

Thomas Szasz talks to Larry Mass about Psychiatric Persecution

Book Reviews
by Dennis Altman
and Marilyn Hacker

A New Story
by
Jane Rule

Profile
of Psychiatrist
Stuart Berger

Christopher Street

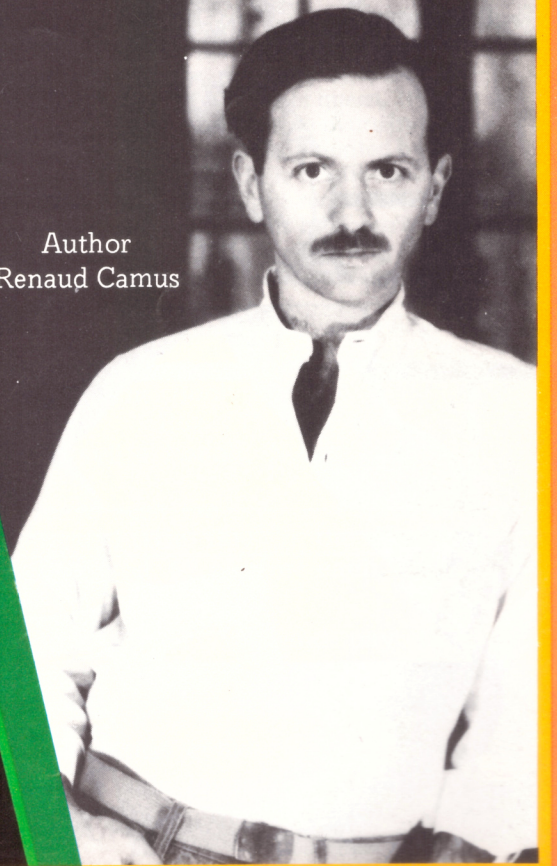
ISSN 0146 7921
Canada \$2.95

March/April 1981 \$2.50

Renaud Camus

TRICKS
25 Encounters

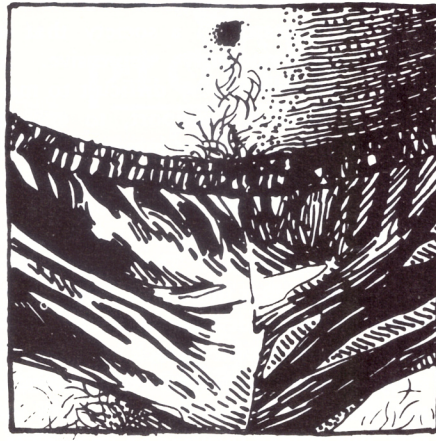
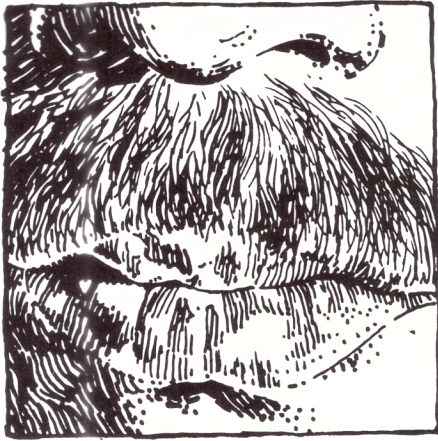
Author
Renaud Camus



The HOT New Novel From France



Preface by Roland Barthes
Translated and with a Note by Richard Howard



It Was a Hit in the Erotic and Intellectual Circles of Paris...

IS AMERICA READY?

Renaud Camus was born in France in 1946. He studied in Paris and Oxford and holds advanced degrees in Law, Political Science, and Philosophy. He has taught French language and literature in the United States, and currently lives in Paris. His novels and collections of essays have met with considerable critical success in France; *Tricks* is the first of his works to appear in English.

Richard Howard, who translated *Tricks*, is an eminent poet and critic. He is the author of *Misgivings*, *Alone with America*, and *Two-Part Inventions*; he has translated works by Roland Barthes, Michel Foucault, and Andre Gide.

The late Roland Barthes was a prolific and eclectic writer. He was certainly one of the most celebrated French philosophers to emerge since Jean-Paul Sartre.

preface by Roland Barthes

Why have you agreed to write a preface to this book by Renaud Camus?

Because Renaud Camus is a writer, because his text belongs to literature, because he cannot say so himself, and because someone else, therefore, must say so in his place.

If it is literary, the text must show as much for itself.

It shows as much, or you can hear as much, from the first turn of phrase, from a certain way of saying "I," of conducting the narrative. But since this book seems to speak, and bluntly, about homosexuality, some readers may forget about literature.

Then for you, asserting the literary nature of a text is a way of taking it out of quarantine, sublimating or purifying it, giving it a kind of dignity which, according to you, sex doesn't have?

Not in the least. Literature is here to afford more pleasure, not more propriety.

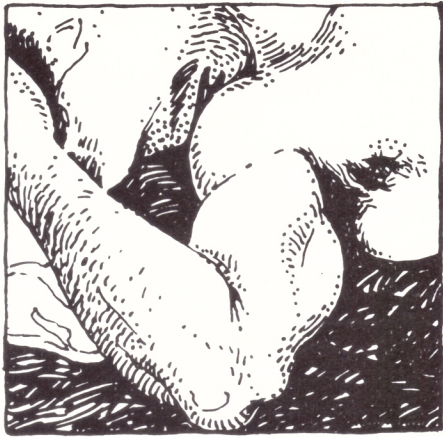
Get on with it then, but make it short.

Homosexuality shocks less, but continues to be interesting; it is still at that

stage of excitation where it provokes what might be called feats of discourse. Speaking of homosexuality permits those who "aren't" to show how open, liberal, and modern they are; and those who "are" to bear witness, to assume responsibility, to militate. Everyone gets busy, in different ways, whipping it up.

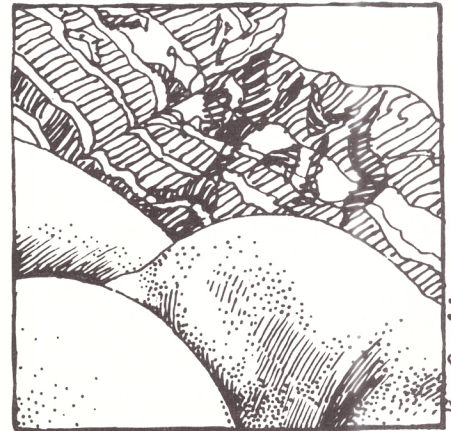
Yet to proclaim yourself something is always to speak at the behest of a vengeful Other, to enter into his discourse, to argue with him, to seek from him a scrap of identity: "You are . . ." "Yes, I am . . ." Ultimately, the attribute is of no importance; what society will not tolerate is that I should be . . . *nothing*, or to be more exact, that the *something* that I am should be openly expressed as provisional, revocable, insignificant, inessential, in a word: irrelevant. Just say "I am," and you will be socially saved.

To reject the social injunction can be accomplished by means of that form of silence which consists in saying things *simply*. Speaking *simply* belongs to a higher art: writing. Take the spontaneous utterances, the spoken testimony then transcribed, as increasingly utilized by the press and by publishers. Whatever their "human" interest, something



TRICKS

an excerpt
from the novel by
Renaud Camus



Illustrations by Ken Gould

rings false in them (at least to my ears): perhaps, paradoxically, an excess of style (trying to sound "spontaneous," "lively," "spoken"). What happens, in fact, is a double impasse: the accurate transcription sounds made up; for it to seem true, it has to become a text, to pass through the cultural artifices of writing. Testimony runs away with itself, calling nature, men, and justice to witness; the text goes slowly, silently, stubbornly—and arrives faster. Reality is fiction, writing is truth: such is the ruse of language.

Renaud Camus's *Tricks* are simple. This means that they speak homosexuality, but never speak about it: at no moment do they invoke it (that is simplicity: never to invoke, not to let Names into language—Names, the source of dispute, of arrogance, and of moralizing).

Our period interprets a great deal, but Renaud Camus's narratives are neutral, they do not participate in the game of interpretation. They are surfaces without shadows, *without ulterior motives*. And once again, only writing allows this purity, this priority of utterance, unknown to speech, which is always a cunning tangle of concealed intentions. If it weren't for their extent and their sub-

ject, these *Tricks* might suggest haikus; for the haiku combines an asceticism of form (which cuts short the desire to interpret) and a hedonism so serene that all we can say about pleasure is that *it is there* (which is also the contrary of Interpretation).

