BRAVE NEW WORLD

by

Aldous Huxley

(1894-1963)

Chapter One

A SQUAT grey building of only thirty-four stories. Over the main en-

trance the words, CENTRAL LONDON HATCHERY AND CONDITIONING

CENTRE, and, in a shield, the World State's motto, COMMUNITY, IDEN-

TITY, STABILITY.

The enormous room on the ground floor faced towards the north. Cold

for all the summer beyond the panes, for all the tropical heat of the

room itself, a harsh thin light glared through the windows, hungrily

seeking some draped lay figure, some pallid shape of academic goose-

flesh, but finding only the glass and nickel and bleakly shining porce-

lain of a laboratory. Wintriness responded to wintriness. The overalls of

the workers were white, their hands gloved with a pale corpse-

coloured rubber. The light was frozen, dead, a ghost. Only from the

yellow barrels of the microscopes did it borrow a certain rich and living

substance, lying along the polished tubes like butter, streak after

luscious streak in long recession down the work tables.

"And this," said the Director opening the door, "is the Fertilizing

Room."

Bent over their instruments, three hundred Fertilizers were plunged, as

the Director of Hatcheries and Conditioning entered the room, in the

scarcely breathing silence, the absent-minded, soliloquizing hum or

whistle, of absorbed concentration. A troop of newly arrived students,

very young, pink and callow, followed nervously, rather abjectly, at the

Director's heels. Each of them carried a notebook, in which, whenever

the great man spoke, he desperately scribbled. Straight from the

horse's mouth. It was a rare privilege. The D. H. C. for Central London

always made a point of personally conducting his new students round

the various departments.

"Just to give you a general idea," he would explain to them. For of

course some sort of general idea they must have, if they were to do

their work intelligently-though as little of one, if they were to be good

and happy members of society, as possible. For particulars, as every

one knows, make for virtue and happiness; generalities are intellectu-

ally necessary evils. Not philosophers but fret-sawyers and stamp col-

lectors compose the backbone of society.

"To-morrow," he would add, smiling at them with a slightly menacing

geniality, "you'll be settling down to serious work. You won't have time

for generalities. Meanwhile ..."

Meanwhile, it was a privilege. Straight from the horse's mouth into the

notebook. The boys scribbled like mad.

Tall and rather thin but upright, the Director advanced into the room.

He had a long chin and big rather prominent teeth, just covered, when

he was not talking, by his full, floridly curved lips. Old, young? Thirty?

Fifty? Fifty-five? It was hard to say. And anyhow the question didn't

arise; in this year of stability, A. F. 632, it didn't occur to you to ask it.

"I shall begin at the beginning," said the D.H.C. and the more zealous

students recorded his intention in their notebooks: Begin at the begin-

ning. "These," he waved his hand, "are the incubators." And opening

an insulated door he showed them racks upon racks of numbered test-

tubes. "The week's supply of ova. Kept," he explained, "at blood heat;

whereas the male gametes," and here he opened another door, "they

have to be kept at thirty-five instead of thirty-seven. Full blood heat

sterilizes." Rams wrapped in theremogene beget no lambs.

Still leaning against the incubators he gave them, while the pencils

scurried illegibly across the pages, a brief description of the modern

fertilizing process; spoke first, of course, of its surgical introduc-

tion-"the operation undergone voluntarily for the good of Society, not

to mention the fact that it carries a bonus amounting to six months'

salary"; continued with some account of the technique for preserving

the excised ovary alive and actively developing; passed on to a consid-

eration of optimum temperature, salinity, viscosity; referred to the liq-

uor in which the detached and ripened eggs were kept; and, leading

his charges to the work tables, actually showed them how this liquor

was drawn off from the test-tubes; how it was let out drop by drop

onto the specially warmed slides of the microscopes; how the eggs

which it contained were inspected for abnormalities, counted and

transferred to a porous receptacle; how (and he now took them to

watch the operation) this receptacle was immersed in a warm bouillon

containing free-swimming spermatozoa-at a minimum concentration

of one hundred thousand per cubic centimetre, he insisted; and how,

after ten minutes, the container was lifted out of the liquor and its

contents re-examined; how, if any of the eggs remained unfertilized, it

was again immersed, and, if necessary, yet again; how the fertilized

ova went back to the incubators; where the Alphas and Betas re-

mained until definitely bottled; while the Gammas, Deltas and Epsilons

were brought out again, after only thirty-six hours, to undergo Bo-

kanovsky's Process.

"Bokanovsky's Process," repeated the Director, and the students un-

derlined the words in their little notebooks.

One egg, one embryo, one adult-normality. But a bokanovskified egg

will bud, will proliferate, will divide. From eight to ninety-six buds, and

every bud will grow into a perfectly formed embryo, and every embryo

into a full-sized adult. Making ninety-six human beings grow where

only one grew before. Progress.

"Essentially," the D.H.C. concluded, "bokanovskification consists of a

series of arrests of development. We check the normal growth and,

paradoxically enough, the egg responds by budding."

Responds by budding. The pencils were busy.

He pointed. On a very slowly moving band a rack-full of test-tubes was

entering a large metal box, another, rack-full was emerging. Machinery

faintly purred. It took eight minutes for the tubes to go through, he

told them. Eight minutes of hard X-rays being about as much as an

egg can stand. A few died; of the rest, the least susceptible divided

into two; most put out four buds; some eight; all were returned to the

incubators, where the buds began to develop; then, after two days,

were suddenly chilled, chilled and checked. Two, four, eight, the buds

in their turn budded; and having budded were dosed almost to death

with alcohol; consequently burgeoned again and having budded-bud

out of bud out of bud-were thereafter-further arrest being generally

fatal-left to develop in peace. By which time the original egg was in a

fair way to becoming anything from eight to ninety-six embryos- a

prodigious improvement, you will agree, on nature. Identical twins-but

not in piddling twos and threes as in the old viviparous days, when an

egg would sometimes accidentally divide; actually by dozens, by

scores at a time.

"Scores," the Director repeated and flung out his arms, as though he

were distributing largesse. "Scores."

But one of the students was fool enough to ask where the advantage

lay.

"My good boy!" The Director wheeled sharply round on him. "Can't you

see? Can't you see?" He raised a hand; his expression was solemn.

"Bokanovsky's Process is one of the major instruments of social stabil-

ity!"

Major instruments of social stability.

Standard men and women; in uniform batches. The whole of a small

factory staffed with the products of a single bokanovskified egg.

"Ninety-six identical twins working ninety-six identical machines!" The

voice was almost tremulous with enthusiasm. "You really know where

you are. For the first time in history." He quoted the planetary motto.

"Community, Identity, Stability." Grand words. "If we could bo-

kanovskify indefinitely the whole problem would be solved."

Solved by standard Gammas, unvarying Deltas, uniform Epsilons. Mil-

lions of identical twins. The principle of mass production at last applied

to biology.

"But, alas," the Director shook his head, "we can't bokanovskify indefi-

nitely."

Ninety-six seemed to be the limit; seventy-two a good average. From

the same ovary and with gametes of the same male to manufacture as

many batches of identical twins as possible-that was the best (sadly a

second best) that they could do. And even that was difficult.

"For in nature it takes thirty years for two hundred eggs to reach ma-

turity. But our business is to stabilize the population at this moment,

here and now. Dribbling out twins over a quarter of a century-what

would be the use of that?"

Obviously, no use at all. But Podsnap's Technique had immensely ac-

celerated the process of ripening. They could make sure of at least a

hundred and fifty mature eggs within two years. Fertilize and bo-

kanovskify-in other words, multiply by seventy-two-and you get an

average of nearly eleven thousand brothers and sisters in a hundred

and fifty batches of identical twins, all within two years of the same

age.

"And in exceptional cases we can make one ovary yield us over fifteen

thousand adult individuals."

Beckoning to a fair-haired, ruddy young man who happened to be

passing at the moment. "Mr. Foster," he called. The ruddy young man

approached. "Can you tell us the record for a single ovary, Mr. Foster?"

"Sixteen thousand and twelve in this Centre," Mr. Foster replied with-

out hesitation. He spoke very quickly, had a vivacious blue eye, and

took an evident pleasure in quoting figures. "Sixteen thousand and

twelve; in one hundred and eighty-nine batches of identicals. But of

course they've done much better," he rattled on, "in some of the tropi-

cal Centres. Singapore has often produced over sixteen thousand five

hundred; and Mombasa has actually touched the seventeen thousand

mark. But then they have unfair advantages. You should see the way a

negro ovary responds to pituitary! It's quite astonishing, when you're

used to working with European material. Still," he added, with a laugh

(but the light of combat was in his eyes and the lift of his chin was

challenging), "still, we mean to beat them if we can. I'm working on a

wonderful Delta-Minus ovary at this moment. Only just eighteen

months old. Over twelve thousand seven hundred children already, ei-

ther decanted or in embryo. And still going strong. We'll beat them

yet."

"That's the spirit I like!" cried the Director, and clapped Mr. Foster on

the shoulder. "Come along with us, and give these boys the benefit of

your expert knowledge."

Mr. Foster smiled modestly. "With pleasure." They went.

In the Bottling Room all was harmonious bustle and ordered activity.

Flaps of fresh sow's peritoneum ready cut to the proper size came

shooting up in little lifts from the Organ Store in the sub-basement.

Whizz and then, click! the lift-hatches hew open; the bottle-liner had

only to reach out a hand, take the flap, insert, smooth-down, and be-

fore the lined bottle had had time to travel out of reach along the end-

less band, whizz, click! another flap of peritoneum had shot up from

the depths, ready to be slipped into yet another bottle, the next of that

slow interminable procession on the band.

Next to the Liners stood the Matriculators. The procession advanced;

one by one the eggs were transferred from their test-tubes to the

larger containers; deftly the peritoneal lining was slit, the morula

dropped into place, the saline solution poured in ... and already the

bottle had passed, and it was the turn of the labellers. Heredity, date

of fertilization, membership of Bokanovsky Group-details were trans-

ferred from test-tube to bottle. No longer anonymous, but named,

identified, the procession marched slowly on; on through an opening in

the wall, slowly on into the Social Predestination Room.

"Eighty-eight cubic metres of card-index," said Mr. Foster with relish,

as they entered.

"Containing all the relevant information," added the Director.

"Brought up to date every morning."

"And co-ordinated every afternoon."

"On the basis of which they make their calculations."

"So many individuals, of such and such quality," said Mr. Foster.

"Distributed in such and such quantities."

"The optimum Decanting Rate at any given moment."

"Unforeseen wastages promptly made good."

"Promptly," repeated Mr. Foster. "If you knew the amount of overtime I

had to put in after the last Japanese earthquake!" He laughed good-

humouredly and shook his head.

"The Predestinators send in their figures to the Fertilizers."

"Who give them the embryos they ask for."

"And the bottles come in here to be predestined in detail."

"After which they are sent down to the Embryo Store."

"Where we now proceed ourselves."

And opening a door Mr. Foster led the way down a staircase into the

basement.

The temperature was still tropical. They descended into a thickening

twilight. Two doors and a passage with a double turn insured the cellar

against any possible infiltration of the day.

"Embryos are like photograph film," said Mr. Foster waggishly, as he

pushed open the second door. "They can only stand red light."

And in effect the sultry darkness into which the students now followed

him was visible and crimson, like the darkness of closed eyes on a

summer's afternoon. The bulging flanks of row on receding row and

tier above tier of bottles glinted with innumerable rubies, and among

the rubies moved the dim red spectres of men and women with purple

eyes and all the symptoms of lupus. The hum and rattle of machinery

faintly stirred the air.

"Give them a few figures, Mr. Foster," said the Director, who was tired

of talking.

Mr. Foster was only too happy to give them a few figures.

Two hundred and twenty metres long, two hundred wide, ten high. He

pointed upwards. Like chickens drinking, the students lifted their eyes

towards the distant ceiling.

Three tiers of racks: ground floor level, first gallery, second gallery.

The spidery steel-work of gallery above gallery faded away in all direc-

tions into the dark. Near them three red ghosts were busily unloading

demijohns from a moving staircase.

The escalator from the Social Predestination Room.

Each bottle could be placed on one of fifteen racks, each rack, though

you couldn't see it, was a conveyor traveling at the rate of thirty-three

and a third centimetres an hour. Two hundred and sixty-seven days at

eight metres a day. Two thousand one hundred and thirty-six metres in

all. One circuit of the cellar at ground level, one on the first gallery,

half on the second, and on the two hundred and sixty-seventh morn-

ing, daylight in the Decanting Room. Independent existence-so called.

"But in the interval," Mr. Foster concluded, "we've managed to do a lot

to them. Oh, a very great deal." His laugh was knowing and trium-

phant.

"That's the spirit I like," said the Director once more. "Let's walk

around. You tell them everything, Mr. Foster."

Mr. Foster duly told them.

Told them of the growing embryo on its bed of peritoneum. Made them

taste the rich blood surrogate on which it fed. Explained why it had to

be stimulated with placentin and thyroxin. Told them of the corpus lu-

teum extract. Showed them the jets through which at every twelfth

metre from zero to 2040 it was automatically injected. Spoke of those

gradually increasing doses of pituitary administered during the final

ninety-six metres of their course. Described the artificial maternal cir-

culation installed in every bottle at Metre 112; showed them the reser-

voir of blood-surrogate, the centrifugal pump that kept the liquid mov-

ing over the placenta and drove it through the synthetic lung and

waste product filter. Referred to the embryo's troublesome tendency to

anaemia, to the massive doses of hog's stomach extract and foetal

foal's liver with which, in consequence, it had to be supplied.

Showed them the simple mechanism by means of which, during the

last two metres out of every eight, all the embryos were simultane-

ously shaken into familiarity with movement. Hinted at the gravity of

the so-called "trauma of decanting," and enumerated the precautions

taken to minimize, by a suitable training of the bottled embryo, that

dangerous shock. Told them of the test for sex carried out in the

neighborhood of Metre 200. Explained the system of labelling-a T for

the males, a circle for the females and for those who were destined to

become freemartins a question mark, black on a white ground.

"For of course," said Mr. Foster, "in the vast majority of cases, fertility

is merely a nuisance. One fertile ovary in twelve hundred-that would

really be quite sufficient for our purposes. But we want to have a good

choice. And of course one must always have an enormous margin of

safety. So we allow as many as thirty per cent of the female embryos

to develop normally. The others get a dose of male sex-hormone every

twenty-four metres for the rest of the course. Result: they're decanted

as freemartins-structurally quite normal (except," he had to admit,

"that they do have the slightest tendency to grow beards), but sterile.

Guaranteed sterile. Which brings us at last," continued Mr. Foster, "out

of the realm of mere slavish imitation of nature into the much more in-

teresting world of human invention."

He rubbed his hands. For of course, they didn't content themselves

with merely hatching out embryos: any cow could do that.

"We also predestine and condition. We decant our babies as socialized

human beings, as Alphas or Epsilons, as future sewage workers or fu-

ture ..." He was going to say "future World controllers," but correcting

himself, said "future Directors of Hatcheries," instead.

The D.H.C. acknowledged the compliment with a smile.

They were passing Metre 320 on Rack 11. A young Beta-Minus me-

chanic was busy with screw-driver and spanner on the blood-surrogate

pump of a passing bottle. The hum of the electric motor deepened by

fractions of a tone as he turned the nuts. Down, down ... A final twist,

a glance at the revolution counter, and he was done. He moved two

paces down the line and began the same process on the next pump.

"Reducing the number of revolutions per minute," Mr. Foster explained.

"The surrogate goes round slower; therefore passes through the lung

at longer intervals; therefore gives the embryo less oxygen. Nothing

like oxygen-shortage for keeping an embryo below par." Again he

rubbed his hands.

"But why do you want to keep the embryo below par?" asked an in-

genuous student.

"Ass!" said the Director, breaking a long silence. "Hasn't it occurred to

you that an Epsilon embryo must have an Epsilon environment as well

as an Epsilon heredity?"

It evidently hadn't occurred to him. He was covered with confusion.

"The lower the caste," said Mr. Foster, "the shorter the oxygen." The

first organ affected was the brain. After that the skeleton. At seventy

per cent of normal oxygen you got dwarfs. At less than seventy eye-

less monsters.

"Who are no use at all," concluded Mr. Foster.

Whereas (his voice became confidential and eager), if they could dis-

cover a technique for shortening the period of maturation what a tri-

umph, what a benefaction to Society!

"Consider the horse."

They considered it.

Mature at six; the elephant at ten. While at thirteen a man is not yet

sexually mature; and is only full-grown at twenty. Hence, of course,

that fruit of delayed development, the human intelligence.

"But in Epsilons," said Mr. Foster very justly, "we don't need human in-

telligence."

Didn't need and didn't get it. But though the Epsilon mind was mature

at ten, the Epsilon body was not fit to work till eighteen. Long years of

superfluous and wasted immaturity. If the physical development could

be speeded up till it was as quick, say, as a cow's, what an enormous

saving to the Community!

