "you have it backwards. We are put on this earth to entertain the gods. By our contests. I respect Fidel Castro, but I am not overawed by him. I have a prayer: Put Fidel and me in the jungle together, and I am the one who will come out alive."

After that, he was silent. Then, he was morose. When I

finished my drink, he barely nodded as I left the table.

I called Rosen from the nearest pay phone, and woke him up. It was his night to catch an early sleep, but he did not grumble; in fact, he was quick to ask, "Did the big fellow look you up?"

"Certainly did. And certainly has a number of things he doesn't care to talk about."

"Yes," said Rosen.

When he said no more, I waited before I asked: "Could you fill me in?"

"I could," said Rosen, "but why should I? Our relations, Harry, are becoming a one-way street."

I was more drunk than I realized. I almost made a long speech to Rosen. It would have said that in our work, the little piece one held of the whole was such an intense and crystalline piece of information that it created a tension, even a thirst in oneself to be filled in on, yes, the *collateral* data, so, of course, we all gossiped and wanted to know more. If we laughed at Arnie, it was envy, yes, Rosen, I said in my mind, it's a form of respect, when all is said, that we call you to find out, but all I managed to mutter after what must have been a not wholly ineffective silence was, "I suppose, Arnie, if you don't tell me, I won't sleep as well."

"So instead you woke me up." This made him laugh, even gave him a good one, as if it suited his notion, after all, of our relations, and he said, "The big guy had to leave Berlin under a cloud."

"Because of Iron-Ass Bill?"

"No. Because of an Inspector General. Iron-Ass actually saved him. Got him transferred to Laos."

"And that's all."

"That's all I know."

"No, it isn't."

"How can you presume to make that remark?"

"Because I know as much as you. I know he was in Laos."

Rosen found this funny as well. "God, are you drunk," he said.

"Yes, I had bourbon for bourbon with the butler."

"Oh, you don't want to do that. Butlers are notoriously

886 I NORMAN MAILER

ramrod, if you know what I mean."

"What I mean is, what is the big guy doing now?"

"I won't tell you. Not under these auspices. I will only say—so that you don't feel obliged to suck your thumb through the night—that he is associated once more with William the King, and it's so hush-hush that it's vanguard, supersecret, a fence, let us say, around the fence. Please do not ask me any more."

"I won't, because you don't have that much to offer."

"You are absolutely right."

"Tell me then about the Inspector General who came to Berlin."

I could feel his relief. This news was, after all, less sensitive. "Well the big guy had a German agent whom he no longer trusted, so he strung the fellow up and put turpentine on his genitals. Said it was to get a little closer to the truth." Rosen began to laugh. "It's not funny, I know, it's painful, but I have to laugh because Dix—oops, the big guy—saw it as the appropriate punishment for a minor piece of double-dealing. After all, turpentine doesn't destroy the genitals, it just wakes the skin up. 'So, I made the Kraut hop,' said our fellow, 'so what? Think of all the *Juden*, Rosen, that this Nazi once kept hopping.' And it was true, according to Dix—oh, hell, I'll use his name. My phone is safe. I make certain it is. And you're at a pay phone, right? Dix says he, personally, always kept a double standard. That meant less mercy to ex-Nazi agents who had gotten naughty than run-of-the-mill agents who had gone naughty. Only, Dix made one mistake. Those ex-Nazis have a network. The turpentine victim complained to an influential friend in the BND. Bad luck for Dix. There was an Inspector General in Berlin that week who has a permanent burn on one side of his face. The story is that he never got a promotion to Senior Officer because of that scar. Hell of a thing, isn't it, to be *cosmetically* rejected by the Agency. Naturally, the IG had sympathy for another burn victim. Dix was in the worst trouble of his life until Bill Harvey used his weight to get our big guy transferred to Laos." Rosen sneezed. "You've done it again. I've told you all."

"My blessings," I said.

Later that night when I filled Modene in on a few modest things about Dix, and confessed that I had not wanted her to

HARLOT'S GHOST | 887

meet him, she was pleased. "You have nothing to fear from a man like that," she said. "I could never be attracted to him."

"Care to tell me why?"

"If he is the way you say he is, he is fixed in his mold of life, and I could not change him. I can't be too attracted to a man I cannot change."

I was about to say, "Can you change Jack Kennedy or Sam Giancana," but I held back. Instead, I said, "Do you believe that you can alter me?"

"Oh," she said, "it's just difficult enough to be interesting."

28 | As the prelude to a couple of bad weeks for my father, for Robert Maheu, and for myself, Nikita Khrushchev took off his shoe one day at the United Nations and began to hammer on his desk with it. That same date, October 12, Robert Maheu received word in the morning that the pills to poison Fidel Castro had reached their final destination in Havana. I had an odd reaction. I began to wonder whether some mute sensor in the Premier's brain was telepathic and Khrushchev had stirred into anger without quite knowing why. If such speculation came under the head of what my father called "freestyle thinking—costs nothing, accomplishes nothing," I could still hear the echo of that shoe. In my ear, it tolled like a bell announcing the end of Castro's life; in advance, I mourned him and concluded that Castro had betrayed something grand in himself. Such contemplation of one's enemies produces rich melancholy.

Of course, he was not exactly dead, not yet, and my work continued, and my nights with Modene. I never slept during those weeks without expecting a phone to awaken me with an

888 I NORMAN MAILER

announcement of Castro's demise, but the phone never rang.

At the end of the third week in October, a letter, via pouch, came from my father. It was not Hunt's habit to pass by my cubicle first thing in the morning, but the old Chief-of-Station instinct may have been working. Hunt, in fact, was sitting in my chair, the letter held between two fingers as I came in. Standing up, he passed it over to me wordlessly. The heading read: ROBERT CHARLES EYES ONLY.

"May I ask whom this is from?"

It was within his prerogative to ask. Technically speaking, anything that passed under my eyes belonged to his eyes as well. I might run a small and secret operation, but I was not supposed to keep it secret from him, not on demand.

"Oh, well, it's Cal's," I said. "He likes to correspond in this fashion. Uses it for personal correspondence."

"Is that really so, Robert?" He called me Robert whenever we were at Zenith. I called him Ed. Howard deemed it necessary. "You cannot know when someone will walk in on you, or even worse, one might forget in public."

"It's true, Ed."

"Well, it's also unheard of. I could bring your father up on charges."

"What are you saying? Come on!"

"I wouldn't, of course. But a Senior Officer has to set an example."

"I won't pass that remark on to my father."

"No, of course not. It's something for me to bring up with him myself if I feel so inclined."

"I wouldn't bring it up at all. It's his way of doing things."

Hunt looked furious at my impertinence, and then he shrugged. "One more rogue elephant on my watch."

"Nothing to worry about," I said. "It is personal correspondence."

When he was gone, I read the letter. Many another important message has become no more than a line of summary in my memory, but I recall all of this letter. It is burned into my brain by the livid attention I gave to it; I could not help but shudder at the thought of Howard reading it.

HARLOT'S GHOST | 889

Oct. 25, 1960

Start BONANZA on RETREAD. No need for personal contact yet. Just have him dig into RETREAD's accounts. If they are as I expect, spread over several banks, BONANZA may have to contact a few friends in rival institutions. This is not an uncommon practice among young bankers, I can tell you. (They never know where they'll be looking for work next, so they do cooperate with each other.)

That, son, will constitute the good news. Now, prepare yourself for a shocker. But first, let me describe the messenger. Richard Bissell, one's immediate boss these days, is an impressive figure of a man. Not for physicality, mind you. He is a big man, but I could throw him over a barn door. It is his mentality. He is at home in fine and contemplative halls of mentality. You are familiar with the Cathedral of St. John the Divine on 110th Street and Amsterdam Avenue in New York? Of course you are. St. John's is a wondrous center for meditating upon the monumentality of thought itself. And to me, Dickie Bissell is the embodiment of that spirit. I want you to picture him. He is six feet six at least, imposing in height even for you or me, and, for fact, when you are sitting down with him, he still seems somewhat overhead. At a desk he will listen to person after person most attentively while he bends paperclips slowly and thoroughly in his long white fingers. Otherwise, he gives you all his attention, his head towering above his pale long hands—Rick, I have to tell you they are as white as good breeding itself, an odd remark to make, except that when I was a boy, that's how I saw good breeding—pale, long hands. Bissell keeps toying with paperclips as if they are tactics and operations, little endeavors down on the plain, so to speak, *particularities*, and he, great massive white man, hovers above, great white massive brain power embodied in white, puffy establishment body—Lord, he is the archetypal, even. I would say, the *godhead* dean of Harvard, huge, gentle, thoughtful, wholly removed from all the goddamned dirt of our operations. His features are delicate. Son, he's almost beautiful in the chiseled perfection of his chin, his lips, his nostrils, and the shaping of his eyes behind his horn-rimmed glasses.

Well, isn't the above just as pretty a piece of writing as I've

890 | NORMAN MAILER

ever sent you? Did I tell you that for a year after World War II, I thought of trying to become a writer, then gave up? All that personal material from OSS, but I didn't want to make a fool of myself. Besides, writing gets you looking at your wife out of the corner of your eye. About the time Mary would remark, "It's getting to be picnic-weather time again," I would be ready to add, "she said," so I decided to put my art into my letters, ha, ha.

At any rate, here I am resolutely straying from the point. I have reason: Bissell, whom I obviously could revere (if only he didn't have a bit of pot belly, but a thunderously good boss all the same), called me over from Quarters Eye to K Building this morning and handed me a memorandum from J. Edgar Hoover to Richard Bissell.

During recent conversations with several friends, Giancana stated that Fidel Castro was to be done away with very shortly. When doubt was expressed regarding this statement, Giancana reportedly assured those present that Castro's assassination would occur in November. Moreover, he allegedly indicated that he had already met with the assassin-to-be on three occasions. Giancana claimed that everything has been perfected for the killing of Castro, and that the "assassin" had arranged with a girl not further described to drop a "pill" in some food or drink of Castro's.

Bissell looked at me and said, "All right, Cal, how did Mr. Hoover obtain such information?"

Son, if you ever get in one of these situations—sooner or later, we all do—start by enumerating all personnel in the know. It gives you time to think. It also separates out the likely possibilities. I started by naming the Director, which produced the next thing to a baleful look from Bissell. "The Director," he said, "is not associated with this. Begin with me."

I didn't argue. After Bissell, I came next. We could trust ourselves. Then Sheffield Edwards. Ditto. It was Bullseye Burns' turn. He had been an FBI man but could probably be vouched for. Besides, he had not been at the Fontainebleau.

"Your son," said Bissell. "is touchy ground for us. But I will



accept your evaluation. Can you vouch for him altogether?"

"Yessir," I said. "One hundred percent. That is one good young man." (I did not tell him that the family vice is hyperbole.)

Which left Maheu and our three Italians.

"I see no advantage for Maheu in playing a double game with us," said Bissell. "It might sweeten future associations for him over at the Bureau, but look at how much he loses with us if the job doesn't come off."

"I couldn't agree more," I said.

"Is Roselli sincere in desiring citizenship?"

"Maheu swears to that."

Which left Giancana and Trafficante. We agreed that I needed a sit-down with Maheu to go over their bona fides.

The key to the problem is, how much does Hoover really know? Bissell's thesis is that so long as the FBI is unwitting of our relation to Giancana, Hoover's memo cannot hurt us. Yet why is Buddha sharing such information with the Agency? Does he know more, or does he wish us to think he knows more?

When Maheu came up to Washington, he told me he had been holding Giancana's hand in Miami. It seems Sammy has a girlfriend named Phyllis McGuire. She's one of the McGuire Sisters. You may have seen them on TV—they are singers who work for Arthur Godfrey. There was some sort of gutter splash a year and more ago when Julius LaRosa and Dorothy McGuire were getting a little too open about their hanky-panky, at least for Godfrey's taste—that monumental hypocrite! Godfrey couldn't live without fast and fancy sex is what I happen to know, but won't let his minions enjoy same. Remember? He said Julius LaRosa was lacking in humility. If this country ever goes under, it will be for needless, egregious hypocrisy. At any rate, the McGuire Sisters are lively girls apparently. Dorothy's sibling Phyllis owed, I was told, a marker in the neighborhood of \$100,000 at the gaming tables of the Desert Inn; Giancana was gallant enough to tear it up for her. Excelsior! What a nice way for a romance to begin! Our Giancana, Maheu now assures me, is close to insanely jealous of Phyllis McGuire. It seems the lady has a soft spot for one Dan Rowan of the comic team of Rowan and Martin—can you keep up with these people? Maheu's first hypothesis is that Giancana told Phyllis about the Castro project

11 NORMAN MAILER

order to impress her; then Phyllis, in her turn, told Rowan. mewhere in the links, the FBI has a taping, and it could be on :Guire. Given Phyllis's public life as one of the three cleaning, God-fearing McGuire Sisters, she is certainly vulnerable the kind of crude pressure the FBI can apply to situations like s.

Now to Maheu's back-up thesis: Giancana is deliberately joting his mouth off to any number of cronies. Reason: He hes to sabotage the operation. Motive? Maheu shrugs. Giancana might be advertising his ties to the Agency in order to get Department of Justice off his back. Maheu does not see how can prove anything, but he is certainly not to be trusted.