Sexual practices are banal, impoverished, doomed to repetition, and this impoverishment is disproportionate to the wonder of the pleasure they afford. Now, since this wonder cannot be said (being of an ecstatic order), all that remains for language to do is to figure, or better still, to cipher, as economically as possible, a series of actions which, in any case, elude it. Erotic scenes must be described sparingly. The economy here is that of the sentence. The good writer is the one who utilizes the syntax so as to link several actions within the briefest linguistic space (we find, in de Sade, a whole art of subordinate clauses); the sentence's function is somehow to scour the carnal operation of its tediums and its efforts, of its noises and its adventitious thoughts. In this regard, the final scenes of the various *Tricks* remain entirely within the domain of *writing*.

But what I like best of all in *Tricks* are the preparations: the cruising, the

alert, the signals, the approach, the conversation, the departure for the bedroom, the household order (or disorder) of the place. Realism finds a new site; it is not the *love scene* which is realistic (or at least its realism is not pertinent), it is the *social scene*. Two young men who do not know each other but know that they are about to become partners in a specific act, risk between them that fragment of language to which they are compelled by the trajectory which they must cover together in order to reach their goal. The *trick* then abandons pornography (before having really approached it) and joins the novel. The suspense (for these *Tricks*, I believe, will be read eagerly) affects not behavior (which is anticipated, to say the least), but the characters: who are they? how do they differ from each other? What delights me, in *Tricks*, is this juxtaposition: the scenes, certainly, are anything but chaste, yet the remarks are just that: they say *sotto voce* that the real object of such modesty is not the Thing ("La Chose, toujours la Chose," Charcot used to say, as quoted by Freud), but the person. It is this *passage* from sex to discourse that I find so successfully achieved in *Tricks*.

PORTRAITS
 CARICATURES
 NUDES
 FROM LIFE
 OR
 PHOTOGRAPHS

KEN GOULD
 (212) 929-7334

Reservations World System

A FREE RESERVATION SERVICE FOR
 THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS:

BAHAMAS

Eleuthra Island

KEY WEST

Cypress House

Big Ruby's

Garden House

Island House

The Floridian

The Palms

LOS ANGELES

Coral Sands

NEW ORLEANS

Bourgoyne House

NEW YORK

Ossi House

Village House

ORLANDO

Parliament House

PROVINCETOWN

Crown & Anchor

Rose & Crown

SAN FRANCISCO

The Brothel

Hotel York

Inn On Castro

SAN JUAN

Lutece

Beach House

Seaview

ST. CROIX

King Frederick

SANTO DOMINGO

Queen Victoria

VERMONT

Andrews Inn

FOR FREE BROCHURE AND
 RESERVATIONS CALL:
 800-221-6574 (TOLL FREE)
 212-934-3126 (NYS)

RESERVATIONS WORLD

2118 AVENUE X, BROOKLYN, N.Y. 11235

This is a form of subtlety quite unknown to the pornographic product, which plays on desires, not on fantasies. For what excites fantasy is not only sex, it is sex plus "the soul." Impossible to account for falling in love or even for infatuations, simple attractions, or Wertherian raptures, without admitting that what is sought in the other is something we shall call, for lack of a better word, and at the cost of great ambiguity, the person. To the person is attached a kind of homing device that causes this particular image, among thousands of others, to seek out and capture me. Bodies can be classified into a finite number of types ("That's just my type"), but the person is absolutely individual. Renaud Camus's *Tricks* always begin with an encounter with the longed-for type (perfectly encoded; the type could figure in a catalogue or in a page of personal want-ads); but once language appears, the type is transformed into a person, and the relation becomes inimitable, whatever the banality of the first remarks. The person is gradually revealed, and lightly, without psychologizing, in clothing, in discourse, in accent, in setting, in what might be called the individual's "domesticity," which transcends his anatomy yet over which he has control. All of which gradually enriches or retards desire. The *trick* is therefore homogeneous to the amorous progression; it is a virtual love, deliberately stopped short on each side, by contract; a submission to the cultural code which identifies cruising with Don Juanism.

The *Tricks* repeat themselves; the subject is on a treadmill. Repetition is an ambiguous form; sometimes it denotes failure, impotence; sometimes it can be read as an aspiration, the stubborn movement of a quest which is not to be discouraged; we might very well take the cruising narrative as the metaphor of a mystical experience (perhaps

this has even been done; for in literature everything exists: the problem is to know *where*). Neither one of these interpretations, apparently, suits *Tricks*: neither alienation nor sublimation; yet something like the methodical conquest of happiness (specifically designated, carefully bounded: discontinuous). The flesh is not sad (but it is quite an art to convey as much).

Renaud Camus's *Tricks* have an inimitable tone. It derives from the fact that the writing here initiates an ethic of dialogue. This ethic is that of good will, which is surely the virtue most contrary to the amorous pursuit, and hence the rarest. Whereas ordinarily a kind of harpy presides over the erotic contract, leaving each party within a chilly solitude, here it is the goddess Eunoia, the Eumenid, the Kindly One, who accompanies the two partners; certainly, literally speaking, it must be very agreeable to be "tricked" by Renaud Camus, even if his companions do not always seem aware of this privilege (but we, the readers, are the third ear in these dialogues: thanks to us, this bit of good will has not been given in vain). Moreover, this goddess has her retinue: politeness, kindness, humor, generous impulse, like the one which seizes the narrator (while tricking with an American) and causes his wits to wander so amiably with regard to the author of this preface.

Trick—the encounter which takes place only once: more than cruising, less than love: an intensity, which passes without regret. Consequently, for me, *Trick* becomes the metaphor for many adventures which are not sexual; the encounter of a glance, a gaze, an idea, an image, ephemeral and forceful association, which consents to dissolve so lightly, a faithless benevolence: a way of not getting stuck in desire, though without evading it; all in all, a kind of wisdom.

Waltlere Dumas

Friday, March 3, 1978

I was nearly two in the morning, the *Mambattan* was about to close. I had already collected my things at the coat-check and I was looking for a quieter place to put on my sweater and leather jacket. He was sitting on a bench upstairs, that is, on the main floor. Apparently he had been there a long time; in any case, I don't remember having seen him downstairs. (Yes, I do.)

It was his wrists and hands that excited me right away: covered with silky black hairs, even on the fingers. His hair was short; he had a very thick mouse-tache, a slightly yellowish complexion, and he seemed to squint a little. He was wearing beige corduroys, a greenish bige herringbone shirt, a V-necked sweater that was also beige, and a black or very dark brown windbreaker.

I put on my clothes beside him, then I leaned over the rail, as if I were waiting for someone downstairs. Our elbows were touching. He didn't move away, but he wasn't looking at me, or at least I couldn't tell if he was, and then he yawned. The lights were turned on, everyone was leaving. He stood up, he went out. I followed him. He turned right into the Rue des Anglais, and so did I, behind him, though my previous intention had been to take a turn around the Square John-XXIII. He was walking slowly, and I slower still. When he reached the Boulevard Saint-Germain, he stopped and turned around, but not toward me; he remained motionless at the corner, looking toward the bar we had both just left. I took a few steps toward the Rue Saint-Jacques and I stopped too, opposite a bench on which

had vaguely cruised earlier, without any yards away from him, a boy whom I toward the Place Maubert. Two or three and stopped on the boulevard sidewalk, then he had crossed the Rue des Anglais And I went over to the stranger. By "What's that got to do with it?"

I put one foot. Slowly, as if he were waiting for someone or something, he started back toward the door of the *Mambattan*, so that I couldn't see him any more. A fairly good-looking guy, a little too thin, with whom I had once gone to bed and whose name I've forgotten—he works in fashion, I think, and often goes to Milan—came over to speak to me:

"What would the Manhattan be with-out you?"

"Oh, it's not that bad. I don't go there every night. I haven't set foot in the place for almost a week."

"What'd you think of the thing at the *Palace* the other night?"

"Not bad. In fact I liked it a lot. Except for Grace Jones, the usual disaster."

"You're telling me! She managed to turn the whole place against her in five minutes. Of course she was completely wrecked, but that's no excuse for fucking over the public like that."

"I saw her last New Year's Eve in New York, at *Studio 54*, and she was a monumental flop. No one clapped, people were hissing all over the place."

Meanwhile the other one had come back to the corner, but except for a quick glance, he wasn't paying any attention to me. I wondered what to do. X, the designer, seemed to be cruising me; he wasn't bad, I didn't feel like going home alone and he seemed a sure thing. The other one, not at all. What made me take a chance was a hostile remark of X's that pissed me off:

"It's funny, you're a writer but you spend all your time in these dumb places."

encouragement from him, suddenly spoke to me:

"We danced together one night."