"Enormous!" murmured the students. Mr. Foster's enthusiasm was in-

fectious.

He became rather technical; spoke of the abnormal endocrine co-

ordination which made men grow so slowly; postulated a germinal mu-

tation to account for it. Could the effects of this germinal mutation be

undone? Could the individual Epsilon embryo be made a revert, by a

suitable technique, to the normality of dogs and cows? That was the

problem. And it was all but solved.

Pilkington, at Mombasa, had produced individuals who were sexually

mature at four and full-grown at six and a half. A scientific triumph.

But socially useless. Six-year-old men and women were too stupid to

do even Epsilon work. And the process was an all-or-nothing one; ei-

ther you failed to modify at all, or else you modified the whole way.

They were still trying to find the ideal compromise between adults of

twenty and adults of six. So far without success. Mr. Foster sighed and

shook his head.

Their wanderings through the crimson twilight had brought them to

the neighborhood of Metre 170 on Rack 9. From this point onwards

Rack 9 was enclosed and the bottle performed the remainder of their

journey in a kind of tunnel, interrupted here and there by openings

two or three metres wide.

"Heat conditioning," said Mr. Foster.

Hot tunnels alternated with cool tunnels. Coolness was wedded to dis-

comfort in the form of hard X-rays. By the time they were decanted

the embryos had a horror of cold. They were predestined to emigrate

to the tropics, to be miner and acetate silk spinners and steel workers.

Later on their minds would be made to endorse the judgment of their

bodies. "We condition them to thrive on heat," concluded Mr. Foster.

"Our colleagues upstairs will teach them to love it."

"And that," put in the Director sententiously, "that is the secret of hap-

piness and virtue-liking what you've got to do. All conditioning aims at

that: making people like their unescapable social destiny."

In a gap between two tunnels, a nurse was delicately probing with a

long fine syringe into the gelatinous contents of a passing bottle. The

students and their guides stood watching her for a few moments in si-

lence.

"Well, Lenina," said Mr. Foster, when at last she withdrew the syringe

and straightened herself up.

The girl turned with a start. One could see that, for all the lupus and

the purple eyes, she was uncommonly pretty.

"Henry!" Her smile flashed redly at him-a row of coral teeth.

"Charming, charming," murmured the Director and, giving her two or

three little pats, received in exchange a rather deferential smile for

himself.

"What are you giving them?" asked Mr. Foster, making his tone very

professional.

"Oh, the usual typhoid and sleeping sickness."

"Tropical workers start being inoculated at Metre 150," Mr. Foster ex-

plained to the students. "The embryos still have gills. We immunize the

fish against the future man's diseases." Then, turning back to Lenina,

"Ten to five on the roof this afternoon," he said, "as usual."

"Charming," said the Director once more, and, with a final pat, moved

away after the others.

On Rack 10 rows of next generation's chemical workers were being

trained in the toleration of lead, caustic soda, tar, chlorine. The first of

a batch of two hundred and fifty embryonic rocket-plane engineers was

just passing the eleven hundred metre mark on Rack 3. A special

mechanism kept their containers in constant rotation. "To improve

their sense of balance," Mr. Foster explained. "Doing repairs on the

outside of a rocket in mid-air is a ticklish job. We slacken off the circu-

lation when they're right way up, so that they're half starved, and

double the flow of surrogate when they're upside down. They learn to

associate topsy-turvydom with well-being; in fact, they're only truly

happy when they're standing on their heads.

"And now," Mr. Foster went on, "I'd like to show you some very inter-

esting conditioning for Alpha Plus Intellectuals. We have a big batch of

them on Rack 5. First Gallery level," he called to two boys who had

started to go down to the ground floor.

"They're round about Metre 900," he explained. "You can't really do

any useful intellectual conditioning till the foetuses have lost their tails.

Follow me."

But the Director had looked at his watch. "Ten to three," he said. "No

time for the intellectual embryos, I'm afraid. We must go up to the

Nurseries before the children have finished their afternoon sleep."

Mr. Foster was disappointed. "At least one glance at the Decanting

Room," he pleaded.

"Very well then." The Director smiled indulgently. "Just one glance."

Chapter Two

MR. FOSTER was left in the Decanting Room. The D.H.C. and his stu-

dents stepped into the nearest lift and were carried up to the fifth

floor.

INFANT NURSERIES. NEO-PAVLOVIAN CONDITIONING ROOMS, an-

nounced the notice board.

The Director opened a door. They were in a large bare room, very

bright and sunny; for the whole of the southern wall was a single win-

dow. Half a dozen nurses, trousered and jacketed in the regulation

white viscose-linen uniform, their hair aseptically hidden under white

caps, were engaged in setting out bowls of roses in a long row across

the floor. Big bowls, packed tight with blossom. Thousands of petals,

ripe-blown and silkily smooth, like the cheeks of innumerable little

cherubs, but of cherubs, in that bright light, not exclusively pink and

Aryan, but also luminously Chinese, also Mexican, also apoplectic with

too much blowing of celestial trumpets, also pale as death, pale with

the posthumous whiteness of marble.

The nurses stiffened to attention as the D.H.C. came in.

"Set out the books," he said curtly.

In silence the nurses obeyed his command. Between the rose bowls

the books were duly set out-a row of nursery quartos opened invit-

ingly each at some gaily coloured image of beast or fish or bird.

"Now bring in the children."

They hurried out of the room and returned in a minute or two, each

pushing a kind of tall dumb-waiter laden, on all its four wire-netted

shelves, with eight-month-old babies, all exactly alike (a Bokanovsky

Group, it was evident) and all (since their caste was Delta) dressed in

khaki.

"Put them down on the floor."

The infants were unloaded.

"Now turn them so that they can see the flowers and books."

Turned, the babies at once fell silent, then began to crawl towards

those clusters of sleek colours, those shapes so gay and brilliant on

the white pages. As they approached, the sun came out of a momen-

tary eclipse behind a cloud. The roses flamed up as though with a sud-

den passion from within; a new and profound significance seemed to

suffuse the shining pages of the books. From the ranks of the crawling

babies came little squeals of excitement, gurgles and twitterings of

pleasure.

The Director rubbed his hands. "Excellent!" he said. "It might almost

have been done on purpose."

The swiftest crawlers were already at their goal. Small hands reached

out uncertainly, touched, grasped, unpetaling the transfigured roses,

crumpling the illuminated pages of the books. The Director waited until

all were happily busy. Then, "Watch carefully," he said. And, lifting his

hand, he gave the signal.

The Head Nurse, who was standing by a switchboard at the other end

of the room, pressed down a little lever.

There was a violent explosion. Shriller and ever shriller, a siren

shrieked. Alarm bells maddeningly sounded.

The children started, screamed; their faces were distorted with terror.

"And now," the Director shouted (for the noise was deafening), "now

we proceed to rub in the lesson with a mild electric shock."

He waved his hand again, and the Head Nurse pressed a second lever.

The screaming of the babies suddenly changed its tone. There was

something desperate, almost insane, about the sharp spasmodic yelps

to which they now gave utterance. Their little bodies twitched and

stiffened; their limbs moved jerkily as if to the tug of unseen wires.

"We can electrify that whole strip of floor," bawled the Director in ex-

planation. "But that's enough," he signalled to the nurse.

The explosions ceased, the bells stopped ringing, the shriek of the si-

ren died down from tone to tone into silence. The stiffly twitching bod-

ies relaxed, and what had become the sob and yelp of infant maniacs

broadened out once more into a normal howl of ordinary terror.

"Offer them the flowers and the books again."

The nurses obeyed; but at the approach of the roses, at the mere sight

of those gaily-coloured images of pussy and cock-a-doodle-doo and

baa-baa black sheep, the infants shrank away in horror, the volume of

their howling suddenly increased.

"Observe," said the Director triumphantly, "observe."

Books and loud noises, flowers and electric shocks-already in the in-

fant mind these couples were compromisingly linked; and after two

hundred repetitions of the same or a similar lesson would be wedded

indissolubly. What man has joined, nature is powerless to put asunder.

"They'll grow up with what the psychologists used to call an 'instinc-

tive' hatred of books and flowers. Reflexes unalterably conditioned.

They'll be safe from books and botany all their lives." The Director

turned to his nurses. "Take them away again."

Still yelling, the khaki babies were loaded on to their dumb-waiters

and wheeled out, leaving behind them the smell of sour milk and a

most welcome silence.

One of the students held up his hand; and though he could see quite

well why you couldn't have lower-cast people wasting the Community's

time over books, and that there was always the risk of their reading

something which might undesirably decondition one of their reflexes,

yet ... well, he couldn't understand about the flowers. Why go to the

trouble of making it psychologically impossible for Deltas to like flow-

ers?

Patiently the D.H.C. explained. If the children were made to scream at

the sight of a rose, that was on grounds of high economic policy. Not

so very long ago (a century or thereabouts), Gammas, Deltas, even

Epsilons, had been conditioned to like flowers-flowers in particular and

wild nature in general. The idea was to make them want to be going

out into the country at every available opportunity, and so compel

them to consume transport.

"And didn't they consume transport?" asked the student.

"Quite a lot," the D.H.C. replied. "But nothing else."

Primroses and landscapes, he pointed out, have one grave defect: they

are gratuitous. A love of nature keeps no factories busy. It was decided

to abolish the love of nature, at any rate among the lower classes; to

abolish the love of nature, but not the tendency to consume transport.

For of course it was essential that they should keep on going to the

country, even though they hated it. The problem was to find an eco-

nomically sounder reason for consuming transport than a mere affec-

tion for primroses and landscapes. It was duly found.

"We condition the masses to hate the country," concluded the Director.

"But simultaneously we condition them to love all country sports. At

the same time, we see to it that all country sports shall entail the use

of elaborate apparatus. So that they consume manufactured articles as

well as transport. Hence those electric shocks."

"I see," said the student, and was silent, lost in admiration.

There was a silence; then, clearing his throat, "Once upon a time," the

Director began, "while our Ford was still on earth, there was a little

boy called Reuben Rabinovitch. Reuben was the child of Polish-

speaking parents."

The Director interrupted himself. "You know what Polish is, I suppose?"

"A dead language."

"Like French and German," added another student, officiously showing

off his learning.

"And 'parent'?" questioned the D.H.C.

There was an uneasy silence. Several of the boys blushed. They had

not yet learned to draw the significant but often very fine distinction

between smut and pure science. One, at last, had the courage to raise

a hand.

"Human beings used to be ..." he hesitated; the blood rushed to his

cheeks. "Well, they used to be viviparous."

"Quite right." The Director nodded approvingly.

"And when the babies were decanted ..."

'"Born,"' came the correction.

"Well, then they were the parents-I mean, not the babies, of course;

the other ones." The poor boy was overwhelmed with confusion.

"In brief," the Director summed up, "the parents were the father and

the mother." The smut that was really science fell with a crash into the

boys' eye-avoiding silence. "Mother," he repeated loudly rubbing in the

science; and, leaning back in his chair, "These," he said gravely, "are

unpleasant facts; I know it. But then most historical facts are unpleas-

ant."

He returned to Little Reuben-to Little Reuben, in whose room, one

evening, by an oversight, his father and mother (crash, crash!) hap-

pened to leave the radio turned on.

("For you must remember that in those days of gross viviparous re-

production, children were always brought up by their parents and not

in State Conditioning Centres.")

While the child was asleep, a broadcast programme from London sud-

denly started to come through; and the next morning, to the aston-

ishment of his crash and crash (the more daring of the boys ventured

to grin at one another), Little Reuben woke up repeating word for word

a long lecture by that curious old writer ("one of the very few whose

works have been permitted to come down to us"), George Bernard

Shaw, who was speaking, according to a well-authenticated tradition,

about his own genius. To Little Reuben's wink and snigger, this lecture

was, of course, perfectly incomprehensible and, imagining that their

child had suddenly gone mad, they sent for a doctor. He, fortunately,

understood English, recognized the discourse as that which Shaw had

broadcasted the previous evening, realized the significance of what

had happened, and sent a letter to the medical press about it.

"The principle of sleep-teaching, or hypnopaedia, had been discov-

ered." The D.H.C. made an impressive pause.

The principle had been discovered; but many, many years were to

elapse before that principle was usefully applied.

"The case of Little Reuben occurred only twenty-three years after Our

Ford's first T-Model was put on the market." (Here the Director made a

sign of the T on his stomach and all the students reverently followed

suit.) "And yet ..."

Furiously the students scribbled. "Hypnopdedia, first used officially in

A.F. 214. Why not before? Two reasons, (a) ..."

"These early experimenters," the D.H.C. was saying, "were on the

wrong track. They thought that hypnopaedia could be made an instru-

ment of intellectual education ..."

(A small boy asleep on his right side, the right arm stuck out, the right

hand hanging limp over the edge of the bed. Through a round grating

in the side of a box a voice speaks softly.

"The Nile is the longest river in Africa and the second in length of all

the rivers of the globe. Although falling short of the length of the

Mississippi-Missouri, the Nile is at the head of all rivers as regards the

length of its basin, which extends through 35 degrees of latitude ..."

At breakfast the next morning, "Tommy," some one says, "do you

know which is the longest river in Africa?" A shaking of the head. "But

don't you remember something that begins: The Nile is the ..."

"The - Nile - is - the - longest - river - in - Africa - and - the - second -

in - length - of - all - the - rivers - of - the - globe ..." The words come

rushing out. "Although - falling - short - of ..."

"Well now, which is the longest river in Africa?"

The eyes are blank. "I don't know."

"But the Nile, Tommy."

"The - Nile - is - the - longest - river - in - Africa - and - second ..."

"Then which river is the longest, Tommy?"

Tommy burst into tears. "I don't know," he howls.)

That howl, the Director made it plain, discouraged the earliest investi-

gators. The experiments were abandoned. No further attempt was

made to teach children the length of the Nile in their sleep. Quite

rightly. You can't learn a science unless you know what it's all about.

"Whereas, if they'd only started on moral education," said the Director,

leading the way towards the door. The students followed him, desper-

ately scribbling as they walked and all the way up in the lift. "Moral

education, which ought never, in any circumstances, to be rational."

"Silence, silence," whispered a loud speaker as they stepped out at the

fourteenth floor, and "Silence, silence," the trumpet mouths indefati-

gably repeated at intervals down every corridor. The students and

even the Director himself rose automatically to the tips of their toes.

They were Alphas, of course, but even Alphas have been well condi-

tioned. "Silence, silence." All the air of the fourteenth floor was sibilant

with the categorical imperative.

Fifty yards of tiptoeing brought them to a door which the Director cau-

tiously opened. They stepped over the threshold into the twilight of a

shuttered dormitory. Eighty cots stood in a row against the wall. There

was a sound of light regular breathing and a continuous murmur, as of

very faint voices remotely whispering.

A nurse rose as they entered and came to attention before the Direc-

tor.

"What's the lesson this afternoon?" he asked.

"We had Elementary Sex for the first forty minutes," she answered.

"But now it's switched over to Elementary Class Consciousness."

The Director walked slowly down the long line of cots. Rosy and re-

laxed with sleep, eighty little boys and girls lay softly breathing. There

was a whisper under every pillow. The D.H.C. halted and, bending over

one of the little beds, listened attentively.

"Elementary Class Consciousness, did you say? Let's have it repeated

a little louder by the trumpet."

At the end of the room a loud speaker projected from the wall. The Di-

rector walked up to it and pressed a switch.

"... all wear green," said a soft but very distinct voice, beginning in the

middle of a sentence, "and Delta Children wear khaki. Oh no, I don't

want to play with Delta children. And Epsilons are still worse. They're

too stupid to be able to read or write. Besides they wear black, which

is such a beastly colour. I'm so glad I'm a Beta."

There was a pause; then the voice began again.

"Alpha children wear grey They work much harder than we do, be-

cause they're so frightfully clever. I'm really awfuly glad I'm a Beta,

because I don't work so hard. And then we are much better than the

Gammas and Deltas. Gammas are stupid. They all wear green, and

Delta children wear khaki. Oh no, I don't want to play with Delta chil-

dren. And Epsilons are still worse. They're too stupid to be able ..."

The Director pushed back the switch. The voice was silent. Only its

thin ghost continued to mutter from beneath the eighty pillows.

"They'll have that repeated forty or fifty times more before they wake;

then again on Thursday, and again on Saturday. A hundred and twenty

times three times a week for thirty months. After which they go on to

a more advanced lesson."

Roses and electric shocks, the khaki of Deltas and a whiff of asafceti-

da-wedded indissolubly before the child can speak. But wordless con-

ditioning is crude and wholesale; cannot bring home the finer distinc-

tions, cannot inculcate the more complex courses of behaviour. For

that there must be words, but words without reason. In brief, hyp-

nopaedia.

"The greatest moralizing and socializing force of all time."

The students took it down in their little books. Straight from the

horse's mouth.

Once more the Director touched the switch.

"... so frightfully clever," the soft, insinuating, indefatigable voice was

saying, "I'm really awfully glad I'm a Beta, because ..."