Next comes Maheu's read on Trafficante: For years, Santos s the mob's number-one man for gambling operations in anana, and still has the best networks there. Of course, half of people might be playing a double game with the DGI by now. could Trafficante. Castro, we know, kept him in jail with a e of rooms, a TV set, visitors, special food. It sounds like a tracted negotiation. Trafficante's claim, at least as Maheu ives it via Giancana and Roselli, is that Santos promised the on to Castro, but has not delivered much since he got back Tampa. His motive for joining us in a move on Fidel is that s anxious to eliminate the big Cuban before the compliment turned. Trafficante, according to Maheu, vouches for the ion of his network that he is using for our job. All the same, spect that Castro is doing *mucho* business with Trafficante, Toto Barbaro is in on it. Just an intuition here, but I have e to trust such instincts.

Let us get to your role. I have, as you may have noticed, e than filled your need to know. Do take exceptional care of letter. Indeed, give it to the shredder yourself if you do not an *endroit*. Or get one. They're worth the expenditure. For s, I confess to you, I've had a safe deposit box in a remote bank up north. Another in Boston. One in Washington, of course. Think on these lines. If you can preserve my rs, do so. Some decade, long after I'm gone, Agency barriay come down, and you might want to do a memoir of your nan. Assuming he's worth the portrait. If so, these letters help to flesh it out. For today, and this week, however, I

believe you do need to know all this, inasmuch as my next ten days have to be spent on direct military matters. I can tell you that working with committees from Joint Chiefs staff is about as agreeable as transferring from Yale to Indiana State.

In my absence, stay close to Maheu on all that concerns Giancana. You see, Maheu and I came separately to the same conclusion: We need a tap on Phyllis McGuire's phone in Las Vegas. It will enable us to know whether she is witting. Maheu suggested the Agency do the job, but I cannot chance any of our people being implicated should something go wrong, so I told Maheu that the ball, like it or not, was in his court. After all, what kind of private detective is he?

Later

Ay, caramba! Giancana just brought in his separate demand. Maheu called to tell me he is going back to Vegas unless we lay in a tape on Rowan. He is obsessed with McGuire's possible infidelity. He must find out. Why not put the tape on McGuire, you may ask, but my assumption is that Giancana doesn't want his calls to Phyllis monitored. Might cramp his style. Rowan, therefore, it must be. Maheu next proceeded to entertain me with an imitation of Giancana expressing his sentiments: "If this tap comes in with the goods, I will cut Rowan's balls off and glue them to his chin. I will give him a fucking goatee to go with his mustache." "Is it," asks Maheu, "Rowan or Martin who has the mustache?" "Who gives a fuck?" answers Giancana. "I'll cut off his nose and shove it up his ass."

Hilarious, but I'm left with the cold assessment that this is a risky caper. You will find, I think, that the larger one's stake on a job, the more a surrealistic element is likely to pop in. Here we are waiting on tiptoe, day after day, for news that the big tree has fallen in Cuba. Yet, in the midst of such unholy anxiety, up pops the little Eyetalian demon and swears to become a veritable Abaddon—O ye angels of the bottomless pits! I *hate* everything about this Giancana business. My disaster warning system (which used to advise me from a half mile off that an irate husband was on his way back to the very connubial bed I was in the act of despoiling) now tells me to beware of this one. Rick,

894 | NORMAN MAILER

stay on top of it! Maheu is only intermittently forthcoming, so don't hesitate to ask tough questions. Get him to review his safety factors before we give the go-ahead on the job. Fill me in directly by pouch.

YOURS FROM SLEEPLESS HALIFAX

Oct. 28, 1960

Great Caliph Halifax—

I don't know if Maheu is a bad man or a fine man. I have seen a good deal of him in the last couple of days, but he is simply beyond my reach. A ponderous yet velvet dimension resides out there. One knows when one is outmatched.

I limit myself, therefore, to focusing each new question on the gap left by Maheu's answer to the previous one. We make progress, but I am sure he sees me as some sort of pill to be taken on the hour.

Nonetheless, I have learned this much: Trafficante and Giancana are certainly devoting time to the Havana op. Sammy, of course, has a good deal of other business here in Miami, as does Traff in Tampa, so it isn't as if they labor full time in our interest. Still, the op does call for more than using one girl to drop one pill into one glass of water. Any time that a mob guy or Latin political leader becomes a logical target, he fully expects attempts to be made on his life. Rather than hope to lull him into a sense of security when he is already in a state of anxiety, the more effective procedure, explains Maheu, is to up the ante, intensify the climate. A brain overloaded with life-threats does not function properly. A plan works best in the midst of many others. It's the enrichment of the soup, therefore, that takes up everybody's time. Various dangerous acquaintances of G and T in Havana are encouraged to pursue the possibility of abrupt elimination. They plot, they discuss, they take primitive steps, and then they get caught. (I would assume they are betrayed by our friends.) All this serves to charge the atmosphere around Castro, who, being perverse, tends to take even more chances.

In the meantime, our agent has arrived in Havana with the medicine. Much depends on whether this former girlfriend can

HARLOT'S GHOST | 895

become the girlfriend again. Her American-based boyfriend, Frank Fiorini (who fought with Castro in the Sierra Maestra and is now associated with some very hardcore hoodlum Cuban exiles in Miami), has passed on to Maheu the information that El Caudillo sleeps heavily after making love, snores, and in the past was not wholly satisfactory to the girl's olfactory senses. (At least so she has told Fiorini.) It seems Castro's cigar breath is offensive.

God, we hang on these details as if they were the relics of a saint!

I give the above to bring you up to date on our off-shore venture. Now, for Vegas. I have imparted your concerns to Maheu and he assures me that the job will be relatively safe. For one thing, we will *not* tap the telephone. A spike-mike, no larger than an eight-penny nail, inserted in the baseboard near the phone will record whatever the target says on the phone, and in addition we will hear any conversation that takes place in the room. In addition, we are not breaking the federal and Nevada statutes that forbid wiretaps. No law exists against eavesdropping from an adjoining room, even if it is by way of a spike-mike.

Perfect. I tell him, but what if the man doing the installation is caught?

Maheu gave me an interesting rundown on the precautions to be taken. For one thing, the operator will occupy a suite in the same hotel. He will remove the lock to the door between his living room and bedroom, and bring it to a selected locksmith in Vegas who can fashion a master key out of this lock capable of opening all the doors of all the guest rooms in the hotel. Now our operator can knock on the target's door, and if there is no answer, open it. He will have an assistant accompanying him to whom he will hand over the master key. The assistant will spill a few drops of whiskey on the operator's suit, and take off down the hall while our operator enters target's room and proceeds to make the installation, after which he sets the door button on lock and leaves. If for any reason target should happen to enter the room while the operator is there, the cover story will go as follows: Our operator is drunk (indeed he reeks of booze), he doesn't know how he got into the room, the door must have been open, he displays his own room key, and wanders out. If

896 | NORMAN MAILER

it is a house detective who interrupts him, the routine will be similar except that a hundred dollar bill is likely to change hands.

"What happens," I asked Maheu, "if security comes in suddenly and there is our man on the floor with all his tools out?"

"That is a contingency which a skilled operator would not allow to evolve," said Maheu. "His tools are small and carried in loops on the inside of his vest. The drill is no thicker than your finger, and the screwdrivers have flat handles. It's a jeweler's kit, you could say. Only one tool is kept out at a time, and that is put back before employing the next."

"What about sawdust?"

"Carefully gathered up as soon as it is created, then immediately disposed of via the toilet fixtures."

"Couldn't the operator be on his knees," I ask, "using a drill on the baseboard just at the moment security comes in?"

"Not at all. The door to target's room will be on the chain. No one, therefore, would be able to enter without a chain-cutter. Our operator will have time to pick up his tool, stow it on his person, go to the door, unhook the chain, and commence impersonating a drunk."

"But," I persist, "if there is a body search, the tools will be discovered."

"Yes, but a body search is not the most likely of contingencies."

"Still, it could happen."

"There are no final guarantees."

"What would eventuate if there is discovery?"

"Well, there can be no legal charge against the operator for the spike-mike. The case comes down to breaking and entering. Since neither the lock nor the door is broken, a good Vegas lawyer ought to be able to get it thrown out of court. Of course, the operator has to stand fast. We'll get a good fellow."

Maheu is planning to use the DuBois Detective Agency in Miami. The operator will be a man named Arthur Balletti. Neither DuBois nor Balletti is to know any more than that they have been hired by Maheu, and he has provided them with the target's room number.

Maheu's precautions do impress me. Given our need to

HARLOT'S GHOST | 897

keep abreast of who is telling what to whom, I would vote for a go-ahead. Under the circumstances, reasonably safe.

ROBERT CHARLES

29 | On the night of October 31, I awoke in the early hours with a feeling that it was imperative to check for messages at Zenith. Since the sleep had been heavy, I thought at first I was in my own apartment, and it took the view of moonlight on Biscayne Bay as seen through the picture window of the master bedroom to remind me that Modene and I were not only at La Nevisca and ensconced in the king-size bed, but sleeping heavily from the effects of several sticks of marijuana.

We had started to smoke earlier this night after her flightmate told her, "It is great for sex," and gave her half an ounce. Our evening turned paranoid. Modene confessed that Sam Giancana made her nervous. "If he wanted to spy on us, he has the people to do it. He could locate your apartment in no time. Even this place."

"Are you sleeping with him?" I remember asking.

"I told you that I am not. But we are friends, and he does want to sleep with me."

"What do you tell him?"

"That I am in love with Jack."

"Which is true."

"It is half-true. Just as it may be half-true that I am in love with you."

"But you don't tell Sam about me."

"I tell him that I sleep only with Jack."

"And do you? Are you back with him?"

"You know the answer to that," she said.

898 | NORMAN MAILER

"It is yes."

"Yes."

I felt as if I were bleeding within. Yet, the professional requirement was on me: ignore pain, pursue inquiry. So I said:

"Are Sam and Jack in contact with one another?"

"They may be."

"Through you?"

"I resent your asking. I know who you work for."

"Whatever are you talking about?"

"You are a special agent for the FBI. Your friend, the *Life* photographer, told me."

Good Sparker Boone. "It's not true," I said. "I happen to work for the Treasury Department. Bureau of Narcotics." When she did not answer, I nodded. "I'm a narc."

"Why don't you arrest me? Because I am going to turn you in." She took another puff on our stick of marijuana and handed it back to me. Soon enough, we began to make love.

Images of Modene in bed with a would-be President crowded in upon images of vichyssoise and hamburgers in the dining room on N Street. The theater opened in my mind with all the solemnity of a curtain rising on a heavily furnished stage. Yes, there was Modene in the middle of an antique bed performing various kinds of whoopee. Lucky candidate. Large hydraulic pressures in my groin were abstractly reminiscent of lust. Sex on marijuana was bizarre. Large and occult was its arena. Beautiful were the curves of the belly and breast, and eloquent was the harmonium of universal sex; its laws came into my senses with one sniff of her dark-haired pussy, no more at other times than a demure whiff of urine, mortal fish, a hint of earth—now I explored caverns, and our bodies began to obey a master rhythm that came from as far away as the drumbeat of an unseen army, one rhythm, wondrous, yet impersonal. I could have welcomed Jack Kennedy into bed with us at that moment. What the hell, we were all equals in the great eye of the universe; the thought took me over the hill; I was rocked about in the engines of orgasm, and felt sensations as strange as lives one would not know how to inhabit: I saw Fidel Castro sleeping with the blond mistress of Frank Fiorini on a Havana bed one hundred and eighty miles away. A cigar was in the mouth of El Caudillo as he

HARLOT'S GHOST I 899

snored. Then I forgot them all, and rolled down the hill, and slept in the tomb of the drug marijuana, and awoke—was it an hour, was it more?—with weights upon my thoughts as heavy as the air of the Everglades in summer. Sleep was possessed of entrails; I had to tear myself loose from them. There was that imperative in my brain: I had to call the night officer at Zenith.

When I did, there was a message: Contact HALIFAX at Rock Falls.

Still in a half-sleep, code words came to the surface more sluggishly than pond fish in a swamp—Rock Falls meant . . . Rock Falls meant *Call my office as soon as possible*. Adrenaline was pressing against torpor—bronze glow across a leaden sky. I did not care at this moment if I ever saw marijuana again.

There was a pay phone on the road to the Rickenbacker Causeway. I could drive there to make the call. I would have to assume that if Modene awakened, she would not panic at finding herself alone in a safe house with no means of transportation, no, not at all. She could, yes, by all means, *ring for a cab*. My brain made large leaps to solve little problems.

By the time I reached Cal at Quarters Eye, it was 3:14 A.M. "Give me your number," he said. "I'll call you back in eight to ten minutes." His voice offered no more than a modicum of recognition.

Just outside my phone booth, the mosquitoes were demented. I felt the synthetic nature of Key Biscayne soil; beneath one's feet were shells and ground coral, channel mud, shoulder asphalt. The whine of the mosquitoes was keyed to the rootless rage of the transplanted. Inside the telephone booth, sizable bugs darted from glass door to glass wall on a high electronic hum. Then the call came through.

"Listen," said Cal. "In Vegas, this afternoon, Maheu's operator, Balletti, went into the target's room, set to work on the telephone, and then got so hungry that he couldn't finish the job. He decided to go down to the coffee shop. During the interim, he left behind a few tools, a couple of phone bugs, and a half dozen wires stripped and ready for splicing."

I could feel my stomach yawning, a physical event I had not experienced so keenly since childhood.