"We did—when was that?"

"One Wednesday."

"That's right, I remember."

But I went on toward the stranger. This time his eyes didn't avoid mine, he even smiled. So I went up to him:

"Funny, leaving that way."

"What way?"

"Leaving the *Mambattan*. Before, people used to stand in the street for a while, in front of the door; now they scatter all around. No one really leaves. They come back, everyone makes a few last attempts, people stare at each other—I think it's funny. . . . You look like you're falling asleep on your feet."

"I haven't slept much in the last two weeks."

"Living it up?"

"No. It was too hot."

"The tropics?"

"Yeah."

"Where in the tropics?"

"Ecuadorial Africa."

"Where in Ecuadorial Africa?"

"Nigeria."

"Where in Nigeria?"

"Lagos."

"I see."

"What are you doing?"

"When?"

"Now."

"I don't know."

"It all depends?"

I laugh.

"Exactly."

"You want to come home with me?"

"Sure."

He laughs.

"We could go to this maid's room a friend of mine lets me use. But it's not very inspiring. We can't go to my place."

"No, I'd rather go to my place."

"So would I."

"Do you have a car?"





"No, I was going to bring my bike, but I walked. Where do you live?"

"Dupleix. We'll take a taxi."

"OK."

We walk toward the taxi stand, at the foot of the statue in the Place Maubert. I discover his name is Walthere, t-h-e-r-e-I'm humming.

"You're in a good mood . . ."

"More than good."

"What about?"

"That we're going to the Fifteenth Arrondissement."

"Yes, the Fifteenth is nice."

Several people are waiting for taxis ahead of us, including the fashion designer, who leaves with a smile. The drivers ask everyone where they're going, and turn most of us down:

"Oh no, not the Trocadero, no, I'm going toward Vincennes, I'm off duty now." We agree that it's a pain in the ass. Moreover, Walthere isn't one for smiling, on the whole. Once we get a cab, he doesn't open his mouth the whole way. He directs the driver very carefully, and we pull up in front of a huge modern apartment house with curving balconies, behind the Front de Seine. All he has is a hundred-franc note, no change, so I pay for the cab, after which, despite my protests, he sticks a few coins in my pocket:

"It's not enough, anyway."

According to the plate over the bell, his name is Walthere Dumas.

He lives in a studio, but a very big one. One whole wall is windows opening, as I would see in the morning, onto a long and quite wide balcony. Very little furniture, modern. Nothing actively ugly. Hanging on the wall, a piece of weaving, probably Indian, and a little primitive painting of a Latin American village with an enormous white baroque church under a uniformly blue sky.

There's also a kitchen, not too small, a bathroom—very comfortable, very

bare, and an enormous closet, almost a room.

"You want something to drink?"

"Just some water, or a Perrier. Yes."

"Tonic? Coke?"

"Tonic would be fine."

"With some gin?"

"No thanks, nothing."

"You don't smoke, you don't drink—"

"Yes I do. Sometimes. May I take the liberty of removing my shoes?"

"Of course. You like music?"

"Yes."

"Classical?"

"Fine."

"What?"

"I don't know. You choose."

"I have mostly Requiems."

"Oh no, no Requiems, if you can help it."

"The Lully *Te Deum*?"

"Sure. Fine."

"You know it?"

"No, not especially, but I'd guess it's a lot like the rest of his work."

"I wouldn't know, it's the only thing by him I've ever heard."

"What's this thing with Requiems?"

"I decided to get into opera. So I thought this would be a good way to start."

"Funny place to start . . ."

I sit cross-legged on the bed. He comes over and lies down beside me. We kiss, on the neck, then on the mouth. I run my hand under his shirt. He's a little less hairy than his wrists might suggest, but still pretty much so. I undo his sleeve buttons in order to caress his forearms, which are splendid. We both get erections. We're lying against each other. His shirt doesn't unbutton all the way down the front, he can only take it off over his head, but I've pushed it up enough to lick his chest. He takes off his shirt. When the record is over, we're

both completely naked. His legs and especially his ass are covered with an incredible mat of hair, long and black, that gets me wildly excited.

"I'm going to put on something I really like."

"What's that?"

"You'll see. It's electronic."

As he changes the record, I can see his completely erect cock right beside the amplifier. He has turned out all the lamps, with my consent, but arranged a lot of little construction lanterns around the room, about a dozen in all.

"It looks like a racetrack."

"Or a Christmas tree."

So now we're naked, stretched out together, me on top of him, my hands under his buttocks, caressing them and his thighs. We kiss each other, but quite superficially (nothing comparable to David the day before yesterday). My obsession is to lick his buttocks, to thrust my face between them, and to stick my tongue as deep in there as I can. He lets me do what I want, but without any special enthusiasm. Yet he offers no resistance. Once more, kissing him, I thrust my cock under his balls and gradually raise his legs. (The other morning, David: "I see what you're up to, you're about as subtle as a sledge hammer.")

"I'm not doing a thing!" "Too bad.") A first attempt to put my cock inside him, with no more help than the saliva left there a moment before, gets nowhere. I put on more with my hand, also on my cock. Then I manage to get halfway in, but he winces. I pull back out, and he winces even more. His bent legs against my chest, my forearms, under his back, my hands behind his neck, I have my head down against his balls, deep in the incredible forest of hair at his crotch. This seems to excite him, and me as well, so much so that I decide to try fucking him again. Another attempt succeeds a little better, but judg-

ing from his expression, he still seems to be in pain. I withdraw and stretch out beside him. We kiss a little while, arms around each other's shoulders, side by side. He plays with himself. So do I. But since I don't get much out of that, I put some saliva in my ass this time, straddle him, and stick his cock, which isn't so big, up my ass without difficulty. With one hand, I caress his thighs or press his buttocks against me, and with the other I play with myself. Leaning forward, I kiss his neck. This position excites me a lot. I come on his belly. He doesn't seem to want to fuck me any more. I stretch out beside him again. He plays with himself. I have one arm under his back, and with one hand I caress his thighs, his balls. He comes just when one of my fingers is against his asshole.

He puts on another record, but asks me if I want to go to sleep.

"Yes, I'd like to; that's nice of you—I don't have the energy to get up and go home."

"No, of course not, that's not what I meant."

I caress him a little, but he barely responds, and we fall asleep practically without touching, each of us on his own side of the bed. When I wake up, his eyes are wide open.

"I can't sleep any more. I'd like some music. Do you mind?"

"No. What time is it?"

"Ten o'clock."

"Oh, that late?"

The Mozart *Requiem*.

"Which recording is that?"

"I don't know. Is there more than one?"

"Yes. Almost everyone has Karajan's."

Which is what it was.

We lie together for a minute, but I'm a little restless. My advances get nowhere.

"Want some tea?"

"Yes, thanks."

He gets up. As do I, and put on my shirt.

"Why are you getting dressed?"

"I don't know. It's time to, isn't it?"

He has pulled on a soccer shirt with a big number on the front and back, and white socks with colored stripes at the top, which reach to his knees; this way, all I see of his body are his muscular thighs, tanned, and hairy, and his ass. We have our breakfast sitting opposite each other at a big table.

"What do you do?"

"I write."

"What?"

"Novels."

"What's your name?"

"Camus."

"You can see there aren't any books here. They wear me out. . . . Have you been doing it long?"

"The first one was published about three years ago. . . ."

"Do you make a living from it?"

"If you can call it a living."

"What do you call it?"

"A pittance."

"How old are you?"

"Thirty-one. I'm a little tired of this bohemian kind of life. After thirty, you know. . . ."

"But couldn't you write things that would make you some money?"

"I don't know. Maybe. I've never tried."

"You should. What do I know? Anyway, I could never live like that. I've gotten used to certain things."

"What do you do?"

"I'm a corporate lawyer."

"Yeah? I'm a lawyer too—I mean, I studied law."

"You got your degree?"

"Two, in fact."

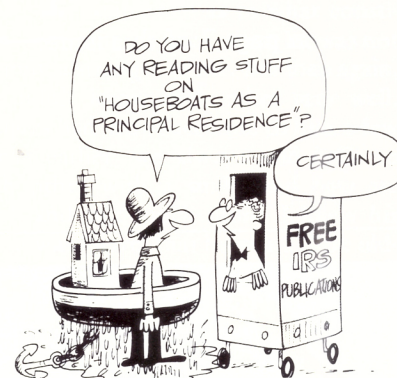
"In what?"