Not so much like drops of water, though water, it is true, can wear

holes in the hardest granite; rather, drops of liquid sealing-wax, drops

that adhere, incrust, incorporate themselves with what they fall on, till

finally the rock is all one scarlet blob.

"Till at last the child's mind is these suggestions, and the sum of the

suggestions is the child's mind. And not the child's mind only. The

adult's mind too-all his life long. The mind that judges and desires and

decides-made up of these suggestions. But all these suggestions are

our suggestions!" The Director almost shouted in his triumph. "Sug-

gestions from the State." He banged the nearest table. "It therefore

follows ..."

A noise made him turn round.

"Oh, Ford!" he said in another tone, "I've gone and woken the chil-

dren."

Chapter Three

OUTSIDE, in the garden, it was playtime. Naked in the warm June

sunshine, six or seven hundred little boys and girls were running with

shrill yells over the lawns, or playing ball games, or squatting silently

in twos and threes among the flowering shrubs. The roses were in

bloom, two nightingales soliloquized in the boskage, a cuckoo was just

going out of tune among the lime trees. The air was drowsy with the

murmur of bees and helicopters.

The Director and his students stood for a short time watching a game

of Centrifugal Bumble-puppy. Twenty children were grouped in a circle

round a chrome steel tower. A ball thrown up so as to land on the plat-

form at the top of the tower rolled down into the interior, fell on a rap-

idly revolving disk, was hurled through one or other of the numerous

apertures pierced in the cylindrical casing, and had to be caught.

"Strange," mused the Director, as they turned away, "strange to think

that even in Our Ford's day most games were played without more ap-

paratus than a ball or two and a few sticks and perhaps a bit of net-

ting, imagine the folly of allowing people to play elaborate games

which do nothing whatever to increase consumption. It's madness.

Nowadays the Controllers won't approve of any new game unless it

can be shown that it requires at least as much apparatus as the most

complicated of existing games." He interrupted himself.

"That's a charming little group," he said, pointing.

In a little grassy bay between tall clumps of Mediterranean heather,

two children, a little boy of about seven and a little girl who might

have been a year older, were playing, very gravely and with all the fo-

cussed attention of scientists intent on a labour of discovery, a rudi-

mentary sexual game.

"Charming, charming!" the D.H.C. repeated sentimentally.

"Charming," the boys politely agreed. But their smile was rather pa-

tronizing. They had put aside similar childish amusements too recently

to be able to watch them now without a touch of contempt. Charming?

but it was just a pair of kids fooling about; that was all. Just kids.

"I always think," the Director was continuing in the same rather maud-

lin tone, when he was interrupted by a loud boo-hooing.

From a neighbouring shrubbery emerged a nurse, leading by the hand

a small boy, who howled as he went. An anxious-looking little girl trot-

ted at her heels.

"What's the matter?" asked the Director.

The nurse shrugged her shoulders. "Nothing much," she answered.

"It's just that this little boy seems rather reluctant to join in the ordi-

nary erotic play. I'd noticed it once or twice before. And now again to-

day. He started yelling just now ..."

"Honestly," put in the anxious-looking little girl, "I didn't mean to hurt

him or anything. Honestly."

"Of course you didn't, dear," said the nurse reassuringly. "And so," she

went on, turning back to the Director, "I'm taking him in to see the As-

sistant Superintendent of Psychology. Just to see if anything's at all

abnormal."

"Quite right," said the Director. "Take him in. You stay here, little girl,"

he added, as the nurse moved away with her still howling charge.

"What's your name?"

"Polly Trotsky."

"And a very good name too," said the Director. "Run away now and see

if you can find some other little boy to play with."

The child scampered off into the bushes and was lost to sight.

"Exquisite little creature!" said the Director, looking after her. Then,

turning to his students, "What I'm going to tell you now," he said,

"may sound incredible. But then, when you're not accustomed to his-

tory, most facts about the past do sound incredible."

He let out the amazing truth. For a very long period before the time of

Our Ford, and even for some generations afterwards, erotic play be-

tween children had been regarded as abnormal (there was a roar of

laughter); and not only abnormal, actually immoral (no!): and had

therefore been rigorously suppressed.

A look of astonished incredulity appeared on the faces of his listeners.

Poor little kids not allowed to amuse themselves? They could not be-

lieve it.

"Even adolescents," the D.H.C. was saying, "even adolescents like

yourselves ..."

"Not possible!"

"Barring a little surreptitious auto-erotism and homosexuality-abso-

lutely nothing."

"Nothing?"

"In most cases, till they were over twenty years old."

"Twenty years old?" echoed the students in a chorus of loud disbelief.

"Twenty," the Director repeated. "I told you that you'd find it incredi-

ble."

"But what happened?" they asked. "What were the results?"

"The results were terrible." A deep resonant voice broke startlingly into

the dialogue.

They looked around. On the fringe of the little group stood a stranger-

a man of middle height, black-haired, with a hooked nose, full red lips,

eyes very piercing and dark. "Terrible," he repeated.

The D.H.C. had at that moment sat down on one of the steel and rub-

ber benches conveniently scattered through the gardens; but at the

sight of the stranger, he sprang to his feet and darted forward, his

hand outstretched, smiling with all his teeth, effusive.

"Controller! What an unexpected pleasure! Boys, what are you thinking

of? This is the Controller; this is his fordship, Mustapha Mond."

In the four thousand rooms of the Centre the four thousand electric

clocks simultaneously struck four. Discarnate voices called from the

trumpet mouths.

"Main Day-shift off duty. Second Day-shift take over. Main Day-shift off

In the lift, on their way up to the changing rooms, Henry Foster and

the Assistant Director of Predestination rather pointedly turned their

backs on Bernard Marx from the Psychology Bureau: averted them-

selves from that unsavoury reputation.

The faint hum and rattle of machinery still stirred the crimson air in

the Embryo Store. Shifts might come and go, one lupus-coloured face

give place to another; majestically and for ever the conveyors crept

forward with their load of future men and women.

Lenina Crowne walked briskly towards the door.

His fordship Mustapha Mond! The eyes of the saluting students almost

popped out of their heads. Mustapha Mond! The Resident Controller for

Western Europe! One of the Ten World Controllers. One of the Ten ...

and he sat down on the bench with the D.H.C, he was going to stay,

to stay, yes, and actually talk to them ... straight from the horse's

mouth. Straight from the mouth of Ford himself.

Two shrimp-brown children emerged from a neighbouring shrubbery,

stared at them for a moment with large, astonished eyes, then re-

turned to their amusements among the leaves.

"You all remember," said the Controller, in his strong deep voice, "you

all remember, I suppose, that beautiful and inspired saying of Our

Ford's: History is bunk. History," he repeated slowly, "is bunk."

He waved his hand; and it was as though, with an invisible feather

wisk, he had brushed away a little dust, and the dust was Harappa,

was Ur of the Chaldees; some spider-webs, and they were Thebes and

Babylon and Cnossos and Mycenae. Whisk. Whisk-and where was

Odysseus, where was Job, where were Jupiter and Gotama and Jesus?

Whisk-and those specks of antique dirt called Athens and Rome, Jeru-

salem and the Middle Kingdom-all were gone. Whisk-the place where

Italy had been was empty. Whisk, the cathedrals; whisk, whisk, King

Lear and the Thoughts of Pascal. Whisk, Passion; whisk, Requiem;

whisk, Symphony; whisk ...

"Going to the Feelies this evening, Henry?" enquired the Assistant Pre-

destinator. "I hear the new one at the Alhambra is first-rate. There's a

love scene on a bearskin rug; they say it's marvellous. Every hair of

the bear reproduced. The most amazing tactual effects."

"That's why you're taught no history," the Controller was saying. "But

now the time has come ..."

The D.H.C. looked at him nervously. There were those strange rumours

of old forbidden books hidden in a safe in the Controller's study. Bibles,

poetry-Ford knew what.

Mustapha Mond intercepted his anxious glance and the corners of his

red lips twitched ironically.

"It's all right, Director," he said in a tone of faint derision, "I won't cor-

rupt them."

The D.H.C. was overwhelmed with confusion.

Those who feel themselves despised do well to look despising. The

smile on Bernard Marx's face was contemptuous. Every hair on the

bear indeed!

"I shall make a point of going," said Henry Foster.

Mustapha Mond leaned forward, shook a finger at them. "Just try to

realize it," he said, and his voice sent a strange thrill quivering along

their diaphragms. "Try to realize what it was like to have a viviparous

mother."

That smutty word again. But none of them dreamed, this time, of smil-

ing.

"Try to imagine what 'living with one's family' meant."

They tried; but obviously without the smallest success.

"And do you know what a 'home' was?"

They shook their heads.

From her dim crimson cellar Lenina Crowne shot up seventeen stories,

turned to the right as she stepped out of the lift, walked down a long

corridor and, opening the door marked GIRLS' DRESSING-ROOM,

plunged into a deafening chaos of arms and bosoms and undercloth-

ing. Torrents of hot water were splashing into or gurgling out of a hun-

dred baths. Rumbling and hissing, eighty vibro-vacuum massage ma-

chines were simultaneously kneading and sucking the firm and sun-

burnt flesh of eighty superb female specimens. Every one was talking

at the top of her voice. A Synthetic Music machine was warbling out a

super-cornet solo.

"Hullo, Fanny," said Lenina to the young woman who had the pegs and

locker next to hers.

Fanny worked in the Bottling Room, and her surname was also

Crowne. But as the two thousand million inhabitants of the plant had

only ten thousand names between them, the coincidence was not par-

ticularly surprising.

Lenina pulled at her zippers-downwards on the jacket, downwards with

a double-handed gesture at the two that held trousers, downwards

again to loosen her undergarment. Still wearing her shoes and stock-

ings, she walked off towards the bathrooms.

Home, home-a few small rooms, stiflingly over-inhabited by a man, by

a periodically teeming woman, by a rabble of boys and girls of all ages.

No air, no space; an understerilized prison; darkness, disease, and

smells.

(The Controller's evocation was so vivid that one of the boys, more

sensitive than the rest, turned pale at the mere description and was on

the point of being sick.)

Lenina got out of the bath, toweled herself dry, took hold of a long

flexible tube plugged into the wall, presented the nozzle to her breast,

as though she meant to commit suicide, pressed down the trigger. A

blast of warmed air dusted her with the finest talcum powder. Eight

different scents and eau-de-Cologne were laid on in little taps over the

wash-basin. She turned on the third from the left, dabbed herself with

chypre and, carrying her shoes and stockings in her hand, went out to

see if one of the vibro-vacuum machines were free.

And home was as squalid psychically as physically. Psychically, it was a

rabbit hole, a midden, hot with the frictions of tightly packed life, reek-

ing with emotion. What suffocating intimacies, what dangerous, in-

sane, obscene relationships between the members of the family group!

Maniacally, the mother brooded over her children (her children) ...

brooded over them like a cat over its kittens; but a cat that could talk,

a cat that could say, "My baby, my baby," over and over again. "My

baby, and oh, oh, at my breast, the little hands, the hunger, and that

unspeakable agonizing pleasure! Till at last my baby sleeps, my baby

sleeps with a bubble of white milk at the corner of his mouth. My little

baby sleeps ..."

"Yes," said Mustapha Mond, nodding his head, "you may well shudder."

"Who are you going out with to-night?" Lenina asked, returning from

the vibro-vac like a pearl illuminated from within, pinkly glowing.

"Nobody."

Lenina raised her eyebrows in astonishment.

"I've been feeling rather out of sorts lately," Fanny explained. "Dr.

Wells advised me to have a Pregnancy Substitute."

"But, my dear, you're only nineteen. The first Pregnancy Substitute

isn't compulsory till twenty-one."

"I know, dear. But some people are better if they begin earlier. Dr.

Wells told me that brunettes with wide pelvises, like me, ought to have

their first Pregnancy Substitute at seventeen. So I'm really two years

late, not two years early." She opened the door of her locker and

pointed to the row of boxes and labelled phials on the upper shelf.

"SYRUP OF CORPUS LUTEUM," Lenina read the names aloud. "OVARIN,

GUARANTEED FRESH: NOT TO BE USED AFTER AUGUST 1ST, A.F. 632.

MAMMARY GLAND EXTRACT: TO BE TAKEN THREE TIMES DAILY, BE-

FORE MEALS, WITH A LITTLE WATER. PLACENTIN: 5cc TO BE IN-

JECTED INTRAVENALLY EVERY THIRD DAY ... Ugh!" Lenina shuddered.

"How I loathe intravenals, don't you?"

"Yes. But when they do one good ..." Fanny was a particularly sensible

girl.

Our Ford-or Our Freud, as, for some inscrutable reason, he chose to

call himself whenever he spoke of psychological matters-Our Freud

had been the first to reveal the appalling dangers of family life. The

world was full of fathers-was therefore full of misery; full of moth-

ers-therefore of every kind of perversion from sadism to chastity; full

of brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts-full of madness and suicide.

"And yet, among the savages of Samoa, in certain islands off the coast

of New Guinea ..."

The tropical sunshine lay like warm honey on the naked bodies of chil-

dren tumbling promiscuously among the hibiscus blossoms. Home was

in any one of twenty palm-thatched houses. In the Trobriands concep-

tion was the work of ancestral ghosts; nobody had ever heard of a fa-

ther.

"Extremes," said the Controller, "meet. For the good reason that they

were made to meet."

"Dr. Wells says that a three months' Pregnancy Substitute now will

make all the difference to my health for the next three or four years."

"Well, I hope he's right," said Lenina. "But, Fanny, do you really mean

to say that for the next three months you're not supposed to ..."

"Oh no, dear. Only for a week or two, that's all. I shall spend the eve-

ning at the Club playing Musical Bridge. I suppose you're going out?"

Lenina nodded.

"Who with?"

"Henry Foster."

"Again?" Fanny's kind, rather moon-like face took on an incongruous

expression of pained and disapproving astonishment. "Do you mean to

tell me you're still going out with Henry Foster?"

Mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters. But there were also hus-

bands, wives, lovers. There were also monogamy and romance.

"Though you probably don't know what those are," said Mustapha

Mond.

They shook their heads.

Family, monogamy, romance. Everywhere exclusiveness, a narrow

channelling of impulse and energy.

"But every one belongs to every one else," he concluded, citing the

hypnopaedic proverb.

The students nodded, emphatically agreeing with a statement which

upwards of sixty-two thousand repetitions in the dark had made them

accept, not merely as true, but as axiomatic, self-evident, utterly in-

disputable.

"But after all," Lenina was protesting, "it's only about four months now

since I've been having Henry."

"Only four months! I like that. And what's more," Fanny went on,

pointing an accusing finger, "there's been nobody else except Henry all

that time. Has there?"

Lenina blushed scarlet; but her eyes, the tone of her voice remained

defiant. "No, there hasn't been any one else," she answered almost

truculently. "And I jolly well don't see why there should have been."

"Oh, she jolly well doesn't see why there should have been," Fanny re-

peated, as though to an invisible listener behind Lenina's left shoulder.

Then, with a sudden change of tone, "But seriously," she said, "I really

do think you ought to be careful. It's such horribly bad form to go on

and on like this with one man. At forty, or thirty-five, it wouldn't be so

bad. But at your age, Lenina! No, it really won't do. And you know how

strongly the D.H.C. objects to anything intense or long-drawn. Four

months of Henry Foster, without having another man-why, he'd be fu-

rious if he knew ..."

"Think of water under pressure in a pipe." They thought of it. "I pierce

it once," said the Controller. "What a jet!"

He pierced it twenty times. There were twenty piddling little fountains.

"My baby. My baby ...!"

"Mother!" The madness is infectious.

"My love, my one and only, precious, precious ..."

Mother, monogamy, romance. High spurts the fountain; fierce and

foamy the wild jet. The urge has but a single outlet. My love, my baby.

No wonder these poor pre-moderns were mad and wicked and miser-

able. Their world didn't allow them to take things easily, didn't allow

them to be sane, virtuous, happy. What with mothers and lovers, what

with the prohibitions they were not conditioned to obey, what with the

temptations and the lonely remorses, what with all the diseases and

the endless isolating pain, what with the uncertainties and the pover-

ty-they were forced to feel strongly. And feeling strongly (and

strongly, what was more, in solitude, in hopelessly individual isolation),

how could they be stable?

"Of course there's no need to give him up. Have somebody else from

time to time, that's all. He has other girls, doesn't he?"

Lenina admitted it.

"Of course he does. Trust Henry Foster to be the perfect gentle-

man-always correct. And then there's the Director to think of. You

know what a stickler ..."

Nodding, "He patted me on the behind this afternoon," said Lenina.

"There, you see!" Fanny was triumphant. "That shows what he stands

for. The strictest conventionality."

"Stability," said the Controller, "stability. No civilization without social

stability. No social stability without individual stability." His voice was a

trumpet. Listening they felt larger, warmer.