"A head chambermaid happened to come by," said Cal, "to

900 I NORMAN MAILER

check the room. She saw the evidence on the floor. She called the house detective. He was waiting in the room when Mr. Balletti came back from lunch and opened the door with his master key. Mr. Balletti did not reek of whiskey."

"Oh, no," I said.

"Do believe it," said Cal. "When they arrived at the police station, Balletti called Maheu at his Miami office. In order for the police to make the phone connection, Balletti was obliged to give them Maheu's number.

"Oh, no," I said again.

"Well, yes," said Cal. "Wiretapping is a federal offense. For some godforsaken reason, Balletti had not tried to put in a spike-mike, no, he was in the act of tapping the telephone. A federal offense. In a few days we will have the FBI on Maheu's ass, and he will proceed to support that weight for as long as his buttocks can take it, and will then proceed, I expect, to tell the Bureau that he was doing a special for us."

"Have you spoken to Maheu?"

"I have been on the phone for hours with everyone. Bullseye Burns, believe it if you will, has been in my face. Representing the Office of Security. I discovered this afternoon, *after the event*, that our overall project actually began with the Office of Security. They hired Maheu, and then, to cover their bald, incompetent ass, Sheffield Edwards talked Dulles, Bissell, or whoever-it-was, to get me in on liaison. Unfortunately, it was never quite made clear to me that this was not entirely my show."

"Could that be in your favor now?" I made the mistake of saying.

"Not at all. The Office of Security is claiming that I took over Maheu and proceeded without Bullseye Burns or Sheffield Edwards. The fact of the matter is that I did, and that I have been had." He came to a halt and started to cough. Phlegm volutes overlapped in his bronchia.

"Now," he said, having delivered one quantum of the misused past to a handkerchief, "we still have to have a real talk with Maheu. I have been occupied with Sheffield Edwards, and his stalwart henchman, Bullseye Burns, who had the temerity to suggest that I shunted him aside in order to give a job to a tyro named Robert Charles."



HARLOT'S GHOST | 901

"I am a tyro," I said. "I advised you to go along on Maheu's plan."

"Yes, you were a bit of a fathead. But I was a hog's head. Maheu has Howard Hughes to deal with daily. He is busy. I know that. He is no longer a private detective; he is a confidence man. He does public relations. He has come down to the level of a carpetbagger. How dare he give you such a splendid summary of how to do the job and then choose people who fulfill none of his precepts?"

"Did you tell him so?"

"At white heat," Cal growled. "Until I realized that I need him to hold the line. So I backed off just a little. Now, you go over and quiz Maheu quietly. Go over right now. To his office. He is expecting you. Has been for the last three hours. Where the hell were you tonight? Don't you ever pick up your telephone?"

"I was out."

"Doing what?"

"Fucking."

"Well, at least one of us isn't being fucked."

Yes, he had come a long way from St. Matthew's. "Do you want my report in the morning?" I asked.

"Hell, yes. Make certain it is in the early flight pouch."

Halifax Eyes Only

NOVEMBER 1, 1960, 5:54 A.M.

Maheu and I shared coffee from 4:00 A.M. to about 5:30, at which time I came back to Zenith to begin this report. Needless to say, I took copious notes, and can give you an accurate summary and reliable quotes.

Let me say that even if I was taken in once by Maheu's confidence, I would testify that he seems genuinely upset. We spoke in his private office which, as you might expect, is lavish, carpeted, and honored with an antique sideboard. He took the lights down a little, then opened the blinds for the hints of dawn on Biscayne Bay. We have impressive black clouds this morning. It fits the mood.

Maheu stated that his previous rundown on how to perform

902 | NORMAN MAILER

the operation described the way he would have done it. He finds himself guilty for neglecting to check out Balletti's procedure in more detail.

Here is what, in Maheu's belief, did occur. For whatever reason, perhaps to cadge a few extra dollars, Balletti did not hire a backup man in Vegas. It is possible, says Maheu, that Balletti never had any intention of installing a spike-mike. They are difficult to adjust, and may not have been available on short notice. Balletti, however, says Maheu, claims to have misunderstood him. Maheu does not believe that for a moment.

Now, as to the master key. Balletti did not, in the absence of an assistant, bother to hide it in the hotel hallway, but put it back in his pocket. An unforgivable exhibition of carelessness. Moreover, he did not carry a flask, nor purchase a small bottle. Fastidiousness, or the desire to save on cleaning bills may have been "the withholding factor."

Finally—the descent to the coffee shop "for sustenance." Maheu assured me that it was not at all inexplicable. Breaking into a stranger's abode kicks off, he says, deep-seated psychological mechanisms. Thieves often defecate on living room carpets, or on the counterpane of the master bed. Some get hungry. It is a primitive reaction. The hotel was quiet, and Balletti did not believe there was once chance in a thousand a chambermaid would check up. "I do not approve, however, of his odds," said Maheu.

When I asked why Balletti made the mistake of phoning him, Maheu shrugged. "I can offer no explanation other than that he lost his head."

That is Maheu's official explanation. There can be, of course, another track. For some time, Maheu resisted my questions. I had, finally, to suggest that I was following leads you had suggested. "You are asking," Maheu said at last, "were we set up by Giancana?"

"The question does exist," I told him.

"We are now in the realm of uninformed hypothesis," said Maheu.

"Let us speculate."

"It is possible," he said, "but what would be Sam's motive?"

HARLOT'S GHOST | 903

What was tacitly agreed upon is that our project with "the boys" has to be placed on hold. As Maheu avowed, it is in the Agency's interest that nothing happen to Castro right now. Since the FBI is well aware of Giancana's interest in assassinating the Cuban leader, they might connect that to the botched job in the Vegas hotel room and Maheu.

Our next question, obviously, is whether the hounds of Havana can be called back. Maheu thinks that is not a problem, since delay is probably to Giancana's preference. "The grapevine would have it that he is a Kennedy man," said Maheu, "and Nixon is bound to gain if Castro is eliminated before the election, since a civil war would certainly ensue, and Eisenhower, under such circumstances, might aid the anti-Communist side."

I confess that I enjoyed talking to Maheu. At the end, almost incidentally, he said in passing, "Do tell Mr. Halifax that I, too, have people who are angry at me." Again he raised one eyebrow. It must be Hughes or Nixon of whom he speaks. That is why I do not think there is any likelihood that we were set up by Maheu himself. Hughes, by all accounts, is very much a Nixon man.

Yours in time for the pouch,
Robert Charles

30 | On November 2, a cable arrived from Cal on ZENITH/
OPEN. It read: "THANK YOU FOR A GOOD CLEAR ASSESS-
MENT."

That was the last communication from my father for a period, and it was just as well. My work for Hunt was increasing by the day. Rumors had swept Miami that there would be an invasion of Cuba in advance of the election on November 8, and a fever undulated in from Havana. The traffic in agents had

904 | NORMAN MAILER

never been higher. Reports, debriefings, and unsupported gossip kept crossing my desk. In a memo sent to my father at Quarters Eye, Howard wrote, "Zenith is being besieged with a small army of amateur spies, *espontáneos*, neophytes, troglodytes, and a variety of young men who assume that espionage needs no more for technique than a little nepotism they can call on in Cuba. Of course, once we get them back to the homeland, they seem to contact no one but friends and relatives. It should not take a classical education to realize that not every friend is, in troubled times, a true friend. Nor does the history of *el Mar Caribe* allow one to forget that Latin families in these tropical climes do manifest loyalty and treachery in equally balanced Shakespearean proportions."

Hunt was pleased enough with this memo to show it to me. I gave him literary praise without too much of an undue tug on my taste. After all, he was right. We were losing a lot of our young spies. Local networks in provincial Cuban towns were being rolled up every week and the agents who were successful in reporting to us, were in conformity with Hunt's oft-repeated axiom that a spy, left to himself, will tell you what he believes you want to hear. I was obliged to put a grade of credibility on reports going up to Quarters Eye; 10 and 20 percent became the marks I issued most often. I was dealing with such statements as "Camaguey is ready to revolt," "Havana is seething," "Guantánamo Bay has become a shrine for Cubans," "Castro is in deep depression," "the militia is ready to revolt." Little of it was specific; nearly all was operative.

I had to deal, however, with a couple of gung-ho paramilitaries at Quarters Eye, unknown to me except as VIKING and CLUTTER. They were always dissatisfied with my evaluations. "How do you know you're not crimping the intake?" they would ask by phone. I could only assure them that at Zenith, we were panning tons of sludge, and anything that looked remotely like gold, went north.

While Howard had never encountered a day without trouble among the Frente, his difficulties were intensifying. The Frente wanted to visit TRAX. The Brigade, once victorious in Cuba, would have small welcome for them if no visit had never been paid to Guatemala in these months. Moreover, the young-

HARLOT'S GHOST | 905

est of our Frente leaders, Manuel Artime, with the approval of Quarters Eye, had joined the Brigade and was now training with them. That sent a signal to the rest of the Frente. Artime was a devout Catholic and perhaps the most conservative of the five Frente leaders. The strongest rumor at Zenith was that the Agency planned to make him the next President of Cuba. In reaction, the older leaders of the Frente kept demanding to be sent to TRAX as well. Toto Barbaro kept screaming, "Just give us twenty million dollars. Repayable after victory. We will get our own boats to Havana."

"How," asked Howard, "do you plan to get those boats past our Coast Guard? Be patient," he would add, "trust the clout of my backers. Former Ambassador to Cuba William Pawley and other wealthy businessmen like Howard Hughes and H. G. Hunt are very close to the next President of the United States."

"What if Nixon does not win?" one of the Frente members might ask.

"I can only hope that our situation will remain the same under Kennedy," Howard would reply.

A few days before the election, Barbaro asked me out for a drink. "You must tell your father," he said, "that the entire Frente leadership, all five of us, are endangered."

"By whom?"

Barbaro would never answer a serious question too quickly for fear one might not appreciate the cost to him of an honest response. "There is good reason," he said after sipping on his *añejo*, "to be afraid of Mario García Kohly."

"You have spoken of him before."

"In Kohly you can find a Cuban millionaire who is truly of the extreme right wing. He even thinks that Artime is a soldier of Satan. As soon as the Frente lands in Cuba and declares itself the provisional government, Kohly is ready to assassinate each and every one of us five leaders. He has independent funds, and he will use Rolando Masferrer's men from No Name Key."

"This is nonsense," I said. "Your safety will be defended by the Brigade."

"The Brigade." He made a face. "Members of Kohly's army have infiltrated the Brigade. I tell you, we leaders will be executed a few days after the landing. You cannot conceive of the

906 | NORMAN MAILER

danger. For many years, Kohly's father was Cuban Ambassador to Spain. Kohly is a follower of General Franco. Now we have heard that Nixon will give support to Kohly." He laid a hand on my arm. "You will tell your father?" he asked.

I nodded. I knew I would not. The story was too wild. I gave it a grade of 20 percent. I knew, however, that I would speak to Hunt about it.

Hunt was furious. "A rumor like this can demoralize the Frente. You had better talk to Bernie Barker. He knows Faustino Barbaro inside out. He'll tell you that if Barbaro is afraid of being assassinated, it is because he knows he damn well ought to be."

"When can I talk to Barker?" I asked. "I want to get to the bottom of Barbaro's story."

"I would just as soon," said Howard, "dig out a latrine."

It was agreed that on election night Hunt, Barker, and I would watch the returns together. Howard knew a divorcée who lived next door to him on Poinciana Avenue in Cocoanut Grove. She was going to have a party.

"Can you bring a girl?" asked Howard. He poked me with a finger. "Or don't you know any?"

"Oh, yes," I told him, "I have a girlfriend."

"Well, good for you," said Howard.

"Ed, do me a favor," I answered. "My girl is kind of friendly with the Kennedy family. I would appreciate it if you didn't noise your opinion of Jack too loudly."

"Well," said Howard, "that is a piece of news. I promise, under the circumstances, Roberto, to muffle my more strident feelings."

31 | Actually, I was glad to take Modene to a party. She had no real friends in Miami; I had none; we often met late at night when her return plane was an evening flight, and we certainly made love too often. Sometimes, on mornings after we had smoked marijuana, we looked at each other with the flat, eternal distaste of lovers who are becoming roommates.

We tried to go out to dance. I suffered again. Sometimes, after asking my permission, she would accept an invitation from a stranger, go forth to the floor, and leave me hoping that her partner was without skill. Once we double-dated at Joe's Stone Crabs with another airline stewardess and her boyfriend, a pilot who had a mind like a meticulously plowed field: "What kind of job do you do, Tom?" "Electronics." "That's great." My warning bell went off. I might have to talk about the instrument panel on his plane. "Electronics are great," I told him, "but kind of boring. I'm really more interested in the election."

So, Modene and I stayed at home. That is to say, I signed us out to La Nevisca, and we had congress in the master bed. I tried to exorcise John Fitzgerald Kennedy out of her flesh and must have driven him into her mind. It came over me on election night that Modene's composure was not to be taken for granted this evening.

Nor mine. I hardly knew whether I wanted Kennedy to win. She might look upon me then as his understudy. And if he lost, well, I could remember talk of desert islands large enough for two. This election was going to bring me no romantic gain.

All the same, if Jack won, then I, by the intermediary of her body, would still have touched immortality. The ferocity of this squalid satisfaction was white as a blowtorch in my compromised heart. On to the party!