Confused?

Read the instructions in your tax package—they can clear up the confusion and make doing your tax return easier and faster.

A public service message from the Internal Revenue Service.



Good reading

Order free IRS Publications on deductions, exemptions, tax credits, depreciation—over 90 topics in all. Available by using the handy order form in your tax package.

A public service message from the Internal Revenue Service.

THANK YOU
for being a supporter
of CHRISTOPHER STREET.

Now become a subscriber!

See our advertisement
on page 7 of this issue.



FALLING IN LOVE AGAIN

Saluki pups / Extraordinarily beautiful
Graceful and Elegant
The pride of Ancient Persia
Father 1976 Westminster champion
non-allergenic
203-637-8217

"Oh, odd things, whatever seemed least boring to me at the time, just to get the degree—History of Law, Political Science."

"I went to the Institute of Political Studies, too."

"So did I. How old are you?"

"Twenty-nine. What was your field?"

"I began in Political Science but I wasn't any good in economics. I had to change. So then I took the gut subject, I don't remember what it was called."

"International Relations?"

"No."

"Social Studies?"

"Yes, that's it."

He gets two telephone calls. The first one is a girl, to whom he talks about his trip to Lagos. Interesting enough professionally, but the climate is impossible. The water and electricity go off four hours a day. The traffic is crazy, the main roads have fallen to pieces, most of them are dirt roads anyway, you know, the cars and trucks are all wrecks put together with string and chewing gum, rattling around in all directions. It takes six hours to get from the airport. But he was lucky, and it took him only four and a half. Kano, oh yes, Kano is much better. She wants to go to the movies with him, but he doesn't feel like it, he hasn't gone to the movies for over a month, he doesn't feel like movies these days. Tomorrow they'll have lunch together, out in the country with some friends.

Then someone he was supposed to go out with the night before. But his dinner lasted longer than expected, he had decided it was too late to call. Yes, he went to the *Manhattan*, yes, yes, he had a good time, thanks a lot, yes, still here, exactly, and so what did you do last night? When are we going to begin our exercises? At the *Samurai*, yes, or at the *Porte Maillot*. Yes, it's expensive, but they all are. He saw Alain and Tony

last night, they go to the *Vitapop*, in Montparnasse (Tony? My Tony? He was at the *Manhattan* last night, as a matter of fact, and there can't be so many Tony's in circulation. And is Alain that very good-looking boy I had noticed, the one who was talking to him later? Does Tony go to the *Vitapop*? But I say nothing.) No, he doesn't know what he's going to do today, nothing at all, lie around the house, probably. In any case, he'll call back tonight, around seven.

He's lying on the bed, still wearing the same things. I suck his cock while he's talking on the phone, but he barely gets hard. Later he's on his back, his arms behind his head, and he's smoking. I caress him.

"I turn you on, huh?"

I laugh at this and answer:

"I guess so!"

"Funny . . ."

A moment of silence. Then:

"What are you thinking about?"

"About that phrase you used just now—"I turn you on?""

"Something strange about it?"

"No, just a little surprising."

"Probably says a lot about me, doesn't it?"

"Oh, plenty of other things say a lot about you. Tell me about this operatic interest of yours."

"Oh, I have a friend who knows all about opera. I just like the noise it makes (he has spoken of music several times now as *noise*). I got interested. So I decided to start with what was easiest—with things I like. But I haven't really gotten into it yet. I bought this set-up, which is pretty good, and a few records, but that's all, up to now. You know, I'm just starting. It's like everything else. Before, I didn't have any kind of life. I've only been really alive for a lit-



like to have discussions with me. He gave me his telephone number. One night, when I called him, he was obviously making love. He declined the offer of my telephone number ("I know I won't use it, that's how I am"), but urged me to telephone him again, which I won't do.]

Jacques's Brother

Thursday, March 23, 1978

To speak of Jacques's brother is to juggle the criteria I have established as to what constitutes a trick, since he was not entirely a stranger to me. But then again, we didn't know each other very well. Jacques had introduced me to him a few weeks earlier, we always said *hello* to each other with a smile, and *how are you?* and not much more. I knew his name was Pierre, that he was a little older than his brother, and that he lived in Paris, unlike the rest of his family, Gypsies all, who were at Gonesse, a veritable tribe, as I understand it. They are not French citizens, the children don't go to school, none of them can read or write, not even numbers, although they seem to be shrewd businessmen. Both brothers were married by their parents, but they hardly know their wives, and never see them. Pierre looks very much the classical Gypsy: very black curly hair, moustache, gold earrings, sometimes a red scarf around the throat. But he's very short; just over five feet, maybe.

That evening at the *Manhattan*, he was very much more communicative than usual. Not that he made any advances, but I kept finding him in my

"No, Honduras. It's exactly like it looks. There's no road. You have to walk three hours to get there. The painter lives there, in that village. An old guy, amazing. . . I met him there. He's the one who sold me the picture."
 "Is it really as white as that?"
 "Yes. The only difference is that the women don't wear Indian costumes so much any more."
 "Were you in Latin America for a long time?"
 "A year and a half."
 "And in Honduras?"
 "A year, being sort of a technical adviser."
 "It's very poor there, isn't it?"
 "Yes, the poorest country in America, after Haiti."

He gets dressed, putting on the same clothes he was wearing the night before. No doubt he plans to change later, after his bath. We leave together. Good weather. An old tiny Fiat 500, rusty and dented, with diplomatic plates, is parked in front of an annex building of some international organization. He looks at it pityingly:

"UNESCO doesn't pay so well, it seems."
 "I almost worked for them, one time, for their French publication."
 "Where are you from?"
 "Chamaieres."
 He laughs.
 We're at the Metro entrance. It's noon, a Saturday.
 "Thanks for your hospitality, Monsieur."
 "See you later."
 He crosses the street, heading toward the market.

[Seen again several times, but for five minutes, and always by accident. I interest him, he says, but not for the reasons which make him interesting to me. He'd

the more than a year. . . Do you go to the *Manhattan* a lot?"
 "On and off. But these days, yeah. I go there quite a lot. Do you?"
 "Oh, maybe every weekend. It's new. A friend took me there a month ago. I'd never gone to places like that in France."
 "But abroad?"
 "Yes, in Costa Rica, in Colombia. . . but they were just bars."
 "What kind of company do you work for?"
 "Engineering. Why? Are you interested?"
 "Yes, of course."
 "Because they happen to be recruiting right now."
 "No, that's not what I meant. Besides, I know less law now than a first-year student."
 "Oh, that doesn't matter. I didn't know anything either when I started. Look, I studied international relations, and all I handle now is labor contracts." "What's the Metro stop nearest here?"
 "Duplex, or Charles-Michels."
 "Right. Charles-Michels is good for me, I don't have to transfer."
 "You know where it is?"
 "No, but I'll find it."
 "I'll go out with you. I have some shopping to do. You want to come with me?"
 "No, I don't like markets—they're too picturesque."
 "Not this one."
 Since he's suggested I wait for him and still hasn't moved, I stay where I am, lying stretched out beside him. He smiles, then he says:

"God, this is just what I like: nothing to do, some good noise. . . ."
 I look at the painting over the bed, the South American village.
 "Do you like that?"
 "I like the place it represents. It looks like a nice place. Is it in Colombia?"

bia?"



path. Once, when I was sitting down, he came over and stood beside me. He said nothing to me, however, and after a moment or so I gave up my seat to him. Later, upstairs near the top of the stairs, he approached me again. We were both standing. I was leaning against the wall, but I kept my feet as far apart as possible, in order to make myself closer to his height. Then, fearing that this position would seem to artificial and too obvious, I straightened up, taller by head and shoulders than he, which was no less embarrassing.

I knew he had a *friend* (his expression), and he couldn't get out as much as he liked:

"So you managed to escape tonight?"

"Yeah. Is it always as crowded as this during the week?"

"No, not this early in the week. Do you only come here on weekends?"

"Only Saturdays."

"And where's your brother? In Gonesse?"

"I don't know. I don't know what he's up to. He may be out tonight—he goes somewhere else."

"Where's that?"

"Oh, he goes to the *Cesar*, or the *Scaramouche*, or 18 . . ."

He remarked that there was a boy over on the banquette who wasn't bad, and I pointed out another whom I found attractive. A Spaniard, he told me. But we remained side by side, without saying anything more. My arm behind him, I stuck a thumb into his belt, once or twice, but there was no reaction on his part. I told him I was sleepy.