The machine turns, turns and must keep on turning-for ever. It is

death if it stands still. A thousand millions scrabbled the crust of the

earth. The wheels began to turn. In a hundred and fifty years there

were two thousand millions. Stop all the wheels. In a hundred and fifty

weeks there are once more only a thousand millions; a thousand thou-

sand thousand men and women have starved to death.

Wheels must turn steadily, but cannot turn untended. There must be

men to tend them, men as steady as the wheels upon their axles, sane

men, obedient men, stable in contentment.

Crying: My baby, my mother, my only, only love groaning: My sin, my

terrible God; screaming with pain, muttering with fever, bemoaning old

age and poverty-how can they tend the wheels? And if they cannot

tend the wheels ... The corpses of a thousand thousand thousand men

and women would be hard to bury or burn.

"And after all," Fanny's tone was coaxing, "it's not as though there

were anything painful or disagreeable about having one or two men

besides Henry. And seeing that you ought to be a little more promiscu-

ous ..."

"Stability," insisted the Controller, "stability. The primal and the ulti-

mate need. Stability. Hence all this."

With a wave of his hand he indicated the gardens, the huge building of

the Conditioning Centre, the naked children furtive in the undergrowth

or running across the lawns.

Lenina shook her head. "Somehow," she mused, "I hadn't been feeling

very keen on promiscuity lately. There are times when one doesn't.

Haven't you found that too, Fanny?"

Fanny nodded her sympathy and understanding. "But one's got to

make the effort," she said, sententiously, "one's got to play the game.

After all, every one belongs to every one else."

"Yes, every one belongs to every one else," Lenina repeated slowly

and, sighing, was silent for a moment; then, taking Fanny's hand,

gave it a little squeeze. "You're quite right, Fanny. As usual. I'll make

the effort."

Impulse arrested spills over, and the flood is feeling, the flood is pas-

sion, the flood is even madness: it depends on the force of the current,

the height and strength of the barrier. The unchecked stream flows

smoothly down its appointed channels into a calm well-being. (The

embryo is hungry; day in, day out, the blood-surrogate pump unceas-

ingly turns its eight hundred revolutions a minute. The decanted infant

howls; at once a nurse appears with a bottle of external secretion.

Feeling lurks in that interval of time between desire and its consum-

mation. Shorten that interval, break down all those old unnecessary

barriers.

"Fortunate boys!" said the Controller. "No pains have been spared to

make your lives emotionally easy-to preserve you, so far as that is

possible, from having emotions at all."

"Ford's in his flivver," murmured the D.H.C. "All's well with the world."

"Lenina Crowne?" said Henry Foster, echoing the Assistant Predestina-

tor's question as he zipped up his trousers. "Oh, she's a splendid girl.

Wonderfully pneumatic. I'm surprised you haven't had her."

"I can't think how it is I haven't," said the Assistant Predestinator. "I

certainly will. At the first opportunity."

From his place on the opposite side of the changing-room aisle, Ber-

nard Marx overheard what they were saying and turned pale.

"And to tell the truth," said Lenina, "I'm beginning to get just a tiny bit

bored with nothing but Henry every day." She pulled on her left stock-

ing. "Do you know Bernard Marx?" she asked in a tone whose exces-

sive casualness was evidently forced.

Fanny looked startled. "You don't mean to say ...?"

"Why not? Bernard's an Alpha Plus. Besides, he asked me to go to one

of the Savage Reservations with him. I've always wanted to see a Sav-

age Reservation."

"But his reputation?"

"What do I care about his reputation?"

"They say he doesn't like Obstacle Golf."

"They say, they say," mocked Lenina.

"And then he spends most of his time by himself-alone." There was

horror in Fanny's voice.

"Well, he won't be alone when he's with me. And anyhow, why are

people so beastly to him? I think he's rather sweet." She smiled to

herself; how absurdly shy he had been! Frightened almost-as though

she were a World Controller and he a Gamma-Minus machine minder.

"Consider your own lives," said Mustapha Mond. "Has any of you ever

encountered an insurmountable obstacle?"

The question was answered by a negative silence.

"Has any of you been compelled to live through a long time-interval

between the consciousness of a desire and its fufilment?"

"Well," began one of the boys, and hesitated.

"Speak up," said the D.H.C. "Don't keep his fordship waiting."

"I once had to wait nearly four weeks before a girl I wanted would let

me have her."

"And you felt a strong emotion in consequence?"

"Horrible!"

"Horrible; precisely," said the Controller. "Our ancestors were so stupid

and short-sighted that when the first reformers came along and of-

fered to deliver them from those horrible emotions, they wouldn't have

anything to do with them."

"Talking about her as though she were a bit of meat." Bernard ground

his teeth. "Have her here, have her there." Like mutton. Degrading her

to so much mutton. She said she'd think it over, she said she'd give

me an answer this week. Oh, Ford, Ford, Ford." He would have liked to

go up to them and hit them in the face-hard, again and again.

"Yes, I really do advise you to try her," Henry Foster was saying.

"Take Ectogenesis. Pfitzner and Kawaguchi had got the whole tech-

nique worked out. But would the Governments look at it? No. There

was something called Christianity. Women were forced to go on being

viviparous."

"He's so ugly!" said Fanny.

"But I rather like his looks."

"And then so small." Fanny made a grimace; smallness was so horribly

and typically low-caste.

"I think that's rather sweet," said Lenina. "One feels one would like to

pet him. You know. Like a cat."

Fanny was shocked. "They say somebody made a mistake when he

was still in the bottle-thought he was a Gamma and put alcohol into

his blood-surrogate. That's why he's so stunted."

"What nonsense!" Lenina was indignant.

"Sleep teaching was actually prohibited in England. There was some-

thing called liberalism. Parliament, if you know what that was, passed

a law against it. The records survive. Speeches about liberty of the

subject. Liberty to be inefficient and miserable. Freedom to be a round

peg in a square hole."

"But, my dear chap, you're welcome, I assure you. You're welcome."

Henry Foster patted the Assistant Predestinator on the shoulder.

"Every one belongs to every one else, after all."

One hundred repetitions three nights a week for four years, thought

Bernard Marx, who was a specialist on hypnopaedia. Sixty-two thou-

sand four hundred repetitions make one truth. Idiots!

"Or the Caste System. Constantly proposed, constantly rejected. There

was something called democracy. As though men were more than

physico-chemically equal."

"Well, all I can say is that I'm going to accept his invitation."

Bernard hated them, hated them. But they were two, they were large,

they were strong.

"The Nine Years' War began in A.F. 141."

"Not even if it were true about the alcohol in his blood-surrogate."

"Phosgene, chloropicrin, ethyl iodoacetate, diphenylcyanarsine, tri-

chlormethyl, chloroformate, dichlorethyl sulphide. Not to mention hy-

drocyanic acid."

"Which I simply don't believe," Lenina concluded.

"The noise of fourteen thousand aeroplanes advancing in open order.

But in the Kurfurstendamm and the Eighth Arrondissement, the explo-

sion of the anthrax bombs is hardly louder than the popping of a paper

bag."

"Because I do want to see a Savage Reservation."

Ch 3 C6H2(N02)3+Hg(CNO) 2 =well, what? An enormous hole in the

ground, a pile of masonry, some bits of flesh and mucus, a foot, with

the boot still on it, flying through the air and landing, flop, in the mid-

dle of the geraniums-the scarlet ones; such a splendid show that

summer!

"You're hopeless, Lenina, I give you up."

"The Russian technique for infecting water supplies was particularly in-

genious."

Back turned to back, Fanny and Lenina continued their changing in si-

lence.

"The Nine Years' War, the great Economic Collapse. There was a choice

between World Control and destruction. Between stability and ..."

"Fanny Crowne's a nice girl too," said the Assistant Predestinator.

In the nurseries, the Elementary Class Consciousness lesson was over,

the voices were adapting future demand to future industrial supply. "I

do love flying," they whispered, "I do love flying, I do love having new

clothes, I do love ..."

"Liberalism, of course, was dead of anthrax, but all the same you

couldn't do things by force."

"Not nearly so pneumatic as Lenina. Oh, not nearly."

"But old clothes are beastly," continued the untiring whisper. "We al-

ways throw away old clothes. Ending is better than mending, ending is

better than mending, ending is better ..."

"Government's an affair of sitting, not hitting. You rule with the brains

and the buttocks, never with the fists. For example, there was the

conscription of consumption."

"There, I'm ready," said Lenina, but Fanny remained speechless and

averted. "Let's make peace, Fanny darling."

"Every man, woman and child compelled to consume so much a year.

In the interests of industry. The sole result ..."

"Ending is better than mending. The more stitches, the less riches; the

more stitches ..."

"One of these days," said Fanny, with dismal emphasis, "you'll get into

trouble."

"Conscientious objection on an enormous scale. Anything not to con-

sume. Back to nature."

"I do love flying. I do love flying."

"Back to culture. Yes, actually to culture. You can't consume much if

you sit still and read books."

"Do I look all right?" Lenina asked. Her jacket was made of bottle

green acetate cloth with green viscose fur; at the cuffs and collar.

"Eight hundred Simple Lifers were mowed down by machine guns at

Golders Green."

"Ending is better than mending, ending is better than mending."

Green corduroy shorts and white viscose-woollen stockings turned

down below the knee.

"Then came the famous British Museum Massacre. Two thousand cul-

ture fans gassed with dichlorethyl sulphide."

A green-and-white jockey cap shaded Lenina's eyes; her shoes were

bright green and highly polished.

"In the end," said Mustapha Mond, "the Controllers realized that force

was no good. The slower but infinitely surer methods of ectogenesis,

neo-Pavlovian conditioning and hypnopaedia ..."

And round her waist she wore a silver-mounted green morocco-

surrogate cartridge belt, bulging (for Lenina was not a freemartin) with

the regulation supply of contraceptives.

"The discoveries of Pfitzner and Kawaguchi were at last made use of.

An intensive propaganda against viviparous reproduction ..."

"Perfect!" cried Fanny enthusiastically. She could never resist Lenina's

charm for long. "And what a perfectly sweet Malthusian belt!"

"Accompanied by a campaign against the Past; by the closing of mu-

seums, the blowing up of historical monuments (luckily most of them

had already been destroyed during the Nine Years' War); by the sup-

pression of all books published before A.F. 150."

I simply must get one like it," said Fanny.

There were some things called the pyramids, for example.

My old black-patent bandolier ..."

And a man called Shakespeare. You've never heard of them of

course."

'It's an absolute disgrace-that bandolier of mine."

'Such are the advantages of a really scientific education."

'The more stitches the less riches; the more stitches the less ..."

'The introduction of Our Ford's first T-Model ..."

'I've had it nearly three months."

'Chosen as the opening date of the new era."

'Ending is better than mending; ending is better ..."

'There was a thing, as I've said before, called Christianity."

'Ending is better than mending."

'The ethics and philosophy of under-consumption ..."

'I love new clothes, I love new clothes, I love ..."

'So essential when there was under-production; but in an age of ma-

chines and the fixation of nitrogen-positively a crime against society."

'Henry Foster gave it me."

All crosses had their tops cut and became T's. There was also a thing

called God."

It's real morocco-surrogate."

We have the World State now. And Ford's Day celebrations, and

Community Sings, and Solidarity Services."

Ford, how I hate them!" Bernard Marx was thinking.

There was a thing called Heaven; but all the same they used to drink

enormous quantities of alcohol."

'Like meat, like so much meat."

'There was a thing called the soul and a thing called immortality."

'Do ask Henry where he got it."

'But they used to take morphia and cocaine."

'And what makes it worse, she thinks of herself as meat."

'Two thousand pharmacologists and bio-chemists were subsidized in

A. P. 178."

He does look glum," said the Assistant Predestinator, pointing at Ber-

nard Marx.

Six years later it was being produced commercially. The perfect drug."

Let's bait him."

Euphoric, narcotic, pleasantly hallucinant."

Glum, Marx, glum." The clap on the shoulder made him start, look up.

It was that brute Henry Foster. "What you need is a gramme of soma."

All the advantages of Christianity and alcohol; none of their defects."

Ford, I should like to kill him!" But all he did was to say, "No, thank

you," and fend off the proffered tube of tablets.

Take a holiday from reality whenever you like, and come back without

so much as a headache or a mythology."

Take it," insisted Henry Foster, "take it."

"Stability was practically assured."

"One cubic centimetre cures ten gloomy sentiments," said the Assis-

tant Predestinator citing a piece of homely hypnopaedic wisdom.

"It only remained to conquer old age."

"Damn you, damn you!" shouted Bernard Marx.

"Hoity-toity."

"Gonadal hormones, transfusion of young blood, magnesium salts ..."

"And do remember that a gramme is better than a damn." They went

out, laughing.

"All the physiological stigmata of old age have been abolished. And

along with them, of course ..."

"Don't forget to ask him about that Malthusian belt," said Fanny.

"Along with them all the old man's mental peculiarities. Characters

remain constant throughout a whole lifetime."

"... two rounds of Obstacle Golf to get through before dark. I must fly."

"Work, play-at sixty our powers and tastes are what they were at sev-

enteen. Old men in the bad old days used to renounce, retire, take to

religion, spend their time reading, thinking-thinking!"

"Idiots, swine!" Bernard Marx was saying to himself, as he walked

down the corridor to the lift.

"Now-such is progress-the old men work, the old men copulate, the

old men have no time, no leisure from pleasure, not a moment to sit

down and think-or if ever by some unlucky chance such a crevice of

time should yawn in the solid substance of their distractions, there is

always soma, delicious soma, half a gramme for a half-holiday, a

gramme for a week-end, two grammes for a trip to the gorgeous East,

three for a dark eternity on the moon; returning whence they find

themselves on the other side of the crevice, safe on the solid ground of

daily labour and distraction, scampering from feely to feely, from girl

to pneumatic girl, from Electromagnetic Golf course to ..."

"Go away, little girl," shouted the D.H.C. angrily. "Go away, little boy!

Can't you see that his fordship's busy? Go and do your erotic play

somewhere else."

"Suffer little children," said the Controller.

Slowly, majestically, with a faint humming of machinery, the Conveyors

moved forward, thirty-three centimters an hour. In the red darkness

glinted innumerable rubies.

Chapter Four

THE LIFT was crowded with men from the Alpha Changing Rooms, and

Lenina's entry wars greeted by many friendly nods and smiles. She

was a popular girl and, at one time or another, had spent a night with

almost all of them.

They were dear boys, she thought, as she returned their salutations.

Charming boys! Still, she did wish that George Edzel's ears weren't

quite so big (perhaps he'd been given just a spot too much parathyroid

at Metre 328?). And looking at Benito Hoover, she couldn't help re-

membering that he was really too hairy when he took his clothes off.

Turning, with eyes a little saddened by the recollection, of Benito's

curly blackness, she saw in a corner the small thin body, the melan-

choly face of Bernard Marx.

"Bernard!" she stepped up to him. "I was looking for you." Her voice

rang clear above the hum of the mounting lift. The others looked

round curiously. "I wanted to talk to you about our New Mexico plan."

Out of the tail of her eye she could see Benito Hoover gaping with as-

tonishment. The gape annoyed her. "Surprised I shouldn't be begging

to go with him again!" she said to herself. Then aloud, and more

warmly than ever, "I'd simply love to come with you for a week in

July," she went on. (Anyhow, she was publicly proving her unfaithful-

ness to Henry. Fanny ought to be pleased, even though it was Ber-

nard.) "That is," Lenina gave him her most deliciously significant smile,

"if you still want to have me."

Bernard's pale face flushed. "What on earth for?" she wondered, as-

tonished, but at the same time touched by this strange tribute to her

power.

"Hadn't we better talk about it somewhere else?" he stammered, look-

ing horribly uncomfortable.

"As though I'd been saying something shocking," thought Lenina. "He

couldn't look more upset if I'd made a dirty joke-asked him who his

mother was, or something like that."

"I mean, with all these people about ..." He was choked with confusion.

Lenina's laugh was frank and wholly unmalicious. "How funny you

are!" she said; and she quite genuinely did think him funny. "You'll

give me at least a week's warning, won't you," she went on in another

tone. "I suppose we take the Blue Pacific Rocket? Does it start from

the Charing-T Tower? Or is it from Hampstead?"

Before Bernard could answer, the lift came to a standstill.

"Roof!" called a creaking voice.

The liftman was a small simian creature, dressed in the black tunic of

an Epsilon-Minus Semi-Moron.

"Roof!"

He flung open the gates. The warm glory of afternoon sunlight made

him start and blink his eyes. "Oh, roof!" he repeated in a voice of rap-

ture. He was as though suddenly and joyfully awakened from a dark

annihilating stupor. "Roof!"

He smiled up with a kind of doggily expectant adoration into the faces

of his passengers. Talking and laughing together, they stepped out into

the light. The liftman looked after them.

"Roof?" he said once more, questioningly.

Then a bell rang, and from the ceiling of the lift a loud speaker began,

very softly and yet very imperiously, to issue its commands.