Our hostess, named Regina Nelson, proved no advertisement for divorce. Once blond, now a redhead, she had grown wrinkled from old marital bitterness and daily exposure to the sun.

"I knew a Charles family once in South Carolina," said Regina. "Any relation to you, Bobby?"

"No. Sorry. No family in South Carolina."

"Your girlfriend calls you Tom. But sometimes she says

908 | NORMAN MAILER

Harry."

"Robert Thomas Harry Charles," I said.

"Your girlfriend is gorgeous."

"Thank you, Regina."

"If she's ever too beautiful for you, give me a ring."

I hated her house. It had the kind of pastel furniture, cream colored rugs, and bamboo wallpaper that would never need a bookcase. There were mirrors in ornate gold frames but no pictures were hanging. The standing lamps stood as tall as the guards at Buckingham Palace, and the bar took up one end wall. A dark silver-dusted mirror gave backing to the bottles on the shelves. We were in Cocoanut Grove, and the land where the house now sat had once been a swamp.

"Is Ed your boss?" Regina asked.

"Yes."

"Do you know, when he first moved in next door I thought he was a homo."

"Ed doesn't look like one," I said.

"You'd be surprised," said Regina, "what comes out in the wash."

"Does he act queer?"

"Well, he's very fussy about the way he keeps his house. He is always coming over to borrow furniture polish or detergent, but maybe that's because he wants to get to know me better."

I realized that I not only desired to get drunk tonight, but would succeed. Beyond Regina, past an arched doorway, was the television den, a buff-colored leather pit. Modene sat alone by the TV, bourbon in hand, and studied the tube.

Regina said, "The reason I had a few bad thoughts about Eddie is that Cubans keep visiting his house. At night. I have heard that Cubans are AC/DC."

"It's more like they exhibit deep feeling for each other," I told her.

"Poor Ed. I can tell by looking at him. I just might start to take care of that poor lost soul."

No response needed for that. "I don't mind inviting Ed to my party, she said, "or him inviting people like you and your girl to drink my booze, hell and hello, everybody's here to do that, aren't they? Just spend the green, Reggie-girl," I tell myself, but

HARLOT'S GHOST | 909

I don't know half my guests. People's tongues look kind of long when they're lapping up your liquor and you don't even know them."

"I'm going to fill my glass," I said.

I didn't know anyone at the party either. There must have been fifty people in her living room, and breakfast room, and they looked like realtors to me, and lifeguards, and beach girls, and insurance salesmen, and divorcées—I realized suddenly that I had been living in Florida for months and knew no one in the state who was independent of the Agency. A retired businessman, a golfer with a sixteen handicap, now began to talk to me about his putting game, and as I drank I measured in my mind the length of the Hubbard tongue dipping into Regina's booze.

Modene was still by herself. The arched bow of her back and shoulders formed a guard rail around the TV set.

"How is it going?" I asked.

"It looks like he still is winning, but it's not as sure anymore," she said.

A still photograph of Jackie Kennedy appeared on the screen. "The candidate's wife," said the TV set, "is expecting a baby. If elected, President and Mrs. Kennedy will have the first baby born in the White House." The still photograph gave way to a picture of Kennedy Headquarters in New York.

"Is he doing well in the Midwest?" I asked.

"Shush," said Modene.

She had wanted to come to the party but she was not talking to anyone. I felt a blast of rage worthy of my father. She had not even turned to look at me.

In a corner of the living room standing together were Hunt, Hunt's assistant, Bernard Barker, and Manuel Artime. I did not wish to visit with them, yet I did not want to talk to anyone else.

"We were speaking," said Hunt as I came up, "of a well-substantiated rumor that the Soviets are going to give Castro some MIGs. Delivery date next summer."

"In that case," I said, "we have to get to Havana first."

The two Cubans nodded profoundly.

The gabble of the party was not unlike a jungle canopy beneath whose shelter we could speak. That gave its own plea-

910 | NORMAN MAILER

sure. It felt better to talk shop here than in the cafeteria at Zenith.

"Will he be able to find enough Cuban pilots to make those jet fighters operational?" asked Artime. "Castro has not much of an Air Force."

"Right now," said Hunt, "Cuban pilots in Czechoslovakia are receiving advanced training on those same MIGs."

"Son of a bitch," said Barker.

Hunt turned to me. "How is the election going? Kennedy still ahead?"

"Nixon seems to be catching up."

"I hope so," said Hunt. "If Kennedy wins, it will be hard to identify the enemy."

"Don Eduardo," said Artime, "certainly you are not suggesting that any American President would desert us? Why, Kennedy even said to Nixon in their debate that the Eisenhower administration had not done enough about Cuba."

"Yes," said Hunt, "I saw that exercise in gall. Think of what it must have cost Nixon. There at the podium, right on live television, Dick Nixon, the Action Officer for Cuba, has to bite his tongue all the while that Kennedy is pretending to be the man who is going to do something."

"All the same," said Artime, "Castro should have been dead by now."

"I thought he might be," said Hunt.

"I could kill Castro myself," said Artime. "I could kill him with a bullet, a knife, a club, a few grains of powder in a glass." His voice grated on me. Artime was singularly handsome, a well-built man with broad shoulders and a fine mustache, but his voice rasped on my ears. It was the voice of a man who had pushed himself to every limit, and now would push more. Fuertes had not been charitable about Artime. "I do not like him," Chevi had said. "He arouses his audiences by reading bad sentimental verse of his own composition. He sets his people amok with emotion. He looks like a prize fighter, yet he is fraudulent."

"That is a strong word."

"He was frail as a boy. I have heard that when he was a young adolescent, all the other students would pat him on the

HARLOT'S GHOST | 911

ass. In some manner, he grew out of that."

"I would say he transcended it," I told Fuentes.

"Yes, but there was a price. His voice tells you what such transcendence must have cost."

"Castro will not live," Artime said now. "If he is alive this month, he will be dead next. And if he is not dead next month, then next year. Such evil will not survive."

"I drink to that," said Barker.

We sipped our drinks.

At the other end of the living room, a carpet had been rolled back, and a few people were trying out a new kind of dance. I could hear the words on the record: "Let's do the Twist." I found it bizarre. One young vacuous blonde with a beautiful sun-ripened body kept insisting in a loud voice that they play the song again. I hated all of it. I thought it was strange in the extreme that the dancers did not hold each other but stood apart and rotated their hips like people alone in a room leering into a mirror. Maybe I was more drunk than I recognized, but I felt as if I were defending a country I no longer understood.

"Look at the wiggle on that blonde," said Hunt with a sad, lopsided, half-superior sneer.

"Yes," I said, "you can whistle while she works." I did not like myself particularly for this remark, but Barker laughed so vigorously that I wondered if I had thrown it out for him. He was a small blockhouse of a man, sturdy, square in build, turning bald, and his lips were humorless. He had been a cop in Batista's security forces. "Don Eduardo," I said, "believes you can tell me some interesting things about Toto Barbaro."

"Toto Barbaro is a piece of shit," said Barker.

"What kind of *mierda*?" I asked.

That produced another laugh. When it concluded, Barker said, "He works for a gangster in Tampa."

"Can the gangster be Santos Trafficante?"

"You are the one who said that, not I," said Barker, and gave a sign to Hunt that he was ready to leave.

"You and Bernie," said Hunt equably, "will have other opportunities to talk." Artime also left, and Hunt and I went to the bar for another drink. "Your girl strikes me as most attractive," said Hunt, "albeit somewhat shy."

912 | NORMAN MAILER

"No," I told him, "she's really a frightful snob. She wants nothing to do with any of these people."

"Yes," said Hunt, "it's not my idea of a party, either."

"What's the real story on Barbaro?"

"I'll fill you in on what I know if Bernie Barker remains no more forthcoming."

Modene turned off the television set and came toward us. "Let's leave," she said. "They can't tell any longer who's ahead, and it's going to take hours to learn."

I could sense a turn in Hunt's mood. "On that premise," he said, "I think I'll stay and have another drink for Richard Nixon."

"I could have guessed," said Modene. "You don't look like a man who would vote for Jack Kennedy."

"Oh," said Hunt, "I have nothing against him. In fact, I met Jack Kennedy years ago at a debutante's party in Boston."

"What was he like then?" asked Modene.

"Well, I can hardly tell you," said Hunt. "For one thing, he must have had a little too much to imbibe because at the end of the evening he was in a corner chair and sound asleep. I will confess I did not discern at that moment, in those highly relaxed lineaments, any suggestion of a presidential candidate."

"I hope I can remember how you put it," said Modene, "because I want to tell the story to Jack," and she inclined her head to Hunt, led me past our good hostess, Regina, and into the night.

"My God," I said, "you *are* a snob."

"Of course," she said. "I wouldn't have anything to do with people like that if they lived in Grand Rapids."

32 | Our evening was not nearing conclusion, however. "That man who spoke to me at the end is your boss?" she asked.

"We work together."

"He doesn't look much like an FBI man."

"He isn't."

"You are. That's why you are with me. To learn all about Sam Giancana."

"You're upset," I said, "because the election is up in the air."

"Of course I am upset. And I am drunk. But that doesn't change it. You do want to know an awful lot about Giancana."

"I couldn't care less. All I really desire at this moment is to smoke some marijuana."

"No," she said, "not while the election is in doubt. To make love right now would be equal to desecrating a grave."

"I think you are serious," I said.

She nodded.

"I'm going to sleep," I said.

"No," she said, "you are going to stay up and watch it with me."

"Well," I said, "if we don't make love, I am still going to smoke marijuana. That is the way I want to watch the returns."

"We must have an understanding," she said. "I will take some too, but only for the purpose of watching the returns with you."

"That will work," I said, "if you don't get horny."

"I am not about to," she said. "But I will tell you this much about Sam Giancana. The only reason I didn't go to bed with him is because of a private feeling."

"Would you describe your private feeling?"

"I felt that if I indulged myself with Sam, I might lose the election for Jack."

"Do you expect me to believe that?"

"When things count, people must keep their promises. I told Jack that I wouldn't sleep with Sam."

"Is Giancana that attractive to you?"

"Of course he is. He is a superior person."

914 | NORMAN MAILER

We went to my apartment that night and smoked marijuana. By one in the morning, the TV analysts were saying that the final result would depend on Texas, Pennsylvania, Michigan, and Illinois. "At present, however," said the television voice, "Illinois looks to be the swing state."

Modene nodded profoundly, "Sam said he would bring it in for Kennedy."

"I thought Mayor Daley was going to take care of that."

"Mayor Daley will take care of some parts of Chicago and Sam will bring in the other areas. The Negroes and the Italians and the Latins and a lot of the Polish wards take orders from Sam's people. He has the leverage on the West Side."

"Sam told you all this?"

"Of course not. He wouldn't talk to me about things like that."

"Then how do you know?"

"Walter explained it to me. Walter used to work in Eastern's office in Chicago. The airline people have to know all of that kind of stuff. They have to, in order to get along with the local unions."

"Do you still see Walter?"

Modene said, "Not since I started seeing Jack again."

"How does Jack make love?" I asked.

"I won't tell you."

"It doesn't matter," I said. "I know that you get more from me than he could ever give you."

"What makes you certain?"

"Why else would you spend time with me?"

"Because I am trying to discover if I have the temperament for marriage, and you might be suitable should I ever decide to come down to earth."

"Do you want to get married?" I asked.

"To you?" she asked.

"Why not?"

"If you are not the poorest man I know, you are certainly the stingiest."

We began to laugh. When we were done, I asked, "Do you really want Jack to win?"

"Of course. Do you think I want to look at myself as the

HARLOT'S GHOST | 915

mistress of the also-ran?"

"Is it better to be courtesan to the king?"

"That is absurd. I do not see myself as a courtesan."

I remember feeling a peculiar glee. "I guess you really indulge the hope that he will divorce his wife and marry you. You do see yourself as First Lady?"

"Stop being nasty."

"It could come down to that. First Lady or courtesan."

"I do not look ahead."

"You can't. His wife is pregnant, and tomorrow, he and she will be on television."

"I never realized before how cruel you are."

"That is because you force me to look at the back of your neck while you are waiting for another man to come onto TV. He is not even in the room."

The voice coming to us from the television set now said, "It looks as if Texas may be swinging toward Kennedy. Perhaps the choice of Lyndon Johnson as running mate will yet pay off."

"You can see how wise he was," said Modene, "to pick that awful man, Johnson."

"I don't care. I'm angry at having to look at the back of your neck. I want to take a little more marijuana and fuck."

"You are an oaf," she said.

"Tell me about the messages you bring from Sam to Jack."

"If Sam wanted to talk to Jack," she said, "he would use Frank Sinatra as the go-between."

"Maybe Sam doesn't trust Frank. Frank might have his own cards to play."

"I wonder," said Modene, "if you aren't getting somewhere."

"So you are saying that Sam used you?"

"No one uses me."

"They all do," I said. "They all do."

"I feel a little demented," she said, "and you are causing it."

"That's the marijuana speaking."

"No. It is because history is being made tonight, and I want to feel a part of it. Yet, I can't."

"Neither of us," I said, "is any part of it at all."

"I am. I certainly am—if you would stop badgering me."

916 | NORMAN MAILER

"Come on," I said, "do you know how many girlfriends Jack Kennedy has?"

"I don't care."

"One in every port."

"How do you know?"

"I know." There had been FBI lists coming in from Harlot lately.