"You should dance a little."

"No, I don't have the energy. But I'll go watch the others."

So I left him where he was and went back downstairs. I circled the dance floor slowly. Ten minutes later I felt two arms around me, embracing me from behind. It was Pierre again. I put

my hands in his pants pockets—which were wide-wale corduroy—then I caressed his forearms, which he had crossed over my stomach. Then, when I got behind him in turn, I stuck my hands in his pockets again or else I crossed my arms over his chest, squeezing now, my legs wide apart, my chin on his shoulder. He went to sit down in a corner. A moment later, since I was staring at him, he signalled me to come over and sit down next to him, which I did. Putting my arm around his shoulders, I kissed him in the hollow of the neck. Then I caressed his back through his shirt. He began to laugh:

"You in love?"

"Why? In love with who? No."

"The way you're handling me."

"I'm not handling you. I'm caressing you."

But I stopped.

"Are you mad at me?"

"No. Why? Not at all."

Now it was he who was running his hand over my tennis shirt, down my back, caressing my forearms and hands.

"You sure you're not mad?"

"Yes, I'm sure."

With both hands, he turned my head toward him, and kissed me on the mouth. All the same, I watched the dancers a moment longer, without paying him much attention. It was only when he drew me toward him a second time that I gradually leaned back, or rather to one side, on the corner banquette where we were sitting alone. My cock was getting hard against his hip. I stuck a couple of fingers between two buttons of his shirt, under his tiny necktie. His pectorals were round, solid, covered with hair. We stayed there about fifteen minutes kissing like that, half reclining. He had an erection too.

It was almost closing time. The music was shut off and all the lights turned on. We headed for the coat checkroom. He

told me to give him my ticket, and cutting into the line, he picked up my things along with his and refused the two francs I owed him. We walked back up to the street floor. At the door, he asked me what I was going to do.

"Go home to bed. And you?"

"I'm going over to *Pim's*. Don't you want to come to *Pim's* with me?"

"No, I'm bushed."

"Too bad."

"You could come with me, if you want to."

"No, I have a friend."

"Oh, in that case . . ."

Just then I glanced around us a bit and we were separated by all the men leaving at the same time we were. But out in the street, from the opposite sidewalk, he signalled me to join him.

"You're going home now?"

"Yes."

"Which way do you go?"

"Down the Boulevard Saint-Germain."

"I'll walk with you a little."

So we set out side by side.

"I'll tell you what I want to do. I'll come home with you, but I won't stay."

"All right. But we can't go to my apartment. There's someone there. We can go to a maid's room I have, around the corner from it."

"It doesn't matter to me. You have a friend too?"

"No, but I live with someone."

"You know, this is the first time I've cheated on my friend. It doesn't feel so good."

"Then you shouldn't do it."

"But you turn me on. Let's stop here and have some coffee."

"Coffee? No, you don't need coffee, you won't be able to sleep if you drink coffee now."

"It doesn't keep me awake. You order what you want. I'd smoke a cigarette over the body."

"What?"

"I said I need a cigarette. I have to buy some."

He started to go into the cafe at the corner of the Boulevard Saint-Germain an the Rue de l'Ancienne-Comedie.

"No, not there. They don't sell cigarettes. There's a place farther down."

So he went into the *Navy*.

"You want something to drink?"

"No, thanks."

I waited outside. He didn't get any coffee.

"Is it much farther?"

"Seven, maybe eight minutes."

"If I had known, we could have taken a taxi. You walk this distance every time?"

"Yes, I'm used to it. And I'm warning you now, you'll have to climb six flights, too."

Not much was said the rest of the way, except for the admonitions on his part not to mention what was happening between us to his brother.

"All the same, when I think of it, who would have believed it?"

"What?"

"That we would leave that place together, you and me."

"I don't see what's so extraordinary about that."

"Still, if my friend knew! You won't say anything about it, will you?"

As soon as we get into the room, he takes off his clothes. His body is very well proportioned, rather dark-skinned, very muscular, especially the arms and thighs, which are exceptionally developed.

I tell him I have to go take a piss. When I come back, he wants to go too, and puts on his underwear to walk down the hall. I get between the icy sheets. When he comes back, he asks if there is hot water here. Yes? Really? Then he very carefully washes himself

off, from the waist down. I explain that there is neither a candle nor a bed lamp, and that we can have either the big light on or no light at all. He suggests that I put a towel over it, but that doesn't make much difference. Then, under the sink he discovers a little lamp I never knew was there.

"You're not going to wash up?"

"I already did."

"So did I."

When his ablutions are completed, he comes and stretches out beside me in the bed, which is still just as cold, despite my solitary efforts. We press against each other, kissing, and warm up that way for quite a while. He seems to be very interested in my ass. He sucks my cock. I run my tongue through the hair on his chest, over his right nipple, his belly, and then I take his cock in my mouth too. This provokes so much agitation that he is now lying completely across the bed. Continuing my descent,

I take his balls between my teeth, then I stop at his asshole, which I lick while continuing to caress his torso. He plays with himself, breathing hard. Then I turn him around so he's lying full length on the bed again, and lying on top of him, with his legs spread and my cock under his ass, I kiss him on the mouth again, on the chest, on the belly, suck him some more, and again suck his ass, leaving as much saliva in it as possible. Then, taking his legs in my arms and having moistened my cock, I start pushing it between his buttocks, where it goes in quite easily. "Easy, Renaud," he says, "easy."

Then I stop and it is he who, by his movements, gets me deeper inside him.

My hands under his shoulder blades, I kiss him on the mouth, in the hollow of the neck, on the chest. He chants my name like a nostalgic wail. Sometimes I fuck him very slowly, then just about to come, very fast and hard and always



*"You can do anything to my body you want to all night long.
I ask only one thing in return. Breakfast."*

with enthusiasm. He plays with himself. I burst out laughing.

"Why are you laughing?"

"Because I'm happy. This is great."

"I like you a lot, you laugh all the time. . . ."

This lasts about ten minutes. Then he tells me he's about to come.

"Now?"

"Yes, now, now, yes. . . ."

"Me too, me too. . . ."

We come exactly the same instant, as if it were my own sperm that was spurting out of his cock onto his belly, up to his chest and even onto his shoulders. I fall back beside him, releasing his legs from my arms. He looks at me, smiling:

"You're a little bastard."

"Why?"

"You're a real bastard. Usually I don't get fucked—on principle. . . . Now why are you laughing? You don't believe me?"

"Sure. But why do what's usual?"

"I don't say it never happens. It's happened a few times. . . but not usually, that's what I mean. Is that all you like to do?"

"No, I like to do everything. I do whatever anyone wants."

"Let me wipe myself off, I'm completely covered. . . ."

"I'll say. What a range! Wait, I'll get you a towel."

I get up and hand him a towel, and wash myself off.

"What time is it?"

"Three."

"At four, I'll go."

"All right. I'll close the curtains, that way I won't have to get up again."

Then back in each other's arms again, his head on my shoulder. I caress him.

"What is *Renaud*, anyway, is that your family name?"

"No, my first name."

"People call you that? *Renaud*? It sounds strange."

"My other Christian name is Jean."

"Ah, your real name is Jean. You decided on *Renaud* for yourself?"

"No, my name is actually Jean-Renaud, but Jean-Renaud's a little too long."

"Still, *Renaud* sounds funny. Like the name of a car."

"You don't like it?"

"No, wait. . . I'm going to call you. . . *Rocky*. Yes, *Rocky*'s good. You like the way it sounds, *Rocky*?"

"It sounds all right to me, if you like it."

"OK, *Rocky*, that's what it is: *Rocky*. What do you have to say for yourself, *Rock*?"

"There you go, getting familiar right off—you could make it *Rock*. I like that, I like that even better."

"OK, *Rock*. . . anything you say, *Rock*. . . I'm thinking about my friend. About the scene he's going to make when I come in."

"Maybe he'll be asleep."

"Dream on. I know him, the bastard, you can be sure he hasn't slept a wink. I know him. He's waiting up for me, wondering where I've gone. It bothers me a lot."

"The you should leave now."

"I wonder what I'll tell him. . . . Maybe that I went to the *Sept*."