"Go down," it said, "go down. Floor Eighteen. Go down, go down. Floor

Eighteen. Go down, go ..."

The liftman slammed the gates, touched a button and instantly

dropped back into the droning twilight of the well, the twilight of his

own habitual stupor.

It was warm and bright on the roof. The summer afternoon was

drowsy with the hum of passing helicopters; and the deeper drone of

the rocket-planes hastening, invisible, through the bright sky five or

six miles overhead was like a caress on the soft air. Bernard Marx drew

a deep breath. He looked up into the sky and round the blue horizon

and finally down into Lenina's face.

"Isn't it beautiful!" His voice trembled a little.

She smiled at him with an expression of the most sympathetic under-

standing. "Simply perfect for Obstacle Golf," she answered rapturously.

"And now I must fly, Bernard. Henry gets cross if I keep him waiting.

Let me know in good time about the date." And waving her hand she

ran away across the wide flat roof towards the hangars. Bernard stood

watching the retreating twinkle of the white stockings, the sunburnt

knees vivaciously bending and unbending again, again, and the softer

rolling of those well-fitted corduroy shorts beneath the bottle green

jacket. His face wore an expression of pain.

"I should say she was pretty," said a loud and cheery voice just behind

him.

Bernard started and looked around. The chubby red face of Benito

Hoover was beaming down at him-beaming with manifest cordiality.

Benito was notoriously good-natured. People said of him that he could

have got through life without ever touching soma. The malice and bad

tempers from which other people had to take holidays never afflicted

him. Reality for Benito was always sunny.

"Pneumatic too. And how!" Then, in another tone: "But, I say," he

went on, "you do look glum! What you need is a gramme of soma."

Diving into his right-hand trouser-pocket, Benito produced a phial.

"One cubic centimetre cures ten gloomy ... But, I say!"

Bernard had suddenly turned and rushed away.

Benito stared after him. "What can be the matter with the fellow?" he

wondered, and, shaking his head, decided that the story about the al-

cohol having been put into the poor chap's blood-surrogate must be

true. "Touched his brain, I suppose."

He put away the soma bottle, and taking out a packet of sex-hormone

chewing-gum, stuffed a plug into his cheek and walked slowly away

towards the hangars, ruminating.

Henry Foster had had his machine wheeled out of its lock-up and,

when Lenina arrived, was already seated in the cockpit, waiting.

"Four minutes late," was all his comment, as she climbed in beside

him. He started the engines and threw the helicopter screws into gear.

The machine shot vertically into the air. Henry accelerated; the hum-

ming of the propeller shrilled from hornet to wasp, from wasp to mos-

quito; the speedometer showed that they were rising at the best part

of two kilometres a minute. London diminished beneath them. The

huge table-topped buildings were no more, in a few seconds, than a

bed of geometrical mushrooms sprouting from the green of park and

garden. In the midst of them, thin-stalked, a taller, slenderer fungus,

the Charing-T Tower lifted towards the sky a disk of shining concrete.

Like the vague torsos of fabulous athletes, huge fleshy clouds lolled on

the blue air above their heads. Out of one of them suddenly dropped a

small scarlet insect, buzzing as it fell.

"There's the Red Rocket," said Henry, "just come in from New York."

Looking at his watch. "Seven minutes behind time," he added, and

shook his head. "These Atlantic services-they're really scandalously

unpunctual."

He took his foot off the accelerator. The humming of the screws over-

head dropped an octave and a half, back through wasp and hornet to

bumble bee, to cockchafer, to stag-beetle. The upward rush of the ma-

chine slackened off; a moment later they were hanging motionless in

the air. Henry pushed at a lever; there was a click. Slowly at first, then

faster and faster, till it was a circular mist before their eyes, the pro-

peller in front of them began to revolve. The wind of a horizontal

speed whistled ever more shrilly in the stays. Henry kept his eye on

the revolution-counter; when the needle touched the twelve hundred

mark, he threw the helicopter screws out of gear. The machine had

enough forward momentum to be able to fly on its planes.

Lenina looked down through the window in the floor between her feet.

They were flying over the six kilometre zone of park-land that sepa-

rated Central London from its first ring of satellite suburbs. The green

was maggoty with fore-shortened life. Forests of Centrifugal Bumble-

puppy towers gleamed between the trees. Near Shepherd's Bush two

thousand Beta-Minus mixed doubles were playing Riemann-surface

tennis. A double row of Escalator Fives Courts lined the main road

from Notting Hill to Willesden. In the Ealing stadium a Delta gymnastic

display and community sing was in progress.

"What a hideous colour khaki is," remarked Lenina, voicing the hyp-

nopaedic prejudices of her caste.

The buildings of the Hounslow Feely Studio covered seven and a half

hectares. Near them a black and khaki army of labourers was busy re-

vitrifying the surface of the Great West Road. One of the huge travel-

ling crucibles was being tapped as they flew over. The molten stone

poured out in a stream of dazzling incandescence across the road, the

asbestos rollers came and went; at the tail of an insulated watering

cart the steam rose in white clouds.

At Brentford the Television Corporation's factory was like a small town.

"They must be changing the shift," said Lenina.

Like aphides and ants, the leaf-green Gamma girls, the black Semi-

Morons swarmed round the entrances, or stood in queues to take their

places in the monorail tram-cars. Mulberry-coloured Beta-Minuses

came and went among the crowd. The roof of the main building was

alive with the alighting and departure of helicopters.

"My word," said Lenina, "I'm glad I'm not a Gamma."

Ten minutes later they were at Stoke Poges and had started their first

round of Obstacle Golf.

§2

WITH eyes for the most part downcast and, if ever they lighted on a

fellow creature, at once and furtively averted, Bernard hastened across

the roof. He was like a man pursued, but pursued by enemies he does

not wish to see, lest they should seem more hostile even than he had

supposed, and he himself be made to feel guiltier and even more help-

lessly alone.

"That horrible Benito Hoover!" And yet the man had meant well

enough. Which only made it, in a way, much worse. Those who meant

well behaved in the same way as those who meant badly. Even Lenina

was making him suffer. He remembered those weeks of timid indeci-

sion, during which he had looked and longed and despaired of ever

having the courage to ask her. Dared he face the risk of being humili-

ated by a contemptuous refusal? But if she were to say yes, what rap-

ture! Well, now she had said it and he was still wretched-wretched

that she should have thought it such a perfect afternoon for Obstacle

Golf, that she should have trotted away to join Henry Foster, that she

should have found him funny for not wanting to talk of their most pri-

vate affairs in public. Wretched, in a word, because she had behaved

as any healthy and virtuous English girl ought to behave and not in

some other, abnormal, extraordinary way.

He opened the door of his lock-up and called to a lounging couple of

Delta-Minus attendants to come and push his machine out on to the

roof. The hangars were staffed by a single Bokanovsky Group, and the

men were twins, identically small, black and hideous. Bernard gave his

orders in the sharp, rather arrogant and even offensive tone of one

who does not feel himself too secure in his superiority. To have deal-

ings with members of the lower castes was always, for Bernard, a

most distressing experience. For whatever the cause (and the current

gossip about the alcohol in his blood-surrogate may very likely-for ac-

cidents will happen-have been true) Bernard's physique as hardly bet-

ter than that of the average Gamma. He stood eight centimetres short

of the standard Alpha height and was slender in proportion. Contact

with members of he lower castes always reminded him painfully of this

physical inadequacy. "I am I, and wish I wasn't"; his self-

consciousness was acute and stressing. Each time he found himself

looking on the level, instead of downward, into a Delta's face, he felt

humiliated. Would the creature treat him with the respect due to his

caste? The question haunted him. Not without reason. For Gammas,

Deltas and Epsilons had been to some extent conditioned to associate

corporeal mass with social superiority. Indeed, a faint hypnopaedic

prejudice in favour of size was universal. Hence the laughter of the

women to whom he made proposals, the practical joking of his equals

among the men. The mockery made him feel an outsider; and feeling

an outsider he behaved like one, which increased the prejudice against

him and intensified the contempt and hostility aroused by his physical

defects. Which in turn increased his sense of being alien and alone. A

chronic fear of being slighted made him avoid his equals, made him

stand, where his inferiors were concerned, self-consciously on his dig-

nity. How bitterly he envied men like Henry Foster and Benito Hoover!

Men who never had to shout at an Epsilon to get an order obeyed;

men who took their position for granted; men who moved through the

caste system as a fish through water-so utterly at home as to be un-

aware either of themselves or of the beneficent and comfortable ele-

ment in which they had their being.

Slackly, it seemed to him, and with reluctance, the twin attendants

wheeled his plane out on the roof.

"Hurry up!" said Bernard irritably. One of them glanced at him. Was

that a kind of bestial derision that he detected in those blank grey

eyes? "Hurry up!" he shouted more loudly, and there was an ugly rasp

in his voice.

He climbed into the plane and, a minute later, was flying southwards,

towards the river.

The various Bureaux of Propaganda and the College of Emotional Engi-

neering were housed in a single sixty-story building in Fleet Street. In

the basement and on the low floors were the presses and offices of the

three great London newspapers-777e Hourly Radio, an upper-caste

sheet, the pale green Gamma Gazette, and, on khaki paper and in

words exclusively of one syllable, The Delta Mirror. Then came the Bu-

reaux of Propaganda by Television, by Feeling Picture, and by Syn-

thetic Voice and Music respectively-twenty-two floors of them. Above

were the search laboratories and the padded rooms in which Sound-

Track Writers and Synthetic Composers did the delicate work. The top

eighteen floors were occupied the College of Emotional Engineering.

Bernard landed on the roof of Propaganda House and stepped out.

"Ring down to Mr. Helmholtz Watson," he ordered the Gamma-Plus

porter, "and tell him that Mr. Bernard Marx is waiting for him on the

roof."

He sat down and lit a cigarette.

Helmholtz Watson was writing when the message came down.

"Tell him I'm coming at once," he said and hung up the receiver. Then,

turning to his secretary, "I'll leave you to put my things away," he went

on in the same official and impersonal tone; and, ignoring her lustrous

smile, got up and walked briskly to the door.

He was a powerfully built man, deep-chested, broad-shouldered, mas-

sive, and yet quick in his movements, springy and agile. The round

strong pillar of his neck supported a beautifully shaped head. His hair

was dark and curly, his features strongly marked. In a forcible em-

phatic way, he was handsome and looked, as his secretary was never

tired of repeating, every centimetre an Alpha Plus. By profession he

was a lecturer at the College of Emotional Engineering (Department of

Writing) and the intervals of his educational activities, a working Emo-

tional Engineer. He wrote regularly for The Hourly Radio, composed

feely scenarios, and had the happiest knack for slogans and hyp-

nopaedic rhymes.

"Able," was the verdict of his superiors. "Perhaps, (and they would

shake their heads, would significantly lower their voices) "a little too

able."

Yes, a little too able; they were right. A mental excess had produced in

Helmholtz Watson effects very similar to those which, in Bernard Marx,

were the result of a physical defect. Too little bone and brawn had iso-

lated Bernard from his fellow men, and the sense of this apartness,

being, by all the current standards, a mental excess, became in its

turn a cause of wider separation. That which had made Helmholtz so

uncomfortably aware of being himself and all alone was too much abil-

ity. What the two men shared was the knowledge that they were indi-

viduals. But whereas the physically defective Bernard had suffered all

his life from the consciousness of being separate, it was only quite re-

cently that, grown aware of his mental excess, Helmholtz Watson had

also become aware of his difference from the people who surrounded

him. This Escalator-Squash champion, this indefatigable lover (it was

said that he had had six hundred and forty different girls in under four

years), this admirable committee man and best mixer had realized

quite suddenly that sport, women, communal activities were only, so

far as he was concerned, second bests. Really, and at the bottom, he

was interested in something else. But in what? In what? That was the

problem which Bernard had come to discuss with him-or rather, since

it was always Helmholtz who did all the talking, to listen to his friend

discussing, yet once more.

Three charming girls from the Bureau of Propaganda by Synthetic

Voice waylaid him as he stepped out of the lift.

"Oh, Helmholtz, darling, do come and have a picnic supper with us on

Exmoor." They clung round him imploringly.

He shook his head, he pushed his way through them. "No, no."

"We're not inviting any other man."

But Helmholtz remained unshaken even by this delightful promise.

"No," he repeated, "I'm busy." And he held resolutely on his course.

The girls trailed after him. It was not till he had actually climbed into

Bernard's plane and slammed the door that they gave up pursuit. Not

without reproaches.

"These women!" he said, as the machine rose into the air. "These

women!" And he shook his head, he frowned. "Too awful," Bernard

hypocritically agreed, wishing, as he spoke the words, that he could

have as many girls as Helmholtz did, and with as little trouble. He was

seized with a sudden urgent need to boast. "I'm taking Lenina Crowne

to New Mexico with me," he said in a tone as casual as he could make

it.

"Are you?" said Helmholtz, with a total absence of interest. Then after

a little pause, "This last week or two," he went on, "I've been cutting

all my committees and all my girls. You can't imagine what a hullaba-

loo they've been making about it at the College. Still, it's been worth

it, I think. The effects ..." He hesitated. "Well, they're odd, they're very

odd."

A physical shortcoming could produce a kind of mental excess. The

process, it seemed, was reversible. Mental excess could produce, for

its own purposes, the voluntary blindness and deafness of deliberate

solitude, the artificial impotence of asceticism.

The rest of the short flight was accomplished in silence. When they

had arrived and were comfortably stretched out on the pneumatic so-

fas in Bernard's room, Helmholtz began again.

Speaking very slowly, "Did you ever feel," he asked, "as though you

had something inside you that was only waiting for you to give it a

chance to come out? Some sort of extra power that you aren't us-

ing-you know, like all the water that goes down the falls instead of

through the turbines?" He looked at Bernard questioningly.

"You mean all the emotions one might be feeling if things were differ-

ent?"

Helmholtz shook his head. "Not quite. I'm thinking of a queer feeling I

sometimes get, a feeling that I've got something important to say and

the power to say it-only I don't know what it is, and I can't make any

use of the power. If there was some different way of writing ... Or else

something else to write about ..." He was silent; then, "You see," he

went on at last, "I'm pretty good at inventing phrases-you know, the

sort of words that suddenly make you jump, almost as though you'd

sat on a pin, they seem so new and exciting even though they're about

something hypnopaedically obvious. But that doesn't seem enough. It's

not enough for the phrases to be good; what you make with them

ought to be good too."

"But your things are good, Helmholtz."

"Oh, as far as they go." Helmholtz shrugged his shoulders. "But they

go such a little way. They aren't important enough, somehow. I feel I

could do something much more important. Yes, and more intense,

more violent. But what? What is there more important to say? And

how can one be violent about the sort of things one's expected to write

about? Words can be like X-rays, if you use them properly-they'll go

through anything. You read and you're pierced. That's one of the

things I try to teach my students-how to write piercingly. But what on

earth's the good of being pierced by an article about a Community

Sing, or the latest improvement in scent organs? Besides, can you

make words really piercing-you know, like the very hardest X-

rays-when you're writing about that sort of thing? Can you say some-

thing about nothing? That's what it finally boils down to. I try and I try

"Hush!" said Bernard suddenly, and lifted a warning finger; they lis-

tened. "I believe there's somebody at the door," he whispered.

Helmholtz got up, tiptoed across the room, and with a sharp quick

movement flung the door wide open. There was, of course, nobody

there.

"I'm sorry," said Bernard, feeling and looking uncomfortably foolish. "I

suppose I've got things on my nerves a bit. When people are suspi-

cious with you, you start being suspicious with them."

He passed his hand across his eyes, he sighed, his voice became plain-

tive. He was justifying himself. "If you knew what I'd had to put up

with recently," he said almost tearfully-and the uprush of his self-pity

was like a fountain suddenly released. "If you only knew!"

Helmholtz Watson listened with a certain sense of discomfort. "Poor lit-

tle Bernard!" he said to himself. But at the same time he felt rather

ashamed for his friend. He wished Bernard would show a little more

pride.

Chapter Five

BY EIGHT O'CLOCK the light was failing. The loud speaker in the tower

of the Stoke Poges Club House began, in a more than human tenor, to

announce the closing of the courses. Lenina and Henry abandoned

their game and walked back towards the Club. From the grounds of

the Internal and External Secretion Trust came the lowing of those

thousands of cattle which provided, with their hormones and their

milk, the raw materials for the great factory at Farnham Royal.

An incessant buzzing of helicopters filled the twilight. Every two and a

half minutes a bell and the screech of whistles announced the depar-

ture of one of the light monorail trains which carried the lower caste

golfers back from their separate course to the metropolis.