"Why don't you tell me how you know?"

"Maybe," I said, "I have seen a few reports."

"Am I on them?" She began to laugh at the expression on my face, and I realized that whatever in her was most loyal to John Fitzgerald Kennedy was therefore most furious at him, and so she could enjoy the idea that she was now a center of attention to strangers who were observing her activities in reports. It occurred to me that she never minded dressing with the shades up. Nor did she have any objection to raising the ante, even if she had no idea how it would all turn out.

"Do you mind," she said, "if I talk about Sam? He is a very funny man."

"I would not have thought of him as funny."

"Oh, he is. He is so foul-mouthed when he chooses to be. But in a humorous way."

"What do you mean?"

"Give me another toke." She puffed on my stick of marijuana. "He loves to talk about sex. And, like you, wants to know what Jack is like."

"Do you tell him?"

"I lie to him. I pretend that Jack is similar to you, and can be very attentive."

"Although he isn't?"

"Of course not. He's too hard-working. He's too tired. He needs a woman who can devote herself to him."

"In which way?"

"Well, you know *which* way."

I now felt the pang of knowing exactly.

"What does Sam say?" I asked.

She turned her eyes from the television set long enough to look at me. Her expression had never been more remorseless nor more attractive. "Sam says, 'Honey, if I ever put my mouth

HARLOT'S GHOST | 917

on your yum-yum twat, you will, guaranteed, be fucking hooked forever."

"Chop me down." I said, "Sam says that?"

"Yes," she said.

"Are you tempted?"

"Sam is a man who would want every last bit of me. That is appealing."

"Don't I want every last bit of you?"

"Yes," she said, "you do. And you certainly try to get it. But, after all, in your case, why not?" She began to laugh from the depths of a heart which, at this moment, did not sound free of rancor.

It was long past two in the morning when the announcer stated: "No concession has come yet from Nixon. Illinois, however, is now considered to be definitely in Kennedy's total, and that, added to the victory in Texas, plus reports that Pennsylvania and Michigan look definite for the Democrats, enables us to go off the air with a firm expectation that the election has been won by John Fitzgerald Kennedy."

Modene gave a whoop and turned off the set. "I know," she said at last, "what he is going to say in the morning."

"What will he say?"

"Now my wife and I prepare for a new administration and a new baby."

"How do you know?" I asked.

"Maybe he rehearsed it with me. You should see the light in his eye. He's a devil."

"Well, so are we all."

She gave me one passionate long pent-up kiss, and with that, we made love, and I wanted every last bit of her. After all, in my case, why not?

SERIAL: J/39,164,504

ROUTING: LINE/GHOUL—SPECIAL SHUNT

TO: GHOUL-A

FROM: FIELD

9:03 P.M. NOV. 10, 1960

SUBJECT: HEEDLESS

I would now put it as 70 percent certain that BLUEBEARD

918 | NORMAN MAILER

has served as a courier on several occasions between RAPUN-
ZEL and IOTA. No hard evidence. This is a judgment call.

FIELD

SERIAL: J/39, 170,377

ROUTE: LINE/ZENITH—OPEN

TO: ROBERT CHARLES

FROM: GLAUCOMA

11:45 A.M. NOV. 11, 1960

SUBJECT: PARTICULARITIES

Get the hard evidence. If you will.

GLAUCOMA

33 |

November 25, 1960

Son,

I've been holding off on writing, but then things have been quiet here at Quarters Eye since the election. In effect, we are waiting to see where we are.

Found myself in low spirits over Thanksgiving. Kept thinking of Mary, my old sweet whale of a wife, and now she's lost to me. She is thinking of getting married to a little Japanese businessman who is probably sitting on more wealth than the state of Kansas, and here am I, old blow-spout of the other half of this beached-whale duo, feeling egregiously elegiacal. Clark Gable died last week, and I discovered to my surprise that I had always felt a large identification with the man.

Now, comprehend it. I really don't know anything about Clark Gable, and even felt envious of him last summer. There

HARLOT'S GHOST I 919

he was, making a flick with Marilyn Monroe, lucky dog. Son, if they ever held an election in this country for the woman you would most want to bed up with for a night, how could that young lady fail to win? So, yes, I envied him. Now he's dead. Maybe she kept his old heart running up and down too many hills. And I find that I'm mourning him although I don't know bird-all about the fellow. All the same, actors fascinate me. Their work is in some sense near to our work, and yet they are not like us at all. While my contact with actors has been limited, I have found them disappointing. They are without our core of motivation. Lacking such point of reference, an actor can't keep trying to be someone other than himself without having to pay for it. Such, at least, is my concept of it. All the same, I did love this guy Clark Gable. It's hard to tell you cynical younger dogs about the kind of identification we older fellows have with movie stars of his ilk. Sometimes, back in the Second World War, I would actually talk to Gable in my head. Particularly after I'd pulled off something good. "Would you have done as well?" I'd ask him. Who knows where these conversations originate? They're silly enough, in any case.

I suspect that part of my meandering frame of mind is due to the Maheu fiasco on Oct. 31. I've been taking flak from it. Three questions hang over me these days at Quarters Eye. One: Was it an act of Providence? Two: Did Giancana throw sand into the gears? Or three: Is the FBI now witting? We don't have the answers, but I am certainly paying for all three suppositions. *First*: Providence. My confreres are now concluding that Cal Hubbard may be prone to an undue share of bad luck. *Secundum*: Terrible judgment on Cal's part to pick a hoodlum like G. I'm inclined to agree even if I did no more than inherit Maheu who did the picking. But then, we amputate the "yets" and "buts" in our kind of work. Just take the blame. It's faster and neater.

Now, *Three*, worst of all. What if the FBI has been tracking this one from the beginning? The last contingency has frozen all activity.

Result is, I have been receiving an undeniable chill from Allen's office, Bissell's office, and Barnes' bailiwick. We all recognize that if worst comes to worst, I'll have to carry the slop pail. We must partition Allen off from this. That's fine by me,

920 | NORMAN MAILER

and a reasonable exercise of duty, but it puts a pall on your best feelings when the chill comes in advance.

It's not so bad that I can't handle it, but, Rick, if there is such a thing as male menopause, I could converse with medical authorities about it. I feel a sense of doom, and it is infecting my natural optimism for exciting projects.

Well, let me introduce you to more interesting matters. Despite my nearness to Outer Purdah, the stories still get back to the old boy. Allen Dulles and our President-Elect John F. Kennedy had a powwow down in Palm Beach on the 17th of November. I'll bet you picked up not a single reverberation from your slot sixty miles away in Miami, but we heard about it up here. Allen didn't come back with a won game. As I get the story, Kennedy expressed a few doubts about the oncoming Cuban push and wanted to discuss the possibility of disbanding the Brigade. Allen responded with his Dutch uncle mode: "Are you, Mr. President-Elect, truly prepared to tell this fine group of young Cuban men that they must disband against their will? Why, all they ask, at every risk to their lives is to have the opportunity to restore the democratic government of their county."

Allen has been able to fire me up on more than one occasion. He got me ready once to eliminate Sukarno, and I felt like a damned fool afterward when it all ended in the bogs of judicious compromise. But Kennedy obviously has salt. He didn't flap. Took in all that Allen could deliver and then came back with the following: Said he was prepared, in principle, to move ahead, but had to emphasize how very crucial it was that no United States involvement show. Overtly aggressive moves against Cuba could stimulate the Sovs to carry out their threat to build a wall dividing Berlin.

Let me add this, Kennedy says: If our involvement in Cuba does show its face, we will, of course, be obliged to win.

Couldn't agree more, replies Allen.

Well, Mr. Dulles, says Kennedy, if we want to win all that much, why begin with the Brigade? If a sizable military operation is what is really called for, why even bother with the CIA in the first place?

He had Allen painted into a corner on that one. He could

HARLOT'S GHOST | 921

come away with no more than a tentative yes from Kennedy. We can go ahead with the Brigade, provided the Agency continues its ironclad commitment to allow no *visible* American involvement. In any event, the invasion has been put off for a few months. By the time Kennedy gets his inauguration out of the way and has an administration functioning, we'll be in early spring of 1961.

During this interim, the Brigade is likely to get restless. I call it a toss-up. If their internal discipline doesn't hold up, they will self-destruct in Guatemala. Interesting times lie ahead.

Yours,

No-Bucks Halifax

On the day I received this letter, another message came from Harlot. It read: *If you will.*

34 |

SERIAL: J/39,354,824

ROUTE: LINE/GHOUL—SPECIAL SHUNT

TO: GHOUL—A

FROM: FIELD

10:11 A.M. DEC. 20, 1960

SUBJECT: HEEDLESS

Regret to inform you that FIELD has lost all access to BLUEBEARD. Catalytic factor: Buddhist interlopers.

Can report that on December 19, BLUEBEARD returned alone to the Fontainebleau after a few hours of shopping with

922 | NORMAN MAILER

RAPUNZEL. In the lobby, were two men wearing felt hats. They smiled at her. A minute after she returned to her room, the front desk was on the phone. A Mr. Mack and a Mr. Rouse wished to see her. They were FBI, stated the front deak. She did not have to open her door, said the clerk, but it might save time. Otherwise, they would come back.

She agreed to meet with Mack and Rouse. They soon informed her that they were inquiring into her relation to RAPUNZEL. She claims to have told them nothing. Later, to FIELD, she described this interview as "wholly disagreeable." Unfortunately, her suspicions of FIELD are now inflamed. She has accused him of being "in cahoots" with Mack and Rouse. She declares that she will not see him any longer.

These events took place yesterday evening. In FIELD's opinion, the relationship is concluded. There is no room left for a cover story.

If the new situation holds constant over the next month, will you require a Final Report?

FIELD

Harlot would hardly be satisfied with this description, but then his displeasure at the loss of BLUEBEARD was going to be larger than his annoyance at the lack of detail.

I could have provided him with more. In the hour I spent with Modene, every speech with Mack and Rouse was repeated. When she called me at Zenith not long after they left, she had been calm, so calm indeed that I could feel her hysteria stirring. "I've had visitors," she said, "and you probably know them. Can you come over before I get too drunk?"

So soon as I arrived, she began to describe the encounter. Mack spoke first. He was tall and heavy.

"You are Modene Murphy?"

"Yes."

"You are on friendly terms with Sam Giancana?"

"Who is he?"

"He is also known as Sam Gold."

"Don't know him."

"How about Sam Flood?"

HARLOT'S GHOST | 923

When she paused, he repeated, "How about Sam Flood?"

"I know him."

"He is the same man as Sam Giancana."

"All right. What of it?"

"Would you be interested to know how Sam Giancana makes his living?"

"I have no idea."

"He is one of the ten most wanted criminals in America."

"Why don't you pick him up?"

"We will," said the FBI man named Rouse. He was of medium height, slim, and had sharp teeth. "We will as soon as we are ready. For now, we can use your help."

"I know nothing that could help you," said Modene.

She saw a sneer on Mack's face. "Do you," he asked, "accept gifts from Sam?"

"If they are appropriate, and not too expensive."

"Are you aware that he has a Las Vegas tootsie?" asked Rouse.

"What is a tootsie?"

"A tootsie is a girl," said Mack, "who takes money for favors. Did Mr. Giancana ever slip you any green?"

"What?"

"Money. He hand you money?"

"Are you calling me a tootsie?"

"Does he kick in for your hotel bill?"

"Are you ready to leave?"

"Just nod your head," said Rouse. "Have you met Johnny Roselli, no? Santos Trafficante, no? Tony Accardo, also known as Big Tuna, no? Have you met individuals named Cheety, Wheels, Bazooka, Tony Tits?"

"No."

"Never met Tony Tits?" asked Rouse. "He's a man."

"I don't care what he is. I'm asking you to leave."

"How do you support yourself?" asked Mack.

"I'm an airline hostess."

Mack consulted a piece of paper, "Your rent here is \$800 a month?"

"Yes."

"But Mr. Giancana never kicks in?"

924 | NORMAN MAILER

"I've asked you to leave twice."

"There seem to be a lot of wrapped packages in this room right now. Are they presents?"

"Christmas gifts."

"From Giancana?"

"A few."

"Mind telling me what they are?"

"Do you mind minding your own business?"

"It becomes my business," said Mack, once you are receiving money or its equivalent in gifts from Giancana, a criminal source."

"Why," asked Rouse, "would someone like yourself, of self-supporting income, according to your claim, associate herself with a gutter hoodlum?"

"I'm going to call the desk and ask the house detective to throw you out."

Mack smiled. Rouse smiled.

"I'm going to ask them to tell you to get out of my room. It is not your hotel."

"We are going," said Mack, "but guarantee you, Miss Murphy, we will come back. In the meantime, ask yourself what additional information you might have to offer us."

"Yes," said Rouse, "you will see us." He smiled. "Keep your nose clean, Modene."

She called Giancana the moment that they left.

"Watch out," said Sam, as soon as she began to explain, "your phone could be hot."

"Can you come over?" she asked.

"That would be no good thing for you."

"Sam, what should I have said?"

"You said the right thing. They were fishing, that's all. For dead stinking fish. They can't take a shit without sucking their toes. They would lick their ass if they could reach it. That's in case you're listening to me, you bastards."

"Sam."

"Sweetheart, if these cocksuckers show up again, tell them I'll supply front-row tickets for J. Edgar Hoover and Clyde Tolson getting it on in Macy's store window. Big changes coming, you scumbags! Modene, you are a queen, and as innocent as the

fucking snow."