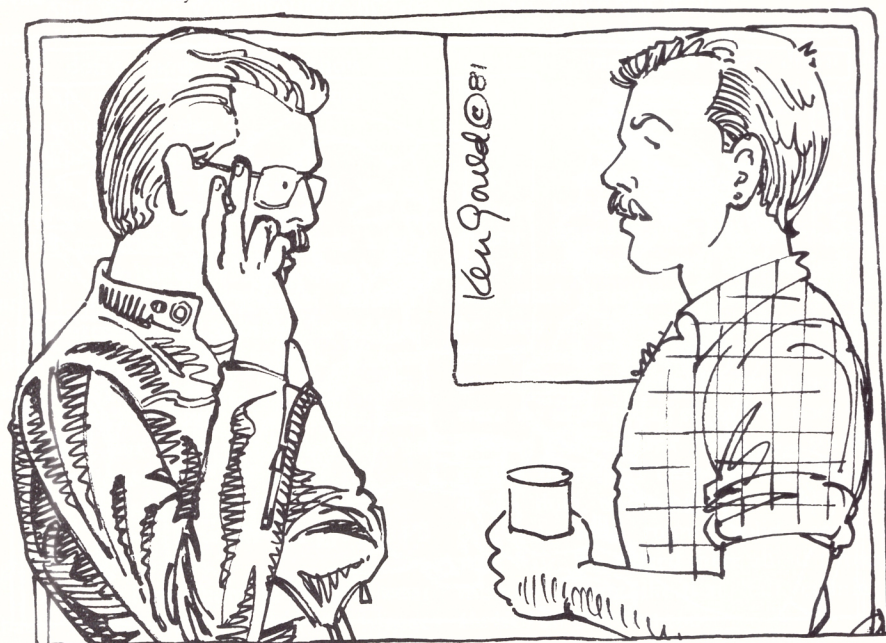
Suppose that's where *he* went?"

"No, he never goes out. That's why we argue all the time."

"You like to go out a lot?"

"Sure, I'd like to go out every night. Not to cruise, you know. Just to be somewhere, you know, where there are people, dance, have some fun, go to the movies, even to the theater, *do* something. But he just comes home from work, he watches television, and bang! right into bed. He doesn't even wait for the late show. I watch the late show alone—some life!"

"Where did you meet him?"



"I won't be able to trust you until
I see the whole package UNWRAPPED!"



"Monsieur has very delicate ears . . . it's seven. Or maybe eight, I don't know. Look for yourself."

He does not know how to read a watch.

It was eight o'clock.

He comes back to bed.

"Now what are you doing?"

"I'm going to stay, since you don't want me to leave."

"You can leave if you want. Only it seems like a funny time to get up, since we went to sleep around four."

"I didn't sleep the whole night."

"Hmmm . . . Do you have to go to work?"

"Usually. But I'm too tired."

"All right, but make up your mind. I want to get some sleep."

He had turned on the light, although the room is light enough for him to get dressed. And he's humming. I groan.

"What?"

"I'm trying to sleep."

"You mean you're not even going to get up to say goodbye?"

"What a pain in the ass you are! Come and say goodbye yourself."

"You'll have to close the door!"

"No, just shut it behind you."

But I get up all the same, to kiss him goodbye. He leaves. And I sleep until noon.

[Saw him again very often, though we never slept together again. After this episode, he broke off with his friend, for which, he says, he's very grateful to me: it had to end someday, and it's much better this way. He's always very pleasant, very sweet, and invariably in a good mood. When he found out that I was a writer, he said he hoped I'd write something about him.]

Didier

Sunday, April 2, 1978

With Didier, the problem of the definition of a *trick* recurs, a problem already encountered with regard to Jacques's brother, whom I knew before beginning this journal, but only slightly, and therefore decided to introduce here. I met Didier on Sunday evening, had dinner with him yesterday, slept with him a second time last night, and am to see him again tonight. Perhaps he will be more than a trick. But at the moment of writing, Wednesday, he can still be considered as such.

I met him at the *Manhattan*. He was sitting in the little room that has banquettes all around the walls, and I noticed that he was looking at me. He was certainly not my type, nor was he the type generally encountered at the *Manhattan*; but rather very young, with smooth, straight, rather long, very light brown hair that fell over his forehead in a huge shock, regular features, no moustache. He seemed very solidly built, with broad shoulders and very muscular thighs, their curves well defined by his jeans. Our eyes met several times, with increasing insistence. I thought he was cute, was flattered by his attention; he looked nice, lively, and smiling. I was in a bad mood, and I wanted to talk to someone agreeable and friendly. But another boy, who was sitting opposite him, had gone over to sit beside him, offering him a cigarette, or a light. They talked for a moment, but each time I passed or turned my head toward him, he looked up at me, and finally we exchanged a broad smile before bursting out laughing. Nevertheless, since he wasn't alone, I stayed where I was.

A little later, when I was standing on the steps that separate the little room with the banquettes from the dance floor, he stood up, put on his windbreaker, which he had kept with him, and stood at the entrance to the other corridor that leads to the checkroom and the stairs. Since he was still smiling when I passed close by, I spoke to him:

"Are you French?"

"Yes, why?"

"I don't know. You look a little like a foreigner. I don't know exactly why."

"Funny. Everyone always says that. It must be true."

"If your admirer sees us together, I'm going to get myself killed."

"What admirer?"

"The boy you were talking to just now."

"Oh, him . . . no. We just discovered we have the same first name."

"What's his?"

"Didier."

It was almost two, everyone was leaving, a line was forming in front of the checkroom, and I moved with it to keep my place. Didier stayed where he was. When I got my leather jacket though, he went up the stairs at the same time I did, but then immediately went out onto the street. I stayed inside for a few seconds to put on my things. When I came out, I saw him waiting on the sidewalk, opposite the door. I went over to him and asked if he was going to *Pim's*. No, he didn't have any money.

"Almost everyone here is going to *Pim's*, I think."

"What about you?"

"No, not me. I never go there. Besides, I don't have any money either."

I went to get my bicycle, which was chained to a post a little farther down the street. He walked off alone, toward the Seine, then stopped. I caught up with him. We were then on a street whose name I didn't know, at the other

end of the Rue des Anglais from the Boulevard Saint-Germain [*The Rue Lagrange*]. I didn't want to proposition him, first of all because I was turned on by his cruising me, and also because his declaration about having no money made me suspect that he was some sort of hustler. Clearly he corresponded in no way to the typical image of the *Manhattan* habitue. We walked toward the river, then started off to the left, and reached the Boulevard Saint-Germain.

[*Thursday, April 6, after a third night spent with him. Is there still any question of a trick here? Yesterday he referred to Monday evening* ("No, it was Sunday." "Oh, right, there was a gap—we didn't see each other on Monday . . ."), *remarking that it was amazing we had met at all: "Because even granting that you were looking for someone at the Manhattan, you weren't looking for someone like me. I'm nothing at all like the local product.*

"And besides I never go to the Manhattan, I go to the Keller when I go out at all. But I'm glad it happened." Last night we dropped in at the Manhattan together and something rather funny happened. Didier was playing the pinball machine, and I was watching him; a boy whom I knew slightly came over to me and, following my eyes, said: "Cute kid, hm? I've tried cruising him, but no luck."]

Between the Rue Saint-Jacques and Saint-Germain-des-Pres, I learned that he lived out in Meudon, that he was in an agricultural lycée near Reims, that he was on his Easter vacation, that he was leaving Friday for the Ile de Re, and that usually he went to the Keller.

"I've only been there once, and didn't have a particularly exciting time.

What's it like?"

"Oh, it's nothing special. I don't know why I go there."

"Is it much more seriously leather than the *Manhattan*?"

"A little. About half the guys there are really into leather. The others aren't."

At the start of our conversation, I learned that he had only dollars with him, which his father had given him. He had thought he could change them for francs at the Invalides air terminal exchange booth which had been open the preceding Sunday, but which was closed today. To his repeated insistence that he did not have one *sou* of ready money on him, I answered correspondingly that as a matter of fact all I had with *me* were *francs*. I am now ashamed to admit that this raised in me a certain suspicion about him, and when he offered to walk my bicycle for me, since I had complained about having to drag it along, it

suddenly occurred to me that he might jump onto it and ride away. It was only when he began speaking in great detail about his lycée, about the agricultural *bac* and his program, that I was finally convinced he wasn't just stringing me along.