Lenina and Henry climbed into their machine and started off. At eight

hundred feet Henry slowed down the helicopter screws, and they hung

for a minute or two poised above the fading landscape. The forest of

Burnham Beeches stretched like a great pool of darkness towards the

bright shore of the western sky. Crimson at the horizon, the last of the

sunset faded, through orange, upwards into yellow and a pale watery

green. Northwards, beyond and above the trees, the Internal and Ex-

ternal Secretions factory glared with a fierce electric brilliance from

every window of its twenty stories. Beneath them lay the buildings of

the Golf Club-the huge Lower Caste barracks and, on the other side of

a dividing wall, the smaller houses reserved for Alpha and Beta mem-

bers. The approaches to the monorail station were black with the ant-

like pullulation of lower-caste activity. From under the glass vault a

lighted train shot out into the open. Following its southeasterly course

across the dark plain their eyes were drawn to the majestic buildings

of the Slough Crematorium. For the safety of night-flying planes, its

four tall chimneys were flood-lighted and tipped with crimson danger

signals. It was a landmark.

"Why do the smoke-stacks have those things like balconies around

them?" enquired Lenina.

"Phosphorus recovery," explained Henry telegraphically. "On their way

up the chimney the gases go through four separate treatments. P2O5

used to go right out of circulation every time they cremated some one.

Now they recover over ninety-eight per cent of it. More than a kilo and

a half per adult corpse. Which makes the best part of four hundred

tons of phosphorus every year from England alone." Henry spoke with

a happy pride, rejoicing whole-heartedly in the achievement, as

though it had been his own. "Fine to think we can go on being socially

useful even after we're dead. Making plants grow."

Lenina, meanwhile, had turned her eyes away and was looking per-

pendicularly downwards at the monorail station. "Fine," she agreed.

"But queer that Alphas and Betas won't make any more plants grow

than those nasty little Gammas and Deltas and Epsilons down there."

"All men are physico-chemically equal," said Henry sententiously. "Be-

sides, even Epsilons perform indispensable services."

"Even an Epsilon ..." Lenina suddenly remembered an occasion when,

as a little girl at school, she had woken up in the middle of the night

and become aware, for the first time, of the whispering that had

haunted all her sleeps. She saw again the beam of moonlight, the row

of small white beds; heard once more the soft, soft voice that said (the

words were there, unforgotten, unforgettable after so many night-long

repetitions): "Every one works for every one else. We can't do without

any one. Even Epsilons are useful. We couldn't do without Epsilons.

Every one works for every one else. We can't do without any one ..."

Lenina remembered her first shock of fear and surprise; her specula-

tions through half a wakeful hour; and then, under the influence of

those endless repetitions, the gradual soothing of her mind, the sooth-

ing, the smoothing, the stealthy creeping of sleep. ...

"I suppose Epsilons don't really mind being Epsilons," she said aloud.

"Of course they don't. How can they? They don't know what it's like

being anything else. We'd mind, of course. But then we've been differ-

ently conditioned. Besides, we start with a different heredity."

"I'm glad I'm not an Epsilon," said Lenina, with conviction.

"And if you were an Epsilon," said Henry, "your conditioning would

have made you no less thankful that you weren't a Beta or an Alpha."

He put his forward propeller into gear and headed the machine to-

wards London. Behind them, in the west, the crimson and orange were

almost faded; a dark bank of cloud had crept into the zenith. As they

flew over the crematorium, the plane shot upwards on the column of

hot air rising from the chimneys, only to fall as suddenly when it

passed into the descending chill beyond.

"What a marvellous switchback!" Lenina laughed delightedly.

But Henry's tone was almost, for a moment, melancholy. "Do you

know what that switchback was?" he said. "It was some human being

finally and definitely disappearing. Going up in a squirt of hot gas. It

would be curious to know who it was-a man or a woman, an Alpha or

an Epsilon. ..." He sighed. Then, in a resolutely cheerful voice, "Any-

how," he concluded, "there's one thing we can be certain of; whoever

he may have been, he was happy when he was alive. Everybody's

happy now."

"Yes, everybody's happy now," echoed Lenina. They had heard the

words repeated a hundred and fifty times every night for twelve years.

Landing on the roof of Henry's forty-story apartment house in West-

minster, they went straight down to the dining-hall. There, in a loud

and cheerful company, they ate an excellent meal. Soma was served

with the coffee. Lenina took two half-gramme tablets and Henry three.

At twenty past nine they walked across the street to the newly opened

Westminster Abbey Cabaret. It was a night almost without clouds,

moonless and starry; but of this on the whole depressing fact Lenina

and Henry were fortunately unaware. The electric sky-signs effectively

shut off the outer darkness. "CALVIN STOPES AND HIS SIXTEEN

SEXOPHONISTS." From the fagade of the new Abbey the giant letters

invitingly glared. "LONDON'S FINEST SCENT AND COLOUR ORGAN.

ALL THE LATEST SYNTHETIC MUSIC."

They entered. The air seemed hot and somehow breathless with the

scent of ambergris and sandalwood. On the domed ceiling of the hall,

the colour organ had momentarily painted a tropical sunset. The Six-

teen Sexophonists were playing an old favourite: "There ain't no Bottle

in all the world like that dear little Bottle of mine." Four hundred cou-

ples were five-stepping round the polished floor. Lenina and Henry

were soon the four hundred and first. The saxophones wailed like me-

lodious cats under the moon, moaned in the alto and tenor registers as

though the little death were upon them. Rich with a wealth of harmon-

ics, their tremulous chorus mounted towards a climax, louder and ever

louder-until at last, with a wave of his hand, the conductor let loose

the final shattering note of ether-music and blew the sixteen merely

human blowers clean out of existence. Thunder in A flat major. And

then, in all but silence, in all but darkness, there followed a gradual

deturgescence, a diminuendo sliding gradually, through quarter tones,

down, down to a faintly whispered dominant chord that lingered on

(while the five-four rhythms still pulsed below) charging the darkened

seconds with an intense expectancy. And at last expectancy was ful-

filled. There was a sudden explosive sunrise, and simultaneously, the

Sixteen burst into song:

"Bottle of mine, it's you I've always wanted!

Bottle of mine, why was I ever decanted?

Skies are blue inside of you,

The weather's always fine;

For

There ain 't no Bottle in all the world

Like that dear little Bottle of mine. "

Five-stepping with the other four hundred round and round Westmin-

ster Abbey, Lenina and Henry were yet dancing in another world-the

warm, the richly coloured, the infinitely friendly world of soma-holiday.

How kind, how good-looking, how delightfully amusing every one was!

"Bottle of mine, it's you I've always wanted ..." But Lenina and Henry

had what they wanted ... They were inside, here and now-safely inside

with the fine weather, the perennially blue sky. And when, exhausted,

the Sixteen had laid by their saxophones and the Synthetic Music ap-

paratus was producing the very latest in slow Malthusian Blues, they

might have been twin embryos gently rocking together on the waves

of a bottled ocean of blood-surrogate.

"Good-night, dear friends. Good-night, dear friends." The loud speak-

ers veiled their commands in a genial and musical politeness. "Good-

night, dear friends ..."

Obediently, with all the others, Lenina and Henry left the building. The

depressing stars had travelled quite some way across the heavens. But

though the separating screen of the sky-signs had now to a great ex-

tent dissolved, the two young people still retained their happy igno-

rance of the night.

Swallowing half an hour before closing time, that second dose of soma

had raised a quite impenetrable wall between the actual universe and

their minds. Bottled, they crossed the street; bottled, they took the lift

up to Henry's room on the twenty-eighth floor. And yet, bottled as she

was, and in spite of that second gramme of soma, Lenina did not for-

get to take all the contraceptive precautions prescribed by the regula-

tions. Years of intensive hypnopaedia and, from twelve to seventeen,

Malthusian drill three times a week had made the taking of these pre-

cautions almost as automatic and inevitable as blinking.

"Oh, and that reminds me," she said, as she came back from the bath-

room, "Fanny Crowne wants to know where you found that lovely

green morocco-surrogate cartridge belt you gave me."

§2

ALTERNATE Thursdays were Bernard's Solidarity Service days. After an

early dinner at the Aphroditzeum (to which Helrnholtz had recently

been elected under Rule Two) he took leave of his friend and, hailing a

taxi on the roof told the man to fly to the Fordson Community Singery.

The machine rose a couple of hundred metres, then headed eastwards,

and as it turned, there before Bernard's eyes, gigantically beautiful,

was the Singery. Flood-lighted, its three hundred and twenty metres of

white Carrara-surrogate gleamed with a snowy incandescence over

Ludgate Hill; at each of the four corners of its helicopter platform an

immense T shone crimson against the night, and from the mouths of

twenty-four vast golden trumpets rumbled a solemn synthetic music.

"Damn, I'm late," Bernard said to himself as he first caught sight of

Big Henry, the Singery clock. And sure enough, as he was paying off

his cab, Big Henry sounded the hour. "Ford," sang out an immense

bass voice from all the golden trumpets. "Ford, Ford, Ford ..." Nine

times. Bernard ran for the lift.

The great auditorium for Ford's Day celebrations and other massed

Community Sings was at the bottom of the building. Above it, a hun-

dred to each floor, were the seven thousand rooms used by Solidarity

Groups for their fortnight services. Bernard dropped down to floor

thirty-three, hurried along the corridor, stood hesitating for a moment

outside Room 3210, then, having wound himself up, opened the door

and walked in.

Thank Ford! he was not the last. Three chairs of the twelve arranged

round the circular table were still unoccupied. He slipped into the

nearest of them as inconspicuously as he could and prepared to frown

at the yet later comers whenever they should arrive.

Turning towards him, "What were you playing this afternoon?" the girl

on his left enquired. "Obstacle, or Electro-magnetic?"

Bernard looked at her (Ford! it was Morgana Rothschild) and blushingly

had to admit that he had been playing neither. Morgana stared at him

with astonishment. There was an awkward silence.

Then pointedly she turned away and addressed herself to the more

sporting man on her left.

"A good beginning for a Solidarity Service," thought Bernard miserably,

and foresaw for himself yet another failure to achieve atonement. If

only he had given himself time to look around instead of scuttling for

the nearest chair! He could have sat between Fifi Bradlaugh and Jo-

anna Diesel. Instead of which he had gone and blindly planted himself

next to Morgana. Morgana! Ford! Those black eyebrows of hers-that

eyebrow, rather-for they met above the nose. Ford! And on his right

was Clara Deterding. True, Clara's eyebrows didn't meet. But she was

really too pneumatic. Whereas Fifi and Joanna were absolutely right.

Plump, blonde, not too large ... And it was that great lout, Tom Kawa-

guchi, who now took the seat between them.

The last arrival was Sarojini Engels.

"You're late," said the President of the Group severely. "Don't let it

happen again."

Sarojini apologized and slid into her place between Jim Bokanovsky

and Herbert Bakunin. The group was now complete, the solidarity cir-

cle perfect and without flaw. Man, woman, man, in a ring of endless

alternation round the table. Twelve of them ready to be made one,

waiting to come together, to be fused, to lose their twelve separate

identities in a larger being.

The President stood up, made the sign of the T and, switching on the

synthetic music, let loose the soft indefatigable beating of drums and a

choir of instruments-near-wind and super-string-that plangently re-

peated and repeated the brief and unescapably haunting melody of the

first Solidarity Hymn. Again, again-and it was not the ear that heard

the pulsing rhythm, it was the midriff; the wail and clang of those re-

curring harmonies haunted, not the mind, but the yearning bowels of

compassion.

The President made another sign of the T and sat down. The service

had begun. The dedicated soma tablets were placed in the centre of

the table. The loving cup of strawberry ice-cream soma was passed

from hand to hand and, with the formula, "I drink to my annihilation,"

twelve times quaffed. Then to the accompaniment of the synthetic or-

chestra the First Solidarity Hymn was sung.

"Ford, we are twelve; oh, make us one,

Like drops within the Social River,

Oh, make us now together run

As swiftly as thy shining Flivver. "

Twelve yearning stanzas. And then the loving cup was passed a second

time. "I drink to the Greater Being" was now the formula. All drank.

Tirelessly the music played. The drums beat. The crying and clashing

of the harmonies were an obsession in the melted bowels. The Second

Solidarity Hymn was sung.

"Come, Greater Being, Social Friend,

Annihilating Twelve-in-One!

We long to die, for when we end,

Our larger life has but begun. "

Again twelve stanzas. By this time the soma had begun to work. Eyes

shone, cheeks were flushed, the inner light of universal benevolence

broke out on every face in happy, friendly smiles. Even Bernard felt

himself a little melted. When Morgana Rothschild turned and beamed

at him, he did his best to beam back. But the eyebrow, that black two-

in-one-alas, it was still there; he couldn't ignore it, couldn't, however

hard he tried. The melting hadn't gone far enough. Perhaps if he had

been sitting between Fifi and Joanna ... For the third time the loving

cup went round; "I drink to the imminence of His Coming," said Mor-

gana Rothschild, whose turn it happened to be to initiate the circular

rite. Her tone was loud, exultant. She drank and passed the cup to

Bernard. "I drink to the imminence of His Coming," he repeated, with

a sincere attempt to feel that the coming was imminent; but the eye-

brow continued to haunt him, and the Coming, so far as he was con-

cerned, was horribly remote. He drank and handed the cup to Clara

Deterding. "It'll be a failure again," he said to himself. "I know it will."

But he went on doing his best to beam.

The loving cup had made its circuit. Lifting his hand, the President

gave a signal; the chorus broke out into the third Solidarity Hymn.

"Feel how the Greater Being comes!

Rejoice and, in rejoicings, die!

Melt in the music of the drums!

For I am you and you are I. "

As verse succeeded verse the voices thrilled with an ever intenser ex-

citement. The sense of the Coming's imminence was like an electric

tension in the air. The President switched off the music and, with the

final note of the final stanza, there was absolute silence-the silence of

stretched expectancy, quivering and creeping with a galvanic life. The

President reached out his hand; and suddenly a Voice, a deep strong

Voice, more musical than any merely human voice, richer, warmer,

more vibrant with love and yearning and compassion, a wonderful,

mysterious, supernatural Voice spoke from above their heads. Very

slowly, "Oh, Ford, Ford, Ford," it said diminishingly and on a descend-

ing scale. A sensation of warmth radiated thrillingly out from the solar

plexus to every extremity of the bodies of those who listened; tears

came into their eyes; their hearts, their bowels seemed to move within

them, as though with an independent life. "Ford!" they were melting,

"Ford!" dissolved, dissolved. Then, in another tone, suddenly, star-

tlingly. "Listen!" trumpeted the voice. "Listen!" They listened. After a

pause, sunk to a whisper, but a whisper, somehow, more penetrating

than the loudest cry. "The feet of the Greater Being," it went on, and

repeated the words: "The feet of the Greater Being." The whisper al-

most expired. "The feet of the Greater Being are on the stairs." And

once more there was silence; and the expectancy, momentarily re-

laxed, was stretched again, tauter, tauter, almost to the tearing point.

The feet of the Greater Being-oh, they heard them, they heard them,

coming softly down the stairs, coming nearer and nearer down the in-

visible stairs. The feet of the Greater Being. And suddenly the tearing

point was reached. Her eyes staring, her lips parted. Morgana

Rothschild sprang to her feet.

"I hear him," she cried. "I hear him."

"He's coming," shouted Sarojini Engels.

"Yes, he's coming, I hear him." Fifi Bradlaugh and Tom Kawaguchi rose

simultaneously to their feet.

"Oh, oh, oh!" Joanna inarticulately testified.

"He's coming!" yelled Jim Bokanovsky.

The President leaned forward and, with a touch, released a delirium of

cymbals and blown brass, a fever of tom-tomming.

"Oh, he's coming!" screamed Clara Deterding. "Aie!" and it was as

though she were having her throat cut.

Feeling that it was time for him to do something, Bernard also jumped

up and shouted: "I hear him; He's coming." But it wasn't true. He

heard nothing and, for him, nobody was coming. Nobody-in spite of

the music, in spite of the mounting excitement. But he waved his

arms, he shouted with the best of them; and when the others began to

jig and stamp and shuffle, he also jigged and shuffled.

Round they went, a circular procession of dancers, each with hands on

the hips of the dancer preceding, round and round, shouting in unison,

stamping to the rhythm of the music with their feet, beating it, beating

it out with hands on the buttocks in front; twelve pairs of hands beat-

ing as one; as one, twelve buttocks slabbily resounding. Twelve as

one, twelve as one. "I hear Him, I hear Him coming." The music quick-

ened; faster beat the feet, faster, faster fell the rhythmic hands. And

all at once a great synthetic bass boomed out the words which an-

nounced the approaching atonement and final consummation of soli-

darity, the coming of the Twelve-in-One, the incarnation of the Greater

Being. "Orgy-porgy," it sang, while the tom-toms continued to beat

their feverish tattoo:

"Orgy-porgy, Ford and fun,

Kiss the girls and make them One.