With that, he signed off. She said Sam was not only talking to the FBI fully as much as he was talking to her, but she had never heard him in such a state of excitement.

When she finished her story, she said, "Are you one of them?"

"One of who?"

"Mack and Rouse."

"I can't believe you said that."

"You are in cahoots. I know it. Something has always been wrong between you and me."

"If you believe that, why do you tell me what they said?"

"Because what they said is charging around inside me."

"I believe you."

"Besides, they report to you anyway." She began to laugh.

"I know for a fact," she said. "You are FBI."

"What would it take to convince you that I am not?"

"Then, who are you really working for?"

"Why don't you use your imagination?" I said. "Or is that in short supply?"

It was a fatal remark.

"Get out of here," she said.

"I think I will."

"I knew it couldn't go on," she said, "but I didn't know it was this close to the end."

"Well, you've found a way."

"I think I have."

"You have."

To my surprise, I was as angry as Modene.

"Don't try to call me," she said.

"I won't be likely to."

"God, I dislike your person," she said. "You are such a dull cock."

Shutting the door behind me, I felt an odd calm. I had no idea whether I would see her again in a day, a year, or never, but at the moment, it did not matter. I had just been treated to what Kittredge used to describe as "the changing of the guard." If there was a parliament in the psyche, the party in power had just been voted out. I did not think Modene and I would come

926 | NORMAN MAILER

together soon. "Dull cock," she had called me. Her father must have been one ungodly wheel at riding other racers off the track.

35 | I suffered in the next week. Of course. If some large part of me no longer wanted to put up with chronic cuckoldry, nor the firm limitations of her mind, so did longing for Modene return at the most unpredictable times. I could no longer walk into a restaurant with that beautiful girl on my arm.

Still, there was a clear line of demarcation. I had no real desire to hear from her. I was even weary of the pride of having her, since it fed my absence of dedication to anything else. It seemed important again to give myself to work. History was going to be made in the next few months. To wind up any doubts on the matter, a communication from Harlot arrived two weeks after my cable to him.

SERIAL: J/39,268,469

ROUTE: LINE/ZENITH—OPEN

TO: ROBERT CHARLES

FROM: GLOUCESTER

10:23 A.M. JAN. 3, 1961

SUBJECT: EFFICACY

It appears that girls talk to girlfriends more freely than to boyfriends. See you anon.

GLOUCESTER

It was his way of telling me that he would not send me any more of the BLUEBEARD—AURAL transcripts.

Before the middle of January, another long letter arrived

HARLOT'S GHOST | 927

from my father. I had to admire his ability to find cures for despondency.

January 12, 1961

Son:

Beware of melancholy, an old Hubbard trait. It hit me very badly yesterday to read that Dashiell Hammett died on January 10. I felt abominable. The radio was playing this dreadful new song, "Let's Do the Twist," just as I opened the paper to receive such news. I put in a call of condolence immediately to Lillian Hellman and that's the first time we've spoken in ten years, although I believe she was glad to hear from me. I don't know if I ever told you, but Lillian is also an old friend. I will admit we are one strange link-up, but in the days when I would drink with Hammett, Lillian got wind that I used to be in OSS and now was signed up again in hush-hush. That didn't bother her a bit. I'm not one to kiss and tell, but Miss Hellman couldn't keep her hands off this then-younger presentation of meat and bones. Some of the Casanovas I've known used to call it a clue to the hunt: Look for a good Christian every time. Well, I'll pass on to you, son, the local recipe from your dad's battle-scarred experience: Make it a strong-minded Jewish girl with powerful leftist inclinations. Can't beat those ladies for types like me.

I tell these out-of-school tales only to indicate the nature of my friendship with Hammett. He knew about my affair with Lillian. I think he even approved of it. He was the damndest Communist I ever met. The fact of the matter was that Lillian still adored Hammett, but he had drunk himself out of any kind of connubial relations a long time ago. So, if it had to be other men, and it had to be, because Lillian was a woman of imperious appetite (used to call her Catherine the Great to her face, which she loved), Dash didn't mind entering the process of selection. He was all for our affair. I never fooled myself, however. It was Dashiell Hammett she loved. He always seemed immortal. Not like a god so much as a dry, silvery angel, a piece of driftwood there on the beach for eternity. It's hard to believe he's gone.

I not only had regard for him as a writer but as a man. He never tried to pump me for literary material. I believe he re-

928 | NORMAN MAILER

spected the caul in which we work. It was as if just by the osmosis of drinking together he could pick up enough about the complexities of our work-code that if he wanted to I'm sure he could have popped me into a book. One classy gent, and he's gone.

As you know from my last letter, I've been subjected to The Chill. I think it must have been at its worst around December 18. It certainly ruined Christmas. But we were all under a cloud anyway. December 18 was the day Dulles and his prize dodo, Deputy Director General Cabell, brought Barnes and Bissell and myself together with our top project officers for a look at our Cuban situation now that we're under Kennedy management. Allen wanted a review of all that was wrong as well as right in order to get out in front of criticism.

A lot of disheartening reports ensued. We have had all too many networks rolled up. And our air drops have been off. We are using former Air Cubana commercial pilots, and these guys can't do pinpoint navigation. They've been sitting on a super-highway of radar between Miami and Havana so long that they've lost directional finesse. Can't find their target drops. Yet neither Eisenhower nor Kennedy will agree to using American pilots. Francis Gary Powers put the cap on that bottle of tonic forever. So the air drops continue to miss their people. In fact the one that worked most accurately was a hell of a comic scene engineered by His High Asshole General Cabell.

It seems we were flying some arms over to a group, and Cabell wanted to know how much of the cargo space was filled. One-tenth capacity happened to be the answer. "That's wasteful," said Cabell. "Don't send a plane over nine-tenths empty! Get some rice and beans on the craft. Our Cuban team down there can probably use it."

Well, it happened to be a precise drop in a specific place. The receiving party was too small to handle a full load.

"I do not want to hear that," said Cabell. "Put some forward lean into this mission."

David Phillips, one of our Latin American hands, said to Cabell, "General, I've spent four of the past six years in Cuba. Rice and beans is the national dish. I can assure you, there's no shortage."

Cabell answered: "Ever hear of an Appropriations Commit-

HARLOT'S GHOST | 929

tee? I'm not going up to the Hill to explain to some congressman why we sent over a plane nine-tenths empty. Load up the rice and beans."

That was one night, son, when our plane did hit the target. The radio message was so frantic that it came back in English: YOU SON OF BITCH. WE NEARLY KILLED BY RICE BAGS. YOU CRAZY?

We all made sure that Allen Dulles received a copy. My belief is that Allen cannot endure Cabell but is stuck with the guy as his Number Two because Cabell is a Four-Star Air Force General, and that helps to keep the Pentagon less unhappy about us. Of course, the General is now renowned in good circles as "Old Rice and Beans Cabell."

Care for any more bad news? Maritime ops are proving equally dismal. Castro's coast guard is showing a high percentage of kills. The DGI has to be picking up good intelligence, for they seem to know a good many of our landing sites in Cuba in advance. I've been pushing to outfit a mother ship that could work just outside the 3-mile limit from Cuban waters. We can equip it with advanced radar. The smaller boats carried on its davits need only be dispatched when the nearby coast, monitored by radar, prove to be clear. The problem is to get such a large craft in readiness quickly.

Now, for first-rate news! The main invasion—and this I pass on to you as a blood confidence—has been confirmed for Trinidad. That small city is on the southern shore between Cienfuegos and Sancti Spiritus. Perfect location. There are mountains nearby to hole up in should things go badly, yet two provincial capitals are right near there and close enough to capture in the first couple of days, provided the push goes right. Best of all, Cuba is narrow at that point, seventy miles wide, no more. On the assumption that we do have an underground ready to blow bridges and divert Castro's troops, we could cut the country in half pretty quickly.

Here's another bit of blood gossip not to be repeated. We've buried a function in the woodwork. It's called ZR/RIFLE and is a capacity for executive action that I wish we had developed in advance of all our Maheu projects. Bissell, who is no fool at knowing when to take responsibility and when to delegate it, has asked Helms, who is his immediate subordinate, to get it

930 | NORMAN MAILER

started, and Helms promptly consulted your godfather. Who does Sir Hugh propose to oversee the new capacity, but Bill Harvey? Amazing—taking into account their old enmity. At any rate, we now have King Bill down in the basement happily at work on ZR/RIFLE. Before it is all over, Wild Bill may get as close to Castro's beard as we do.

I end here for the nonce. I'm having a night out tonight which I do look forward to, but will pick up this communication tomorrow.

Friday, the Thirteenth

That was one good night, last night, fellow. Allen had the wit—God, I love that man when he's at his best—to invite all the new Kennedy muckamucks to an evening with a number of us at the Alibi Club. He wanted to put the top new Washington folk into a more gung-ho frame of mind for the Cuban op, and I believe we brought it off. I must say, the Alibi Club was the perfect place for this, just as fusty inside as, let's say, the Somerset Club in Boston. The old menus on the wall set the note, "Turtle Soup, 25 cents," and the martinis are good. It relaxed the young new Kennedy breed, and a few of them are pretty young, I must tell you, and awfully bright, and fitted up with an all-around alert system as to where the next cue is coming from. Bright young top-of-the-Law-Review gents, but instinctive as well. On the other hand, they are certainly in way over their heads. Either they are learned but soft, or bright as hell, yet green. With all due respect to your mother's ancient blood, they do remind me a bit of Phi Beta Kappas (Jewish) at a coming-out party. There was also a contingent of Kennedy's Irish Mafia, just as suspicious as FBI monks, and not at all green. Rather, they are iron-gray, tough, flinty, ready to strong-arm an issue. However, they are also just ignorant enough to be in over their heads. So the get-together was a good idea. Bissell made a hell of a speech in his gold-plated archbishop's style. Presented himself as paleface of all the palefaces. Took one of his long fingers, poked himself in the chest, and said, "Take a good look at me. I'm the man who east the sharks in this outfit." That had its impact. A distinguished churchman was talking dirty. It was our way of saying, "Just give us an assignment, brothers, and we will

HARLOT'S GHOST | 931

ram it home. We are not afraid of responsibility, contumely, cess, and/or odium. We take on high risk. If you want to move mountains, call on us." You could see all the Kennedy people imbibing Bissell's qualifications, Groton, Yale, Ph.D. in economics, and ready to eat sharks. Why, he's even taught at MIT.

I must say, we did feed them good stories. How to steal a country with three hundred men *à la* Guatemala. Cloak-and-dagger has to be the second-oldest profession, Allen told them. And in the course of it, lots of first-rate toasts were exchanged. Then Allen called on me. Damn, the glint in his spectacles was adjuring me in no uncertain terms to recount my now hoary exploits with the secretaries. Back in 1947, in case you never heard, I captured scads of poop on what Truman's Cabinet people were planning because I got to know (in the Biblical sense) a few of the top office girls. Last night, I rounded it off by saying, "Of course, we don't do these things anymore." The Kennedy people loved it. I think the note Allen wish to strike was that we were absolutely the right organization for a roistering jack-in-the-sack like our own President-Elect.

I wasn't going to let myself, however, get stuck in the Department of Legends as one more over-the-hill stunt man, so I went off on a reasonably witty presentation to the effect that we can look forward, White House and CIA, to great times together since we possess in common a liking for the work of Ian Fleming. Let's give a toast to good old Ian Fleming, I said, holding the flagon high. Someone actually did mutter, "His work is such crap!"—I can hear you speaking in that young voice—but I came back with, "Ian Fleming, a stylist for our time." And a few of us on the Agency side, which I suppose comes down to Dulles, Bissell, Montague, Barnes, Helms, and myself, were thinking of those rather Ian Fleming-like toys that have come out of Technical Services, such as the depilatory to take off Fidelito's beard back in 1959 when he visited the U.N. At an effectiveness level, it was all pure Dartmouth yahoo crap, but a few of us in the room knew that I was pretending to more, so it was permissible to laugh like hell. We got the idea across. They now understood that we were monkeys with as many tricks in our cage as they had in theirs. We communicated the notion that if you want a quick answer to a knotty problem, CIA is the place to go. Not, repeat,

932 | NORMAN MAILER

not the State Department.

Dean Rusk got a longer and longer face as the evening wore on. I think he was the first to sense what a splendid theatrical grasp Allen has on how-to-make-new-friends in transitional times. Rusk looks constipated. Probably loses half an hour every morning to the blooper.

In any case, I am now on the move again. At least within. Which is what morale is all about.

Your good father,
Big-Bucks Halifax

P.S. Despite all this self-congratulation, I won't neglect to mention RETREAD. He worries me. Has BONANZA brought you in anything about him? If not, push him. From what you told me about his abilities, BONANZA ought to be able to follow the money trail RETREAD would be leaving in his Miami banks if he is as crooked as I expect he is.