The nature of our encounter, and our respective intentions and destinations were still vague. I even asked him where he was going:

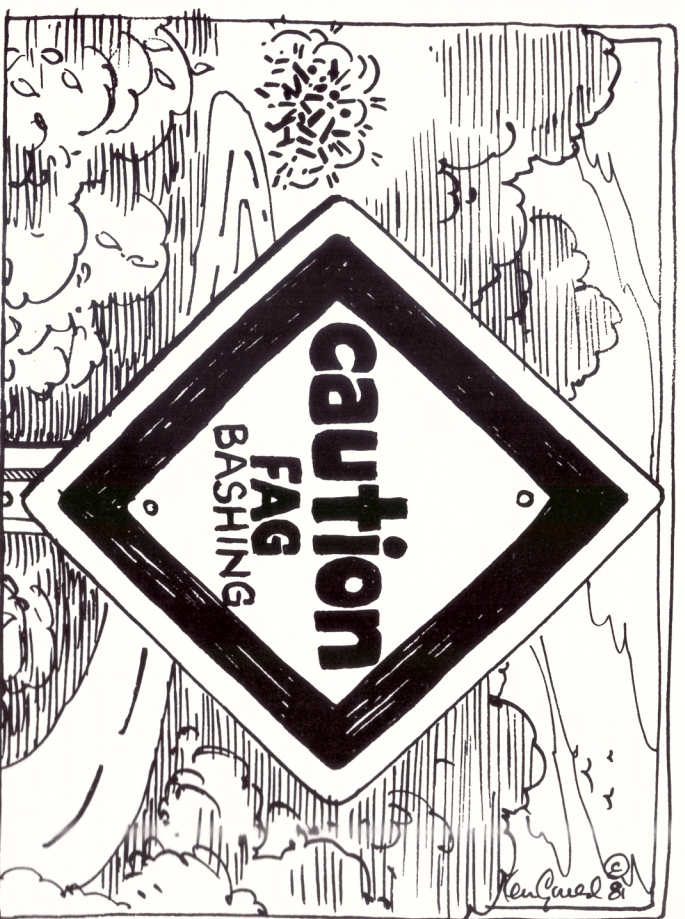
"I don't know. It doesn't matter. I like walking."

"Just anywhere?"

"Sure. The other night I walked all the way home."

"To Meudon? That's a long way."

"Not all the way. But I didn't take the shortest route. I walked to the Eroile, through the Bois de Boulogne, and Saint-Cloud. At Saint-Cloud I took a bus."



"That's a pretty long walk all right, especially starting from the *Keller*. But isn't it dangerous, walking through the Bois de Boulogne at night?"

"Hell, it takes more than that to scare me."

When we crossed the Place Saint-Germain-des-Pres, I decided it was better to bring matters to a head, so as not to take him ultimately too far out of his way:

"I can't ask you back to my place, there's someone there. But I also have a maid's room, in another building. It's not so terrific . . ."

To which he made no reply, and we walked on to the Rue du Bac, talking about other things. I learned that the agricultural lycee nearest Paris was at Saint-Germain-en-Laye, and that fifty percent of the students in his school were from the city.

"Fifty percent! I wouldn't have thought that. I imagined almost all of

the guys who went to agricultural lycees were people who would be inheriting land. What makes a boy brought up in town want to go to an agricultural lycee? A yearning to get back to the land?"

"No, no, at least not for me. You know, you can do all kinds of things with an agricultural degree. You don't have to become a farmer."

"But it's very specialized, isn't it?"

"No, not really. There's a lot of math, for instance. And we have a rotten teacher on top of it, who thinks the regular manuals are lousy, so we have to do the specialized math programs. And then, of course, we also have to do (but here came words I'm not sure of, starting with zoology and even one I never heard of, which I've forgotten, ending in *-techny*)."

"*What -techny?*"

"Something-techny, it's plants."

"Yes, of course."

We had reached the corner of the

Boulevard and the Rue du Bac, in front of the *Escurial*.

"So what are we doing? I've got to know, because if I'm alone, I'm going home, over there, to the left, and if not, we'll go straight ahead."

"Whatever you like. I don't want to hassle you."

"You aren't hassling me. I'm just sorry I can't take you to my place. The maid's room is kind of grim. There aren't any records, no books, nothing."

"Oh, I don't care about that. What would you like?"

"So let's go."

"Fine. I should also warn you—there's a lot of stairs to climb."

When we got to the room, he said it wasn't as bad as all that.

"I know. I always make it sound worse than it is, so then it's a pleasant surprise."

He wanted to use the toilet, and he found on top of the refrigerator a roll of toilet paper that I had never noticed, and which he took away with him. When he came back, I was lying on the bed, my shoes and socks off. He sat down beside me. I was leafing through an issue of *Egoiste*, and I showed him an interview with Yvette Horner, whose name he had mentioned much earlier at the *Manhattan*. (I: "Judging from the music, they're really trying to tell us we have to clear out." He: "Yes, next they'll be playing Yvette Horner.")

"Poor thing, the interviewer isn't very kind to her."

"I know—even the title!" ("Vulgarity is something I don't really understand.")

He asked me what I do.

"I write."

"What?"

"Novels."

"What kind of novels?"

"Oh, the boring kind. You know, the kind that gets printed in an edition of three thousand."

AT LUNCH

It's been two months since he's been kissed.
He sits, observing a hairy wrist,
And says, as the hot tide rises, that no,
He has no plans for the evening: he'll go.

—John Harris



"No, I mean, what *type* of novel? Tell me—I read everything."

"Something to do with the *nouveau roman*, I guess you could say."

"Back at the lycee, they can't believe the kind of books I read. Artaud, for instance—and not just any Artaud. I've read his *Heligabale*, for instance. You know what that is?"

"Yes."

"Day before yesterday a girlfriend of mine saw me reading that and she was blown away."

"There are girls there too?"

"Oh sure, more and more of them. In our lycee, there are more than thirty now, out of two-hundred and sixty. And one day in study hall (I never work in study hall, anyway. My grades are good, I don't need to), a proctor caught me reading an issue of *Opera*, a thing about *Das Rheingold*, you know *Das Rheingold*?"

"Yes."

"It turns me on, because I'm something of a mystic myself."

"But isn't it *Parsifal* that has more to do with mysticism?"

"They all do. God, all those stories of gods and heroes. They're so tangled."

"Yes, nobody's ever really figured it all out. But some of the librettos are better than others, in Wagner. *Tristan*, for instance . . ."

I was caressing his forearm, which was resting on one of my hips or on my stomach. We must have jabbered on like that for a good hour, almost entirely about his school. There are no dormitories, but rooms shared by four boarders. This year the doors were taken off to make it easier to keep the residents under surveillance, because all kinds of things were going on.

"They were? I should think if you were four to a room, that would limit

the possibilities, wouldn't it?"

"What do you mean?"

"I don't know: there's always at least one who doesn't fit in or who won't cooperate, isn't there? Someone you have to watch out for—"

"Oh, it's not what you think. Mostly it's about bringing food back to the rooms."

"Sorry: I have a dirty mind. Bringing back food?"

"Sure, there's never anything to eat at school. I lost five pounds right away. So I began bringing in a few cans of stuff, sardines, pate, everything. Then everyone did it, and there were real banquets all night long. You should have seen us. Cassoulets and everything. We really started cooking."

"There's a farm attached to the lycee, isn't there?"

"Sure, there's a sort of chateau, and a little farm. And a whole flock of chickens disappeared. We cooked every one of them."

"But how did you kill them?"

"It's not very complicated, you know—especially chickens!"

"No? It always seemed such an elaborate business to me. But I guess it's harder with rabbits. And ducks—don't they run around for an hour after you've cut their heads off?"

"Yes, but nowadays, you know, it's different. You have them all lined up in a row, the chickens or the ducks, and there's this little needle that comes down, click—in fact, it's like that with everything now. It's all automated. It used to be the horses that were really hard to kill."

"I don't think I really want to talk about that. I once had a horse I was very fond of, and he had an accident and broke something, and they sent him to the slaughterhouse."

"Yes, with horses, there's only one

place you can be sure of getting them. If you miss . . . it's like the steers: if you mess up a steer, he gets away. He can break out of anything. Just break bars as big as this. You really have to know what you're doing. The guys who do that are not real sociable to begin with, you know. But after a while, living in all that blood all the time, it drives them completely nuts. . . ."

"Uh-huh. Why don't we talk about something else?"

So we went back to talking about the rooms, where plants of all kinds were cultivated.

"But the school authorities must know how to recognize marijuana plants, don't they?"

"They do, but the women who take care of the rooms, they just ask us what this one is, it's so pretty. . . . Before, there used to be really decent supervisors. They used to come into the rooms and there'd be the smell of grass, or hash, even, strong enough to knock you down, but they'd close the door and say, 'I'll come back some other time.' But now that's all different. They really hunt us down now."