Boys at One with girls at peace;

Orgy-porgy gives release. "

"Orgy-porgy," the dancers caught up the liturgical refrain, "Orgy-porgy,

Ford and fun, kiss the girls ..." And as they sang, the lights began

slowly to fade-to fade and at the same time to grow warmer, richer,

redder, until at last they were dancing in the crimson twilight of an

Embryo Store. "Orgy-porgy ..." In their blood-coloured and foetal dark-

ness the dancers continued for a while to circulate, to beat and beat

out the indefatigable rhythm. "Orgy-porgy ..." Then the circle wavered,

broke, fell in partial disintegration on the ring of couches which sur-

rounded-circle enclosing circle-the table and its planetary chairs.

"Orgy-porgy ..." Tenderly the deep Voice crooned and cooed; in the red

twilight it was as though some enormous negro dove were hovering

benevolently over the now prone or supine dancers.

They were standing on the roof; Big Henry had just sung eleven. The

night was calm and warm.

"Wasn't it wonderful?" said Fifi Bradlaugh. "Wasn't it simply wonder-

ful?" She looked at Bernard with an expression of rapture, but of rap-

ture in which there was no trace of agitation or excitement-for to be

excited is still to be unsatisfied. Hers was the calm ecstasy of achieved

consummation, the peace, not of mere vacant satiety and nothingness,

but of balanced life, of energies at rest and in equilibrium. A rich and

living peace. For the Solidarity Service had given as well as taken,

drawn off only to replenish. She was full, she was made perfect, she

was still more than merely herself. "Didn't you think it was wonderful?"

she insisted, looking into Bernard's face with those supernaturally

shining eyes.

"Yes, I thought it was wonderful," he lied and looked away; the sight of

her transfigured face was at once an accusation and an ironical re-

minder of his own separateness. He was as miserably isolated now as

he had been when the service began-more isolated by reason of his

unreplenished emptiness, his dead satiety. Separate and unatoned,

while the others were being fused into the Greater Being; alone even

in Morgana's embrace-much more alone, indeed, more hopelessly

himself than he had ever been in his life before. He had emerged from

that crimson twilight into the common electric glare with a self-

consciousness intensified to the pitch of agony. He was utterly miser-

able, and perhaps (her shining eyes accused him), perhaps it was his

own fault. "Quite wonderful," he repeated; but the only thing he could

think of was Morgana's eyebrow.

Chapter Six

ODD, ODD, odd, was Lenina's verdict on Bernard Marx. So odd, in-

deed, that in the course of the succeeding weeks she had wondered

more than once whether she shouldn't change her mind about the New

Mexico holiday, and go instead to the North Pole with Benito Hoover.

The trouble was that she knew the North Pole, had been there with

George Edzel only last summer, and what was more, found it pretty

grim. Nothing to do, and the hotel too hopelessly old-fashioned-no

television laid on in the bedrooms, no scent organ, only the most pu-

trid synthetic music, and not more than twenty-five Escalator-Squash

Courts for over two hundred guests. No, decidedly she couldn't face

the North Pole again. Added to which, she had only been to America

once before. And even then, how inadequately! A cheap week-end in

New York-had it been with Jean-Jacques Habibullah or Bokanovsky

Jones? She couldn't remember. Anyhow, it was of absolutely no impor-

tance. The prospect of flying West again, and for a whole week, was

very inviting. Moreover, for at least three days of that week they would

be in the Savage Reservation. Not more than half a dozen people in

the whole Centre had ever been inside a Savage Reservation. As an

Alpha-Plus psychologist, Bernard was one of the few men she knew

entitled to a permit. For Lenina, the opportunity was unique. And yet,

so unique also was Bernard's oddness that she had hesitated to take

it, had actually thought of risking the Pole again with funny old Benito.

At least Benito was normal. Whereas Bernard ...

"Alcohol in his blood-surrogate," was Fanny's explanation of every ec-

centricity. But Henry, with whom, one evening when they were in bed

together, Lenina had rather anxiously discussed her new lover, Henry

had compared poor Bernard to a rhinoceros.

"You can't teach a rhinoceros tricks," he had explained in his brief and

vigorous style. "Some men are almost rhinoceroses; they don't re-

spond properly to conditioning. Poor Devils! Bernard's one of them.

Luckily for him, he's pretty good at his job. Otherwise the Director

would never have kept him. However," he added consolingly, "I think

he's pretty harmless."

Pretty harmless, perhaps; but also pretty disquieting. That mania, to

start with, for doing things in private. Which meant, in practice, not

doing anything at all. For what was there that one could do in private.

(Apart, of course, from going to bed: but one couldn't do that all the

time.) Yes, what was there? Precious little. The first afternoon they

went out together was particularly fine. Lenina had suggested a swim

at Toquay Country Club followed by dinner at the Oxford Union. But

Bernard thought there would be too much of a crowd. Then what

about a round of Electro-magnetic Golf at St. Andrew's? But again, no:

Bernard considered that Electro-magnetic Golf was a waste of time.

"Then what's time for?" asked Lenina in some astonishment.

Apparently, for going walks in the Lake District; for that was what he

now proposed. Land on the top of Skiddaw and walk for a couple of

hours in the heather. "Alone with you, Lenina."

"But, Bernard, we shall be alone all night."

Bernard blushed and looked away. "I meant, alone for talking," he

mumbled.

"Talking? But what about?" Walking and talking-that seemed a very

odd way of spending an afternoon.

In the end she persuaded him, much against his will, to fly over to

Amsterdam to see the Semi-Demi-Finals of the Women's Heavyweight

Wrestling Championship.

"In a crowd," he grumbled. "As usual." He remained obstinately

gloomy the whole afternoon; wouldn't talk to Lenina's friends (of

whom they met dozens in the ice-cream soma bar between the wres-

tling bouts); and in spite of his misery absolutely refused to take the

half-gramme raspberry sundae which she pressed upon him. "I'd

rather be myself," he said. "Myself and nasty. Not somebody else,

however jolly."

"A gramme in time saves nine," said Lenina, producing a bright treas-

ure of sleep-taught wisdom. Bernard pushed away the proffered glass

impatiently.

"Now don't lose your temper," she said. "Remember one cubic centi-

metre cures ten gloomy sentiments."

"Oh, for Ford's sake, be quiet!" he shouted.

Lenina shrugged her shoulders. "A gramme is always better than a

damn," she concluded with dignity, and drank the sundae herself.

On their way back across the Channel, Bernard insisted on stopping his

propeller and hovering on his helicopter screws within a hundred feet

of the waves. The weather had taken a change for the worse; a south-

westerly wind had sprung up, the sky was cloudy.

"Look," he commanded.

"But it's horrible," said Lenina, shrinking back from the window. She

was appalled by the rushing emptiness of the night, by the black

foam-flecked water heaving beneath them, by the pale face of the

moon, so haggard and distracted among the hastening clouds. "Let's

turn on the radio. Quick!" She reached for the dialling knob on the

dash-board and turned it at random.

"... skies are blue inside of you," sang sixteen tremoloing falsettos,

"the weather's always ..."

Then a hiccough and silence. Bernard had switched off the current.

"I want to look at the sea in peace," he said. "One can't even look with

that beastly noise going on."

"But it's lovely. And I don't want to look."

"But I do," he insisted. "It makes me feel as though ..." he hesitated,

searching for words with which to express himself, "as though I were

more me, if you see what I mean. More on my own, not so completely

a part of something else. Not just a cell in the social body. Doesn't it

make you feel like that, Lenina?"

But Lenina was crying. "It's horrible, it's horrible," she kept repeating.

"And how can you talk like that about not wanting to be a part of the

social body? After all, every one works for every one else. We can't do

without any one. Even Epsilons ..."

"Yes, I know," said Bernard derisively. '"Even Epsilons are useful'! So

am I. And I damned well wish I weren't!"

Lenina was shocked by his blasphemy. "Bernard!" She protested in a

voice of amazed distress. "How can you?"

In a different key, "How can I?" he repeated meditatively. "No, the real

problem is: How is it that I can't, or rather-because, after all, I know

quite well why I can't-what would it be like if I could, if I were free-

not enslaved by my conditioning."

"But, Bernard, you're saying the most awful things."

"Don't you wish you were free, Lenina?"

"I don't know what you mean. I am free. Free to have the most won-

derful time. Everybody's happy nowadays."

He laughed, "Yes, 'Everybody's happy nowadays.' We begin giving the

children that at five. But wouldn't you like to be free to be happy in

some other way, Lenina? In your own way, for example; not in every-

body else's way."

"I don't know what you mean," she repeated. Then, turning to him,

"Oh, do let's go back, Bernard," she besought; "I do so hate it here."

"Don't you like being with me?"

"But of course, Bernard. It's this horrible place."

"I thought we'd be more ... more together here-with nothing but the

sea and moon. More together than in that crowd, or even in my

rooms. Don't you understand that?"

"I don't understand anything," she said with decision, determined to

preserve her incomprehension intact. "Nothing. Least of all," she con-

tinued in another tone "why you don't take soma when you have these

dreadful ideas of yours. You'd forget all about them. And instead of

feeling miserable, you'd be jolly. So jolly," she repeated and smiled, for

all the puzzled anxiety in her eyes, with what was meant to be an in-

viting and voluptuous cajolery.

He looked at her in silence, his face unresponsive and very grave-

looked at her intently. After a few seconds Lenina's eyes flinched

away; she uttered a nervous little laugh, tried to think of something to

say and couldn't. The silence prolonged itself.

When Bernard spoke at last, it was in a small tired voice. "All right

then," he said, "we'll go back." And stepping hard on the accelerator,

he sent the machine rocketing up into the sky. At four thousand he

started his propeller. They flew in silence for a minute or two. Then,

suddenly, Bernard began to laugh. Rather oddly, Lenina thought, but

still, it was laughter.

"Feeling better?" she ventured to ask.

For answer, he lifted one hand from the controls and, slipping his arm

around her, began to fondle her breasts.

"Thank Ford," she said to herself, "he's all right again."

Half an hour later they were back in his rooms. Bernard swallowed four

tablets of soma at a gulp, turned on the radio and television and began

to undress.

"Well," Lenina enquired, with significant archness when they met next

afternoon on the roof, "did you think it was fun yesterday?"

Bernard nodded. They climbed into the plane. A little jolt, and they

were off.

"Every one says I'm awfully pneumatic," said Lenina reflectively, pat-

ting her own legs.

"Awfully." But there was an expression of pain in Bernard's eyes. "Like

meat," he was thinking.

She looked up with a certain anxiety. "But you don't think I'm too

plump, do you?"

He shook his head. Like so much meat.

"You think I'm all right." Another nod. "In every way?"

"Perfect," he said aloud. And inwardly. "She thinks of herself that way.

She doesn't mind being meat."

Lenina smiled triumphantly. But her satisfaction was premature.

"All the same," he went on, after a little pause, "I still rather wish it

had all ended differently."

"Differently?" Were there other endings?

"I didn't want it to end with our going to bed," he specified.

Lenina was astonished.

"Not at once, not the first day."

"But then what ...?"

He began to talk a lot of incomprehensible and dangerous nonsense.

Lenina did her best to stop the ears of her mind; but every now and

then a phrase would insist on becoming audible. "... to try the effect of

arresting my impulses," she heard him say. The words seemed to

touch a spring in her mind.

"Never put off till to-morrow the fun you can have to-day," she said

gravely.

"Two hundred repetitions, twice a week from fourteen to sixteen and a

half," was all his comment. The mad bad talk rambled on. "I want to

know what passion is," she heard him saying. "I want to feel some-

thing strongly."

"When the individual feels, the community reels," Lenina pronounced.

"Well, why shouldn't it reel a bit?"

"Bernard!"

But Bernard remained unabashed.

"Adults intellectually and during working hours," he went on. "Infants

where feeling and desire are concerned."

"Our Ford loved infants."

Ignoring the interruption. "It suddenly struck me the other day," con-

tinued Bernard, "that it might be possible to be an adult all the time."

"I don't understand." Lenina's tone was firm.

"I know you don't. And that's why we went to bed together yester-

day-like infants-instead of being adults and waiting."

"But it was fun," Lenina insisted. "Wasn't it?"

"Oh, the greatest fun," he answered, but in a voice so mournful, with

an expression so profoundly miserable, that Lenina felt all her triumph

suddenly evaporate. Perhaps he had found her too plump, after all.

"I told you so," was all that Fanny said, when Lenina came and made

her confidences. "It's the alcohol they put in his surrogate."

"All the same," Lenina insisted. "I do like him. He has such awfully nice

hands. And the way he moves his shoulders-that's very attractive."

She sighed. "But I wish he weren't so odd."

§2

HALTING for a moment outside the door of the Director's room, Ber-

nard drew a deep breath and squared his shoulders, bracing himself to

meet the dislike and disapproval which he was certain of finding

within. He knocked and entered.

"A permit for you to initial, Director," he said as airily as possible, and

laid the paper on the writing-table.

The Director glanced at him sourly. But the stamp of the World Con-

troller's Office was at the head of the paper and the signature of Mus-

tapha Mond, bold and black, across the bottom. Everything was per-

fectly in order. The director had no choice. He pencilled his initials-two

small pale letters abject at the feet of Mustapha Mond-and was about

to return the paper without a word of comment or genial Ford-speed,

when his eye was caught by something written in the body of the per-

mit.

"For the New Mexican Reservation?" he said, and his tone, the face he

lifted to Bernard, expressed a kind of agitated astonishment.

Surprised by his surprise, Bernard nodded. There was a silence.

The Director leaned back in his chair, frowning. "How long ago was it?"

he said, speaking more to himself than to Bernard. "Twenty years, I

suppose. Nearer twenty-five. I must have been your age ..." He sighed

and shook his head.

Bernard felt extremely uncomfortable. A man so conventional, so scru-

pulously correct as the Director-and to commit so gross a solecism! It

made him want to hide his face, to run out of the room. Not that he

himself saw anything intrinsically objectionable in people talking about

the remote past; that was one of those hypnopaedic prejudices he had

(so he imagined) completely got rid of. What made him feel shy was

the knowledge that the Director disapproved-disapproved and yet had

been betrayed into doing the forbidden thing. Under what inward com-

pulsion? Through his discomfort Bernard eagerly listened.

"I had the same idea as you," the Director was saying. "Wanted to

have a look at the savages. Got a permit for New Mexico and went

there for my summer holiday. With the girl I was having at the mo-

ment. She was a Beta-Minus, and I think" (he shut his eyes), "I think

she had yellow hair. Anyhow she was pneumatic, particularly pneu-

matic; I remember that. Well, we went there, and we looked at the

savages, and we rode about on horses and all that. And then-it was

almost the last day of my leave-then ... well, she got lost. We'd gone

riding up one of those revolting mountains, and it was horribly hot and

oppressive, and after lunch we went to sleep. Or at least I did. She

must have gone for a walk, alone. At any rate, when I woke up, she

wasn't there. And the most frightful thunderstorm I've ever seen was

just bursting on us. And it poured and roared and flashed; and the

horses broke loose and ran away; and I fell down, trying to catch

them, and hurt my knee, so that I could hardly walk. Still, I searched

and I shouted and I searched. But there was no sign of her. Then I

thought she must have gone back to the rest-house by herself. So I

crawled down into the valley by the way we had come. My knee was

agonizingly painful, and I'd lost my soma. It took me hours. I didn't

get back to the rest-house till after midnight. And she wasn't there;

she wasn't there," the Director repeated. There was a silence. "Well,"

he resumed at last, "the next day there was a search. But we couldn't

find her. She must have fallen into a gully somewhere; or been eaten

by a mountain lion. Ford knows. Anyhow it was horrible. It upset me

very much at the time. More than it ought to have done, I dare say.

Because, after all, it's the sort of accident that might have happened

to any one; and, of course, the social body persists although the com-

ponent cells may change." But this sleep-taught consolation did not

seem to be very effective. Shaking his head, "I actually dream about it

sometimes," the Director went on in a low voice. "Dream of being

woken up by that peal of thunder and finding her gone; dream of

searching and searching for her under the trees." He lapsed into the

silence of reminiscence.

"You must have had a terrible shock," said Bernard, almost enviously.

At the sound of his voice the Director started into a guilty realization of

where he was; shot a glance at Bernard, and averting his eyes,

blushed darkly; looked at him again with sudden suspicion and, angrily

on his dignity, "Don't imagine," he said, "that I'd had any indecorous

relation with the girl. Nothing emotional, nothing long-drawn. It was all

perfectly healthy and normal." He handed Bernard the permit. "I really

don't know why I bored you with this trivial anecdote." Furious with

himself for having given away a discreditable secret, he vented his

rage on Bernard. The look in his eyes was now frankly malignant. "And

I should like to take this opportunity, Mr. Marx," he went on, "of saying

that I'm not at all pleased with the reports I receive of your behaviour

outside working hours. You may say that this is not my business. But it

is. I have the good name of the Centre to think of. My workers must

be above suspicion, particularly those of the highest castes. Alphas are

so conditioned that they do not have to be infantile in their emotional

behaviour. But that is all the more reason for their making a special ef-

fort to conform. It is their duty to be infantile, even against their incli-

nation. And so, Mr. Marx, I give you fair warning." The Director's voice

vibrated with an indignation that had now become wholly righteous

and impersonal-was the expression of the disapproval of Society itself.