36 | In Montevideo, after Kittredge discontinued our correspondence, I used to see a good deal more of Hunt, and now, bereft of Modene, I began once more to have dinner with him a couple of nights a week. History was repeating itself. Howard's mood was not far from mine. Dorothy was in Washington, and the news received each night by telephone was often of her mother who was hospitalized with an inoperable cancer. In addition, his social life, so important to him, was hardly thriving. He might keep up with Palm Beach parties in the society columns, but he was driving through no gates these days in white dinner jacket; the royal palms and poinciana trees on the great estates, the tiled fountains, stone urns, and balustrades of

HARLOT'S GHOST | 933

the Palm Beach palaces were remote; he walked no paths between jasmine and bougainvillea, and danced with panache on no marble floor. Nor did he spend his afternoons at Hialeah watching pink flamingos cross a green lawn, no, Howard was in Miami to work, and the scent of oleander and azalea did not reach the cubicles of Zenith. Howard was at that place in his career where success could raise him to the level of a Senior Officer, and failure might put a stop to his ambition.

He certainly pushed himself. If his own politics were, as he put it, "to the right of Richard Nixon," he swallowed the polemical contumely of dealing with Cubans whose social views were to the left of him. When asked for his own ideological position by Barbaro or Aranjó, he would reply, "I'm here to oil the gears."

He served. If Manuel Artime was the only member of the Frente with whom Hunt could feel some philosophical kinship, Howard worked nonetheless to hold the Frente together. Watching him operate, I came to understand that politics was not ideology, but property. The Frente was in Hunt's portfolio and that, as I was soon to discover, was of determining significance to him. I was soon to discover that Howard had not only learned to bear up with Toto Barbaro, but was ready to protect him. Be it said, I had not needed my father's prod to keep Chevi Fuertes working on Barbaro's bank accounts, and he was producing results. Chevi had succeeded in tracking large movements of money through Barbaro's separate checking accounts, and Cal's instinct was confirmed—the trail of deposits and withdrawals began to point to the Miami lottery whose winning number was pegged each week on the last three digits of the circulation figures of the Cuban peso that were released in Havana Thursday morning. One rumor prevalent in the exile community was that these figures were rigged by Havana to affect the lottery in Miami. Trafficante was being given the winning numbers in advance, and a portion of his increased profits went to paying off the operations of the DGI in Florida. If this rumor was valid, then Trafficante was not only the Agency's most important asset in the proposed assassination of Fidel Castro, but might be Castro's most important agent in America.

Since Trafficante was also famous in Batista's day for run-

934 | NORMAN MAILER

ning extravaganzas in Havana between a whore and a gigantic donkey, my powers of insight were obviously going to be minimal concerning him; I tried to keep the focus on Barbaro. Toto, I had decided, must be serving as Trafficante's paymaster to the DGI in Miami; the more he kept screaming for money to liberate Cuba, the more he was working for Castro.

Armed by what seemed better than half a case, I spoke to Cal via secure phone. He promptly returned me to Hunt. "I could come in from above," said Cal, "but I won't. Not this shot. Howard has been holding an impossible situation together, and I won't smash into it. Bring your findings to him."

Hunt, to my surprise, showed little response. He would, he said, peruse the summaries of cash flow in Barbaro's accounts. When I did not hear any more after a few days and I pressed him, he was noncommittal. "I don't know that we have enough to hang the guy," he said at last.

"Does Bernie Barker agree with you? He said Toto was a shit."

"There's a measurable distinction between a shit and a double agent."

Fuertes was not surprised at Hunt's lack of reaction. "The next act is commencing," was his conclusion. "To avoid any imputation that the exiles who replace Castro are related to Batista, your new President Kennedy is going to insist that more leftist groups be brought in. It is a comedy. Barbaro, a wholly corrupt politician, once represented some species of left-wing camouflage for your Frente. But now that Kennedy is bringing in serious figures like Manuel Ray who is far to the left of Barbaro, Toto has become the new center. You do not remove the center of a coalition. Without Barbaro, do you think Manuel Artime would be able to speak to Manuel Ray? No, Toto is crucial. He can hold hands with Manuel of the left and carry messages to Manuel of the right."

"But what if Barbaro is working for Castro?" I asked.

"Toto," said Fuertes, "would not know how to function if he did not have a finger in every hole. Of course, his fingers are filthy, but Toto sees nothing but visions." Fuertes looked at me then with something close to intense dislike, and added, "It is a common feeling in our work."

HARLOT'S GHOST | 935

While it did occur to me that Howard would be careful to feed Barbaro nothing but disinformation, it was also true that such misapprehensions of reality might hurt the Frente indirectly. I had to recognize that it hardly mattered. The Brigade was the center of our real effort; the Frente was there to serve our international image.

All the same, I considered writing an anonymous letter to Mario García Kohly exposing Barbaro as a Castro agent. I soon heard, however, via Fuertes again, that Trafficante, ringmaster of every intrigue, was also in close contact with Kohly. How, then, could Kohly and Masferrer decide whether to eliminate Toto or to do business with him? Profiteers, murderers, patriots, turncoats, informers, drug dealers, and double agents all swam in the same soup, and I became depressed once more over the limitations of my competence to deal with such people.

Now came word from TRAX that there was open dissension in the Brigade. Pepe San Román, the commander, had graduated from Cuba's military academy while the country was under Batista, and had also served with distinction in the United States Army. That last, probably, was why Quarters Eye had selected him for the post. Men who had carried arms for Batista were, however, hardly going to be trusted by men who had fought by the side of Castro in the Sierra Maestra; neither group was congenial to the younger troops who had no ties to either man. There had been a strike in the Brigade; training had ceased; Pepe San Román had resigned. He could not lead men into battle, he said, who did not trust him. He was, however, reinstated by the American officer who was on liaison to the Brigade. The striking troops now threatened to mutiny. Before training could recommence, sixty men had to be dismissed from the Brigade. The other malcontents would only agree to return to duty if Faustino Barbaro were allowed to visit the camp. I was beginning to see why my father did not rush to get rid of Toto.

The long-standing request of the Frente to be given a trip to TRAX was finally accepted, therefore, by Quarters Eye. Artime would fly over with Barbaro, Hunt would accompany them, and I was dispatched as well, "on orders," said Hunt, "issued by HALIFAX."

"Well," I said to Howard, "a little ability and a lot of nepo-

936 | NORMAN MAILER

tism do go a long way."

I think he liked the remark. I was frankly excited. Nepotism be damned. This was the first serious excursion I had gone on for the Agency, and it came at a good time, for it underlined the virtues of living without a woman. If I had still been seeing Modene, my false explanations would have elicited her distrust, and I would suffer the divided mind of being in a place where I would probably not be able to phone her. Now I could pack a bag, buy mosquito repellent, pick up a pair of workshoes to serve as jungle boots, and be off.

37 |

GUATEMALA

TRAX, FEB 17, 1961

HALIFAX—EYES ONLY

Tomorrow, at dawn, the mail plane goes out from Retalhulehu, twenty-five kilometers from here, and the pouch, one is assured, will reach Quarters Eye within forty-eight hours. I, however, feel one whole planet removed from the States. TRAX (which, somewhat more affectionately, is called Vaquero by the Cubans) has been bulldozed out of the jungle and rests on volcanic soil, making up one hell of a dark gumbo in the ever-present rain. The Cuban swamps cannot prove more uncomfortable. I will not go on any more about the jungle surrounding us in these mountains except to say that it is not New England in the fall.

We left Opa-Locka on a C-46 cargo carrier. A black flight. I know you've been on more than a few, but it was my first experience of taking off without wing lights or, more important,

HARLOT'S GHOST | 937

runway lights, and at the risk of imposing on your patience, I will state that I felt as if I were in the belly of the whale. The plane was chock-full of supplies, and Hunt, Artime, Barbaro, and myself, wrapped in blankets against the high-altitude cold of our large compartment void of heat, had to sleep on top of cartons and between heavy gear. Coffee and sandwiches, courtesy of the pilot and copilot, were fed back from time to time.

Even in the dead of night, Barbaro was ready to harangue us. I have seen the man in various stages of anxiety, but never more intense than over the last few days. Sometimes I think that sustained argument, like those nitroglycerine pills he takes, is but one more form of release for his constricted arteries. All night, he kept exclaiming that the troubles at TRAX had ensued because of the previous lack of an invitation for him to visit Guatemala, and now it was his mission to rid TRAX of its Batis-teros.

While it was certainly not agreeable to listen to Toto saw away on his obsessions—"Give me the money and I will conquer Cuba"—Hunt's gifts as a horseman showed up well. He just rode the old nag out, occasionally interjecting enough argument to enable Barbaro to assume he possessed our attention. You could feel the intensity of the last eight months of balked Frente plans in his agitated drone, but Hunt was there to take it around the track. I tried to sleep. I was furious. It took the sum of my respect for you and Hunt not to shout, "You old fraud. You pimp for Trafficante."

We came into Guatemala City with the dawn, were met by Bob Davis, the local Chief of Station, and after breakfast, transferred our stuff onto an Aero Commander, the President of Guatemala's own private plane, indeed.

I saw the country then. We flew astonishingly close to the jungle as we crossed between great extinct, ash-haunted cones of huge volcanoes. Your travel guide will submit that he never saw foliage so quintessentially emerald as in the unholy green light that came up from the jungle below, and the landing on a mean slash of dirt strip carved into the flank of a mountain would have been a stunt man's delight. We sashayed to a stop ten feet from the jungle wall. I had no fear. I am Cal Hubbard's son.

938 | NORMAN MAILER

This place is so remote that I do not know how any word ever gets out. On the Jeep ride up to Vaquero, several thousand feet of climb were involved, and we hair-pinned it over many a mud track no wider in many places than the vehicle, and had the leisure to peer over vertical drops all the abject distance down to the airstrip. One begins to think of an honorable, if highly covert, Agency funeral.

As I learned over the next couple of days, you must build a camp before you train anyone, and the first members of the Brigade and their cadre had worked as carpenters and road builders, drained swamps, poured cement, and put up an electric plant while chopping down untold new acres. Naturally, the flora and fauna reacted with outrage. There were hosts of poisonous snakes uncovered, a terror to Cubans who have none on their native island, and scorpions galore. No one in the field dared to go to sleep without turning their sleeping bags inside out. Ticks were large enough to be mistaken for acorns. When Cubans complain of the onslaught of insect life, you know that you are visiting hell on stilts.

Fortunately, our accommodations are in the main house of the coffee plantation which serves as base for TRAX and is relatively civilized. We sleep in a tin-roofed, gabled structure with a porch around all four sides. My cot has mosquito netting, and through the windows are to be seen the bountiful acres of our host, Roberto Alejo. His coffee shrubs—I do not know whether to call them small trees or bushes—stand out in close checkerboard formation over cleared hills and dales. On our other side is level terrain offering a parade ground, barracks, mess halls, and a flagpole carrying the white star of the Cuban flag on a red, white, and blue field.

Be certain that as soon as we had washed and come back to the living room, Toto began to denounce Pepe San Román and Tony Oliva for their leadership of the Brigade. They immediately quit the room. They are obviously not men to be trifled with. I, like you, I presume, have a set of mixed feelings about military people, but these two gentlemen prove impressive. San Román is slim, lithe, mean-faced, and absolutely consecrated. No excess weight. I think it would never occur to him that he would not die for the cause if that was required. Humorless and

938 | NORMAN MAILER

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full of Cuban honor—which seems to come in even larger sizes than they fit you for in Spain. Oliva, who is a Negro, fought for Castro, then parted company with him. Struck me as more complex than San Román, but equally dedicated, and if anything, tougher. A lot to take in, you may say, in one quick look, but I assure you, we were all of us sufficiently fired up to decide a good deal about each other over a handshake. In any event, the abrupt departure of San Román and Oliva kicked off a quarrel between Hunt and our American commandant here, one Colonel Frank, a beefed-up bull of a Marine Corps officer who won his medals at Iwo Jima and looks capable of lifting the rear end of a Jeep out of the mud. He may, however, be fatally remiss in the top drawer. Recently, he sent twelve Brigade “malcontents” up a tropical river in canoes to a wholly inaccessible place called a “reindocuration camp,” and seems oblivious of the trouble that has caused to the other Brigade members’ national pride. They naturally wish to discipline their own people rather than have Americans do it for them. Colonel Frank then took Howard and me off to the side and proceeded to berate us. “What were you meat-heads thinking of when you brought Barbaro have? If you don’t get the son of a bitch out of TRAX, my Brigade will blow up.”

Howard held his ground. It wasn’t automatic, I must say. Howard would be no physical match for Colonel Frank, and say what you will, that is always a factor.

“I’ll handle Toto Barbaro,” said Howard (in what under the circumstances, was a viable voice) “if you quiet down San Román and Oliva.”

Well, they got into one hell of a staring contest before Frank gave in enough to say, “Take care of your end,” and stomped off.

Later in the day, Barbaro did remain civil when he spoke to the troops, but he also said that it would be neither honest nor responsible to pretend that he had not come with a most serious message: The Frente was the future government of Cuba, no matter what others (he made a point of staring at Artime) might have told those assembled soldiers. So the Brigade should not take any major decision without referring it first to the Frente.

The men were at parade rest—I counted over six hundred.

940 | NORMAN MAILER

Perhaps a third cheered for Barbaro, a third issued Cuban cat-calls (which run the gamut from mouth blats to simulations of parrots, roosters, and wild beasts). Most disquieting in terms of morale was a middle group who stood more or less mute but looked not at all pleased.

I got an inkling then of what Hunt can be capable of. Standing next to me, looking pale as icy resolve itself, he said, "I vow to silence that son of a bitch."

Afterward, at the main house, San Román issued an ultimatum. If Barbaro did not support him openly in front of the troops, he would resign.

"Toto," said Howard, "come with me to my room. I have a few things I wish to speak to you about."