Except for vacations, the students could get out only on Wednesday afternoons. Sometimes they went to Reims, but there's nothing much to do there. "I don't exactly fit in there, with all the peasants. God, what dolts they are. Just my dog collar gets them all upset."

In fact, I forgot to note that he was wearing around his neck, quite tightly, a simple iron chain with rather large links.

"Is that a real dog collar?"

"Sure, guaranteed: seven francs twenty. You thought it came from Cartier's, didn't you? I went into a pet shop and made them show me all the collars they had: isn't there one a little bigger than this, a little smaller than that? Finally



the girl said: 'But what kind of dog is it for?' I told her: 'It's not for a dog, it's for me.' You should have seen her face."

"But how do you get it open? Is there a clasp?"

"No, just one link that isn't completely closed. But it never comes open. It's really well designed. Of course, you don't want your puppy to get away."

Didier walks through Reims with his schoolmates. They know his tastes. The other day they went into a record store, and immediately saw their opportunity, there were nudgings, whisperings. "They said, 'Just your meat,' and of course it was some poor queen, not at all my type, I told them they'd have to find something else."

"Straights are all like that, they think fags will sleep with anything in pants between fifteen and eighty-five."

"But I'll tell you, the old record salesman would have loved a young student from the lycee. I could have gotten *Rbeingold* and all the others for the price of just one forty-five."

He's glad to be going to Ile de Re. It's great there now, there's even a new disco. "It's my grandfather who sent me there. He saw I was going crazy at home. And as soon as I came in I saw the kind of place it was, all right, I told myself, this changes everything."

"But the clientele must get pretty stale, doesn't it?"

"Oh, you know, there are guys from all over, guys I've seen again here in Paris, in the bars. Besides, I never stay long—I'm the one who keeps it from getting stale."

"Yes, I see. That's always a nice feeling."

I don't know at which moment in the conversation the silence fell. We looked into each other's eyes, he smiled, leaned over toward me; I put one arm around his neck and we kissed. The next moment, I was lying on top of him. His

body was solid, muscular, with a few traces of baby fat. Five minutes later, I suggested that we get on the other side of the bed, which is to say, on the other bed, which is a little wider and more comfortable. Then came the problem of the lamp—too strong but which we didn't want to turn off. He was the one who covered the shade with an assortment of towels and rags. Meanwhile I had got between the sheets. He joined me there, showing—as I did—a good deal of enthusiasm. We kissed frantically, we squeezed our arms and legs around each other. He also liked licking the hair on my chest, or at the pit of my throat, which turned me on a lot. In five minutes, we had pulled the bed completely apart. I sucked his cock, which was quite large, though the head was slightly out of proportion to the shaft, which was thick and rather long. Then I licked his ass for a long time.

I have forgotten to note that while we were undressing, he asked me whether or not I wanted him to keep his dog collar on. Yes, why not. This along with the reference to the *Keller*, suggested that he was probably a masochist to some degree, and I was very eager to turn him on as much as possible. But I wasn't sure what to do. His erections were irregular. Biting his nipples had no special effect on his cock, nor did several ventures in the directions of (very light) slaps, which provoked no reaction either way. What gave him the biggest hard-on was for me to hug him as hard as possible, and to wiggle around on top of him very energetically.

After having covered his asshole with saliva, I noticed that the insides of his thighs and the back of his balls showed signs of an irritation, which worried me a little. That I was about to start fucking him had no effect on his cock, but he did nothing to prevent me; anything but. Still, my first attempt got nowhere.

I got up to look for a tube of Hyalomiel. When I stretched out beside him again, my cock against his and he licking my neck, I hugged him very hard, until he got a complete erection. Then I rubbed some cream into his asshole, and followed it with my cock. I raised his legs and penetrated him without difficulty. The noises he made could have come from pain as well as pleasure, but he did not push me away. The backs of my knees against the insides of my elbows, my hands under his shoulder blades, I fucked him for a long time. He hugged my head against his. Or else he licked the pit of my throat, which I encouraged him to do, repeating, "Yes, yes, lick me," not without thinking of the dog collar. Once or twice I ran a finger inside the collar and, by slightly twisting my hand, tightened it around his neck. But I received no special indication that I should continue doing it.

Sometimes I straightened up, letting his legs down, and played with his cock, which was still not very hard. Or, my legs extended, supported on my arms, I fucked him harder and harder, hoping that his muffled cries were of pleasure. While I was doing this he caressed my chest.

A little tired after spending what must have been a good half-hour inside his ass, I knelt down and pulled him up and over me. We were then face to face, my cock still inside him, he squatting so as to straddle my thighs, his arms around my shoulders. When I started playing with his cock again in this position, my hand between his belly and mine, he managed to get very hard. His moans, shorter and closer together, became very specific, less subject to interpretation. And that was how he came, very copiously. Then I tipped him over onto his back, raised his legs again, and in the same position as before, I came a moment or two later. Then, my cock

still inside him, I slid over to the left, his thighs against my belly, his legs still around my arms. We lay that way for a long moment, smiling, kissing, and finally sleeping a little.

His dried come was sticking to my belly and my chest. I got up to wash a little, as did he. Back in bed, I watched him standing in front of the sink, as he moved a washcloth over his torso:

"Nice pair of legs you have there, kid."

"They look good with my boots. That's another thing that drives them crazy in Reims. I have these boots that come up to here, to my knees, and I wear them with very tight jeans. You should see their faces."

"Yes, I can imagine. Do you want to sleep here?"

"I don't know. What do you think?"

"Do whatever you want. If you go, I'll leave with you. I'm not about to sleep here alone, believe me."

"I have to go to the dentist tomorrow morning. My appointment's at eleven."

"What time do you have to be up?"

"What's the nearest Metro stop?"

"Bac."

"That goes straight to Montparnasse, right?"

"Right."

"Oh, nine-thirty, then."

"Well, there's an alarm clock here. But I don't know how it works. Try to set it yourself."

He set the alarm, and came back to bed. We slept very well, lying pressed together, he with his back to me, our legs bent and parallel, my arms around his chest.

When the alarm went off, he didn't get up:

"How many stops to Montparnasse?"

"Four."

"Then I can stay here another minute."

And he fell back to sleep. But I didn't. Fifteen minutes later, I shook him and asked if he still wanted to go to the dentist:

"I don't know."

Nevertheless, he got up and dressed quite rapidly. The night before, just before we fell asleep, I had offered him my telephone number. He had said he was about to ask me for it. He now wrote it on a Metro ticket. Then he kissed me and closed the door behind him.

[Thursday, April 6, eight o'clock: two phone calls from him this afternoon, the first at five-thirty. I still didn't know what I was doing in the evening, and I asked him to call back between seven and eight. When he called back, I had made an appointment with Etienne for dinner, so I told Didier I couldn't see him this evening. He leaves tomorrow for Ile de Re, and then returns directly to school. I feel a certain remorse, because he's extremely nice (as only making love with him can fully testify), and I enjoyed his company. Regret, too, because Etienne, who is physically much more my type, is of an aggressiveness which augurs badly for our future relations.]

[Saw him again very frequently. I even had a kind of little affair with him, interrupted by my reconciliation with Tony. Once I went to bed with him and Etienne together, and he would not have been adverse, I think, to a reprise of this kind with Tony. But Tony is not at all interested in him.]

The specialization of his sexuality appears to be intensifying: he functions in a milieu about which I know nothing. But I see him quite often, and we are very good friends.]

MARVIN D. HELDEMAN, M.D.

Specializing in

DERMATOLOGICAL
SURGERY

and Treatment of

SKIN AND VENEREAL
DISEASES

Amoeba Tested and Treated

135 Central Park West

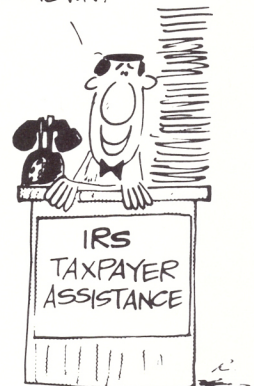
(Corner of 73rd St.)

N.Y.C.

Call for Appointment

873-0909

WE GOT A TOLL FREE
NUMBER...FREE PUBLICATIONS,
AND THE BEST COUNTER
IN TOWN.



Free help

Got a tax question? The answer may be in one of the free IRS publications — there are over 90 topics in all — available by using the handy order form in your tax package. Or call the toll-free IRS taxpayer assistance number listed in your telephone directory.

A public service message from
the Internal Revenue Service.