What ensued has been called "The Miracle of La Helvetia." When they came down, Howard was still pale and certainly resolute; Barbaro seemed half-broken. He spoke to all of us, San Román, Oliva, Alejos, Artime, Colonel Frank, Howard, and myself long enough to say that he was now convinced he must make a good and careful study of conditions here at Vaquero before determining his own political certainties. This afternoon and tomorrow morning he would study maneuvers in the field.

There seemed a curious finality to his remarks, as if he had already decided on what he was going to say tomorrow to the troops. Howard hinted to us that he had told Toto to be ready to be flown back to Miami on the next plane as a mental case if he did not cooperate, but such a story hardly holds up. The Frente would have been torn apart by such a move. Deny it if you will, but I believe I now know why neither you nor Howard would react to my findings on Trafficante's rigged lottery and Barbaro's connection to it. There's no sense in playing your trump card until the game is there to be won! I feel as if I have learned something invaluable.

The rest of the afternoon proved interesting. We were able to watch the troops' impressive competence in small arms fire, heavy and light machine guns, and the mortar and artillery range. I couldn't stop looking at Barbaro. He was exhibiting peculiar merriment. For instance, he was full of manic excitement when invited to fire the 50mm machine guns, and couldn't stop laughing after his gun jammed. He kept hefting all the

HARLOT'S GHOST | 941

equipment to see how heavy it was, tried on one man's helmet, slung a rifle, threw a couple of defused grenades for practice, and then a live one on the range, only to complain happily that he had thrown out his arm. I realized after a while that he was acting like a man who is enjoying his retirement. All the while, Howard kept nodding his approval and taking photographs of the leaders, the troops, the terrain, and what with the Hunt pipe and most photographer-like smile, I could have taken him for an English professor.

Next morning, the Brigade was addressed by Artime and Barbaro. Artime has a cosmically poetic style that can prove downright embarrassing to our northern ear. He treats each large sentimental notion as if it were his dancing partner. "It is the will of the heavens that we are gathered here, far from home. . . . It is God's desire that we sweat and live in fear, and overcome such fear, and thrive in brotherhood until we bring the flag of our Brigade back to Cuba, back to Havana, back to a land where Cubans may love each other again." Verbs like *vencar*, *trunfar*, and *imperar* predominate. "We will win, we will triumph, we will prevail. We cannot fail in this war against the steel-tipped hearts of the Communists, but even if we are all massacred on the beachhead"—at which point an astounding sound came up from the Brigade, full of the fiber of the thought of losing their young lives, yet an ecstatic cry, as if there had been some glimpse of heaven in the fall to the ground—"even if all of us are lost, none of us are lost. For the Americans are behind us, and they are a proud nation and will never accept defeat, and they will be there after us in wave after wave."

Wave after wave of impassioned applause washed back to him. Artime is the most curious leader. He is the spirit of charisma when he speaks; when he is done, he is just like one more guy with nice manners. Two personalities, for sure, and the younger one is very young, and not nearly so sure of himself. It comes out when he is forced to offer up a piece of prime bullshit as indeed he had to when introducing Barbaro in flattering terms, "a man without whom Cuban history would not be the same over the last twenty years." Before Toto had said a word, the troops must have sensed that some kind of fix was in, for they cat-called as much as they applauded, and the moment Barbaro

942 | NORMAN MAILER

began to tell them of the high opinion he was taking back to Miami of the Brigade, an opinion, he declared, that would enable the exile community of Miami to feel proud of their heroes. Toto was met by a mixture of applause and derision. Now it was as if all the men who had been for him yesterday were against him, whereas all of San Román and Tony Oliva's supporters overrode the booing with ovations.

Toto ended with a paean to discipline, to sacrifice, to the expectation of triumph: "We will reconquer our island and our home. We will have earned a page in the epic chapters of history. Legend awaits the heroic actions of this Brigade." Do you know, I felt wistful. Oratory is such a rich comfort if you can just let yourself get into it. We will certainly leave TRAX tomorrow morning under a general impression, now shared by San Román, Artime, Alejos, and even Colonel Frank, that our trip has been a success.

I think it was. For me it was. On this, our last night, I visited the barracks and had the opportunity to talk, to listen, and to come away with the impression that these men are emotionally ready to give their lives. I would say they even have religious dedication to their ideals. I can hardly communicate the kind of intensity that comes over conversation as they speak of their willingness to give, as they put it, "*todos*"—yes, all things. I was not unmoved. I hope this has given some picture of the situation at TRAX.

ROBERT CHARLES

The message I really wished to send would have been more extravagant. On the last night, closeted with the Cubans I had recruited, I was quietly overcome by their readiness to die. Sitting among them, I felt a sense of holy, even chilly exaltation, as if one could hear in these mountains and valleys, a muted refrain of cymbals clashing and voices singing, and felt close to Cal, because I knew, although I could hardly say how, that these were the sounds heard by men dedicated to war. That night, falling asleep to the sound of jungle downpour, I wondered whether the Crusaders and the conquistadors of Cortez had also heard that faint, beautiful, and sinister echo. Were the Australi-

HARLOT'S GHOST | 943

ans going up over the trenches at Gallipoli aware of such music, and the Red Army marching into battle against the Whites? Did the Whites hear the same siren on the rock as they battled with the Reds? Certainly my father had heard these strains parachuting down into a strange land.

It was then I realized that if I had been a member of the Brigade, I would have been ready to enter any purgatory with them. I understood their hatred of Castro. To hate Castro offered exaltation that could not otherwise be approached, and I felt much moved by what was awaiting our Brigade. The enormity of attacking Cuba with so small a force weighed upon me; I wanted to be able to hate Castro with sufficient intensity to make their mission more possible.

38 | I had not felt too much pain immediately after losing Modene, but then some wounds are anesthetized by the shock of the laceration. Returning from Guatemala was more difficult. I soon called the Fontainebleau. I was determined not to speak to her, but at least I could learn whether she was still in Miami. The desk clerk told me that her base had been moved to Washington. Would I like a forwarding address? I would not. It cost me something to say that, as if we were separating all over again.

New difficulties with the Frente awaited Howard and myself. Barbaro's conversion at TRAX caused new unhappiness in Miami. At one of the larger meetings, a man stood up to say, "Arttime's only program is to call for love. That is the mark of a dictator." Half of the assembled Frente chose to cheer.

I soon discovered that the potential linking-up of the Frente with Manuel ray's forces was dividing ranks again. Half of the

944 | NORMAN MAILER

exiles in Miami appeared to believe that Ray was an agent for Castro.

On the other hand, Manuel Ray was laying claim to the largest underground network in Havana, and, in addition, presidents Betancourt of Venezuela and Muñoz-Marín of Puerto Rico were well-disposed toward him. It was reported that they had serious influence with Kennedy's administration.

I felt for Hunt. He worked so hard. He had done his best to advance the political agenda of Cubans whose political programs he could hardly endure. Now there was every intimation he would soon be forced to accept a Cuban he considered cousin to a Bolshevik. "Just look at Ray's policies," he would complain. "Maintain Castro's nationalization of banks and public utilities; keep socialized medicine; don't restore any confiscated properties. Keep close relations with the Communist bloc. Why, Manuel Ray is Castroism without Castro."

Next day, Howard was called up to Washington. He came back to Miami with the news that Dr. José Miro Cardona—by choice of Quarters Eye—was going to head up the Frente. Cardona had been President of Cuba for the first few weeks of Castro's triumphal arrival in Havana, but soon resigned and went to Argentina. Recently, the CIA brought him to Miami. He was, Hunt told me, a prestigious figure. He would be able to unify the Frente far better than Toto Barbaro.

"Just one thing wrong," said Hunt. "Until now, whenever Quarters Eye has asked Ray to join the Frente, Ray was arrogant enough to tell them that it would make more sense for the Frente to join *him*. Now that Dr. Miro Cardona is coming on board, however, I think Ray will sign up."

"Where does that leave you?"

"I haven't decided."

By the second week in March, Hunt was summoned again to Washington. Bissell soon informed him that Manuel Ray was indeed joining their ranks.

Hunt replied: "This is tantamount to liquidating the Frente."

My father, who had been asked to attend this meeting, now said to Hunt, "Couldn't you force your guys to accept Ray?"

"Yes," said Hunt. "I could force them, but I'd rather not be

asked to try."

"Why not?"

Hunt provided a full answer to the question. Later, Cal said that he could not remember the reply. "Hunt was just being a royal pain in the ass," Cal said. "I have no use for Manuel Ray, but it was obvious that Howard had to get on the train or get off. Instead, he was arguing."

Telling it to me, Hunt repeated his speech. I knew why my father had not listened. The remarks were too well-rehearsed for Cal's taste. "We," Hunt said, "have trampled heavily on the pride of men who, in their own country, were distinguished, highly respected citizens. Over a period of time, these men of the Frente have come to realize that in Miami they are not much more than puppets. Despite that, they go on doing what I ask because they know there's no other way their country can be rescued. They have become just about entirely dependent on us. I can't face them, however, with a proposal to make Manuel Ray their equal. Rather than compromise on the issue, I prefer to withdraw."

"What was the reaction in Bissell's office?" I asked Hunt.

"A prolonged silence. I received the message. I said, therefore, that I'd like to come back to Washington. I could work with Phillips on our radio broadcasts for the invasion. I can assure you, they were relieved to have me come up with such a proposal."

"It must have been a long plane ride back to Miami," I said.

"Time enough," he said, "to change one's thinking about more than a few things."

I invited Howard to dinner, but he was going out with Bernard Barker to tour a few Cuban hangouts and say some farewells. Tomorrow, he would be on his way to Quarters Eye. On the drive home to my empty apartment that night, I decided that Howard Hunt had lost more than his job. I did not pretend to understand the Agency, but I thought he had probably come to the upper limit of his career. No job was supposed to be too onerous to take on.

All the same, next morning over breakfast, I accepted Hunt's invitation to work with him at Quarters Eye. If I remained at Zenith, I, too, might have no future. Whoever suc-



946 P. NORMAN MAILER

ceeded Howard would hardly be partial to his former assistant. Whereas, at Quarters Eye, as propaganda officers, we would, Hunt calculated, still be flown to the beachhead with the Frente. A spill of adrenaline as pure as the fear of jumping from a quarry wall into ice-cold water confirmed my decision. I would fight against the steel-tipped hearts of the Communists after all.

So, the move was put into the paper mill, and a week later, my orders were cut. I sublet my apartment in Miami, and got ready, upon his sudden if unexpected offer, to bunk with Cal in Washington.

Just before I went up to Quarters Eye, the Frente was reorganized into the Cuban Revolutionary Council. Dr. José Miro Cardona became President, and Manuel Ray's group was proposed for membership. In a meeting at the Miami Skyway Motel, a couple of Agency officers I had never seen before, large men calling themselves Will and Jim, dressed in three-piece gray flannel suits, declared to a near-riotous group of exiles that if the proposed change did not take place, no further aid was forthcoming. The executive wisdom of the Agency had just been exercised. Strangers were always to be preferred when it came to promulgating stern measures.

39 | My father was living in mean quarters. A decommissioned safe house had become available through the Agency rental office, and he picked it up for low rental. I believe it was his pleasure to save money in this manner in order to have more bounty available for food and drink. To celebrate my arrival, he took me to Sans Souci.

We had a splendid meal on Saturday evening, and the restaurant was so full, and the mood so powerfully festive, that we

HARLOT'S GHOST | 947

talked freely. Given the din, no recording mechanism yet developed could have picked up our conversation, and I, after a week of closing down Hunt's desk and living as liaison to the ice-cold executive team of Will and Jim, was as merry as a man on the first day of vacation.

"It may interest you to know," Cal remarked, "that Giancana and Trafficante have not given up. Three weeks ago Sam informed Maheu that a little poison was now ready to go a long way. 'What happened to the last batch?' asked Maheu. 'Oh,' said Giancana, 'you mean the pills for the broad?' 'Yes' said Maheu. 'Oh, that broad!' said Giancana." My father began to laugh.

"Well, what did happen to her?" I asked.

"It appears," said Cal, "that the girl put the pill in the bottom of her cold cream jar in order to take it through Cuban customs. A couple of nights later, lying there beside a soundly snoring Fidel Castro, she got up to dig out the little pellet and drop it in a glass of water on the end table within reach of the Caudillo's hand. The pill was missing, however. Either it had melted in the cold cream, or Castro's security had found it."

"Are you saying that they were witting to her?"

"The girl thinks so. Castro had been, it seems, a masterful lover that night—which was considerably out of character for the kind of buckeroo he usually is—at least, according to the girl. On this particular evening, however, he was Superman. This, apparently, kicked off her suspicions. She says he is a man who would take pleasure in knowing a mistress was trying to kill him provided, of course, she could not succeed. In fact, he might be sufficiently amused by it to be generous afterward. She is now back in Miami and tells her boyfriend, Fiorini, that Castro says no one will ever be able to kill him because the highest practitioners of *santeria* gird his person day and night with all varieties of sorcerer's protection. 'For a Marxist, I am curiously partial to magic,' Castro actually said to her."

"Did you get all this from Maheu?"

"Hell, no," said Cal. "The bare outlines Maheu provided made me curious enough to interview the girl myself."

"And what did she look like?"

"Ravishing, but frightfully nervous. She is just sufficiently paranoid to believe that the DGI could have a hit man out