"If ever I hear again of any lapse from a proper standard of infantile

decorum, I shall ask for your transference to a Sub-Centre-preferably

to Iceland. Good morning." And swivelling round in his chair, he picked

up his pen and began to write.

"That'll teach him," he said to himself. But he was mistaken. For Ber-

nard left the room with a swagger, exulting, as he banged the door

behind him, in the thought that he stood alone, embattled against the

order of things; elated by the intoxicating consciousness of his individ-

ual significance and importance. Even the thought of persecution left

him undismayed, was rather tonic than depressing. He felt strong

enough to meet and overcome affliction, strong enough to face even

Iceland. And this confidence was the greater for his not for a moment

really believing that he would be called upon to face anything at all.

People simply weren't transferred for things like that. Iceland was just

a threat. A most stimulating and life-giving threat. Walking along the

corridor, he actually whistled.

Heroic was the account he gave that evening of his interview with the

D.H.C. "Whereupon," it concluded, "I simply told him to go to the Bot-

tomless Past and marched out of the room. And that was that." He

looked at Helmholtz Watson expectantly, awaiting his due reward of

sympathy, encouragement, admiration. But no word came. Helmholtz

sat silent, staring at the floor.

He liked Bernard; he was grateful to him for being the only man of his

acquaintance with whom he could talk about the subjects he felt to be

important. Nevertheless, there were things in Bernard which he hated.

This boasting, for example. And the outbursts of an abject self-pity

with which it alternated. And his deplorable habit of being bold after

the event, and full, in absence, of the most extraordinary presence of

mind. He hated these things-just because he liked Bernard. The sec-

onds passed. Helmholtz continued to stare at the floor. And suddenly

Bernard blushed and turned away.

§3

THE journey was quite uneventful. The Blue Pacific Rocket was two

and a half minutes early at New Orleans, lost four minutes in a tornado

over Texas, but flew into a favourable air current at Longitude 95

West, and was able to land at Santa Fe less than forty seconds behind

schedule time.

"Forty seconds on a six and a half hour flight. Not so bad," Lenina con-

ceded.

They slept that night at Santa Fe. The hotel was excellent-incompara-

bly better, for example, than that horrible Aurora Bora Palace in which

Lenina had suffered so much the previous summer. Liquid air, televi-

sion, vibro-vacuum massage, radio, boiling caffeine solution, hot con-

traceptives, and eight different kinds of scent were laid on in every

bedroom. The synthetic music plant was working as they entered the

hall and left nothing to be desired. A notice in the lift announced that

there were sixty Escalator-Squash-Racket Courts in the hotel, and that

Obstacle and Electro-magnetic Golf could both be played in the park.

"But it sounds simply too lovely," cried Lenina. "I almost wish we could

stay here. Sixty Escalator-Squash Courts ..."

"There won't be any in the Reservation," Bernard warned her. "And no

scent, no television, no hot water even. If you feel you can't stand it,

stay here till I come back."

Lenina was quite offended. "Of course I can stand it. I only said it was

lovely here because ... well, because progress is lovely, isn't it?"

"Five hundred repetitions once a week from thirteen to seventeen,"

said Bernard wearily, as though to himself.

"What did you say?"

"I said that progress was lovely. That's why you mustn't come to the

Reservation unless you really want to."

"But I do want to."

"Very well, then," said Bernard; and it was almost a threat.

Their permit required the signature of the Warden of the Reservation,

at whose office next morning they duly presented themselves. An

Epsilon-Plus negro porter took in Bernard's card, and they were admit-

ted almost immediately.

The Warden was a blond and brachycephalic Alpha-Minus, short, red,

moon-faced, and broad-shouldered, with a loud booming voice, very

well adapted to the utterance of hypnopaedic wisdom. He was a mine

of irrelevant information and unasked-for good advice. Once started,

he went on and on-boomingly.

"... five hundred and sixty thousand square kilometres, divided into

four distinct Sub-Reservations, each surrounded by a high-tension wire

fence."

At this moment, and for no apparent reason, Bernard suddenly re-

membered that he had left the Eau de Cologne tap in his bathroom

wide open and running.

"... supplied with current from the Grand Canyon hydro-electric sta-

tion."

"Cost me a fortune by the time I get back." With his mind's eye, Ber-

nard saw the needle on the scent meter creeping round and round,

antlike, indefatigable. "Quickly telephone to Helmholtz Watson."

"... upwards of five thousand kilometres of fencing at sixty thousand

volts."

"You don't say so," said Lenina politely, not knowing in the least what

the Warden had said, but taking her cue from his dramatic pause.

When the Warden started booming, she had inconspicuously swallowed

half a gramme of soma, with the result that she could now sit, se-

renely not listening, thinking of nothing at all, but with her large blue

eyes fixed on the Warden's face in an expression of rapt attention.

"To touch the fence is instant death," pronounced the Warden sol-

emnly. "There is no escape from a Savage Reservation."

The word "escape" was suggestive. "Perhaps," said Bernard, half ris-

ing, "we ought to think of going." The little black needle was scurrying,

an insect, nibbling through time, eating into his money.

"No escape," repeated the Warden, waving him back into his chair;

and as the permit was not yet countersigned Bernard had no choice

but to obey. "Those who are born in the Reservation-and remember,

my dear young lady," he added, leering obscenely at Lenina, and

speaking in an improper whisper, "remember that, in the Reservation,

children still are born, yes, actually born, revolting as that may seem

..." (He hoped that this reference to a shameful subject would make

Lenina blush; but she only smiled with simulated intelligence and said,

"You don't say so!" Disappointed, the Warden began again. ) "Those, I

repeat who are born in the Reservation are destined to die there."

Destined to die ... A decilitre of Eau de Cologne every minute. Six litres

an hour. "Perhaps," Bernard tried again, "we ought ..."

Leaning forward, the Warden tapped the table with his forefinger. "You

ask me how many people live in the Reservation. And I reply"-trium-

phantly-"I reply that we do not know. We can only guess."

"You don't say so."

"My dear young lady, I do say so."

Six times twenty-four-no, it would be nearer six times thirty-six. Ber-

nard was pale and trembling with impatience. But inexorably the

booming continued.

"... about sixty thousand Indians and half-breeds ... absolute savages ...

our inspectors occasionally visit ... otherwise, no communication what-

ever with the civilized world ... still preserve their repulsive habits and

customs ... marriage, if you know what that is, my dear young lady;

families ... no conditioning ... monstrous superstitions ... Christianity

and totemism and ancestor worship ... extinct languages, such as Zuni

and Spanish and Athapascan ... pumas, porcupines and other ferocious

animals ... infectious diseases ... priests ... venomous lizards ..."

"You don't say so?"

They got away at last. Bernard dashed to the telephone. Quick, quick;

but it took him nearly three minutes to get on to Helmholtz Watson.

"We might be among the savages already," he complained. "Damned

incompetence!"

"Have a gramme," suggested Lenina.

He refused, preferring his anger. And at last, thank Ford, he was

through and, yes, it was Helmholtz; Helmholtz, to whom he explained

what had happened, and who promised to go round at once, at once,

and turn off the tap, yes, at once, but took this opportunity to tell him

what the D.H.C. had said, in public, yesterday evening ...

"What? He's looking out for some one to take my place?" Bernard's

voice was agonized. "So it's actually decided? Did he mention Iceland?

You say he did? Ford! Iceland ..." He hung up the receiver and turned

back to Lenina. His face was pale, his expression utterly dejected.

"What's the matter?" she asked.

"The matter?" He dropped heavily into a chair. "I'm going to be sent to

Iceland."

Often in the past he had wondered what it would be like to be sub-

jected (soma-less and with nothing but his own inward resources to

rely on) to some great trial, some pain, some persecution; he had

even longed for affliction. As recently as a week ago, in the Director's

office, he had imagined himself courageously resisting, stoically ac-

cepting suffering without a word. The Director's threats had actually

elated him, made him feel larger than life. But that, as he now real-

ized, was because he had not taken the threats quite seriously, he had

not believed that, when it came to the point, the D.H.C. would ever do

anything. Now that it looked as though the threats were really to be

fulfilled, Bernard was appalled. Of that imagined stoicism, that theo-

retical courage, not a trace was left.

He raged against himself-what a fooll-against the Director-how unfair

not to give him that other chance, that other chance which, he now

had no doubt at all, he had always intended to take. And Iceland, Ice-

land ...

Lenina shook her head. "Was and will make me ill," she quoted, "I take

a gramme and only am."

In the end she persuaded him to swallow four tablets of soma. Five

minutes later roots and fruits were abolished; the flower of the present

rosily blossomed. A message from the porter announced that, at the

Warden's orders, a Reservation Guard had come round with a plane

and was waiting on the roof of the hotel. They went up at once. An oc-

toroon in Gamma-green uniform saluted and proceeded to recite the

morning's programme.

A bird's-eye view of ten or a dozen of the principal pueblos, then a

landing for lunch in the valley of Malpais. The rest-house was comfort-

able there, and up at the pueblo the savages would probably be cele-

brating their summer festival. It would be the best place to spend the

night.

They took their seats in the plane and set off. Ten minutes later they

were crossing the frontier that separated civilization from savagery.

Uphill and down, across the deserts of salt or sand, through forests,

into the violet depth of canyons, over crag and peak and table-topped

mesa, the fence marched on and on, irresistibly the straight line, the

geometrical symbol of triumphant human purpose. And at its foot,

here and there, a mosaic of white bones, a still unrotted carcase dark

on the tawny ground marked the place where deer or steer, puma or

porcupine or coyote, or the greedy turkey buzzards drawn down by the

whiff of carrion and fulminated as though by a poetic justice, had come

too close to the destroying wires.

"They never learn," said the green-uniformed pilot, pointing down at

the skeletons on the ground below them. "And they never will learn,"

he added and laughed, as though he had somehow scored a personal

triumph over the electrocuted animals.

Bernard also laughed; after two grammes of soma the joke seemed,

for some reason, good. Laughed and then, almost immediately,

dropped off to sleep, and sleeping was carried over Taos and Tesuque;

over Nambe and Picuris and Pojoaque, over Sia and Cochiti, over La-

guna and Acoma and the Enchanted Mesa, over Zuhi and Cibola and

Ojo Caliente, and woke at last to find the machine standing on the

ground, Lenina carrying the suit-cases into a small square house, and

the Gam ma -green octoroon talking incomprehensibly with a young In-

dian.

"Malpais," explained the pilot, as Bernard stepped out. "This is the

rest-house. And there's a dance this afternoon at the pueblo. He'll take

you there." He pointed to the sullen young savage. "Funny, I expect."

He grinned. "Everything they do is funny." And with that he climbed

into the plane and started up the engines. "Back to-morrow. And re-

member," he added reassuringly to Lenina, "they're perfectly tame;

savages won't do you any harm. They've got enough experience of gas

bombs to know that they mustn't play any tricks." Still laughing, he

threw the helicopter screws into gear, accelerated, and was gone.

Chapter Seven

THE MESA was like a ship becalmed in a strait of lion-coloured dust.

The channel wound between precipitous banks, and slanting from one

wall to the other across the valley ran a streak of green-the river and

its fields. On the prow of that stone ship in the centre of the strait, and

seemingly a part of it, a shaped and geometrical outcrop of the naked

rock, stood the pueblo of Malpais. Block above block, each story

smaller than the one below, the tall houses rose like stepped and am-

putated pyramids into the blue sky. At their feet lay a straggle of low

buildings, a criss-cross of walls; and on three sides the precipices fell

sheer into the plain. A few columns of smoke mounted perpendicularly

into the windless air and were lost.

"Queer," said Lenina. "Very queer." It was her ordinary word of con-

demnation. "I don't like it. And I don't like that man." She pointed to

the Indian guide who had been appointed to take them up to the

pueblo. Her feeling was evidently reciprocated; the very back of the

man, as he walked along before them, was hostile, sullenly contemp-

tuous.

"Besides," she lowered her voice, "he smells."

Bernard did not attempt to deny it. They walked on.

Suddenly it was as though the whole air had come alive and were

pulsing, pulsing with the indefatigable movement of blood. Up there, in

Malpais, the drums were being beaten. Their feet fell in with the

rhythm of that mysterious heart; they quickened their pace. Their path

led them to the foot of the precipice. The sides of the great mesa ship

towered over them, three hundred feet to the gunwale.

"I wish we could have brought the plane," said Lenina, looking up re-

sentfully at the blank impending rock-face. "I hate walking. And you

feel so small when you're on the ground at the bottom of a hill."

They walked along for some way in the shadow of the mesa, rounded

a projection, and there, in a water-worn ravine, was the way up the

companion ladder. They climbed. It was a very steep path that zig-

zagged from side to side of the gully. Sometimes the pulsing of the

drums was all but inaudible, at others they seemed to be beating only

just round the corner.

When they were half-way up, an eagle flew past so close to them that

the wind of his wings blew chill on their faces. In a crevice of the rock

lay a pile of bones. It was all oppressively queer, and the Indian smelt

stronger and stronger. They emerged at last from the ravine into the

full sunlight. The top of the mesa was a flat deck of stone.

"Like the Charing-T Tower," was Lenina's comment. But she was not al-

lowed to enjoy her discovery of this reassuring resemblance for long. A

padding of soft feet made them turn round. Naked from throat to na-

vel, their dark brown bodies painted with white lines ("like asphalt

tennis courts," Lenina was later to explain), their faces inhuman with

daubings of scarlet, black and ochre, two Indians came running along

the path. Their black hair was braided with fox fur and red flannel.

Cloaks of turkey feathers fluttered from their shoulders; huge feather

diadems exploded gaudily round their heads. With every step they

took came the clink and rattle of their silver bracelets, their heavy

necklaces of bone and turquoise beads. They came on without a word,

running quietly in their deerskin moccasins. One of them was holding a

feather brush; the other carried, in either hand, what looked at a dis-

tance like three or four pieces of thick rope. One of the ropes writhed

uneasily, and suddenly Lenina saw that they were snakes.

The men came nearer and nearer; their dark eyes looked at her, but

without giving any sign of recognition, any smallest sign that they had

seen her or were aware of her existence. The writhing snake hung limp

again with the rest. The men passed.

"I don't like it," said Lenina. "I don't like it."

She liked even less what awaited her at the entrance to the pueblo,

where their guide had left them while he went inside for instructions.

The dirt, to start with, the piles of rubbish, the dust, the dogs, the

flies. Her face wrinkled up into a grimace of disgust. She held her

handkerchief to her nose.

"But how can they live like this?" she broke out in a voice of indignant

incredulity. (It wasn't possible.)

Bernard shrugged his shoulders philosophically. "Anyhow," he said,

"they've been doing it for the last five or six thousand years. So I sup-

pose they must be used to it by now."

"But cleanliness is next to fordliness," she insisted.

"Yes, and civilization is sterilization," Bernard went on, concluding on a

tone of irony the second hypnopaedic lesson in elementary hygiene.

"But these people have never heard of Our Ford, and they aren't civi-

lized. So there's no point in ..."

"Oh!" She gripped his arm. "Look."

An almost naked Indian was very slowly climbing down the ladder from

the first-floor terrace of a neighboring house-rung after rung, with the

tremulous caution of extreme old age. His face was profoundly wrin-

kled and black, like a mask of obsidian. The toothless mouth had fallen

in. At the corners of the lips, and on each side of the chin, a few long

bristles gleamed almost white against the dark skin. The long un-

braided hair hung down in grey wisps round his face. His body was

bent and emaciated to the bone, almost fleshless. Very slowly he came

down, pausing at each rung before he ventured another step.

"What's the matter with him?" whispered Lenina. Her eyes were wide

with horror and amazement.

"He's old, that's all," Bernard answered as carelessly as he could. He

too was startled; but he made an effort to seem unmoved.

"Old?" she repeated. "But the Director's old; lots of people are old;

they're not like that."

"That's because we don't allow them to be like that. We preserve them

from diseases. We keep their internal secretions artificially balanced at

a youthful equilibrium. We don't permit their magnesium-calcium ratio

to fall below what it was at thirty. We give them transfusion of young

blood. We keep their metabolism permanently stimulated. So, of

course, they don't look like that. Partly," he added, "because most of

them die long before they reach this old creature's age. Youth almost

unimpaired till sixty, and then, crack! the end."

But Lenina was not listening. She was watching the old man. Slowly,

slowly he came down. His feet touched the ground. He turned. In their

deep-sunken orbits his eyes were still extraordinarily bright. They

looked at her for a long moment expressionlessly, without surprise, as

though she had not been there at all. Then slowly, with bent back the

old man hobbled past them and was gone.

"But it's terrible," Lenina whispered. "It's awful. We ought not to have

come here." She felt in her pocket for her soma-only to discover that,

by some unprecedented oversight, she had left the bottle down at the

rest-house. Bernard's pockets were also empty.

Lenina was left to face the horrors of Malpais unaided. They came

crowding in on her thick and fast. The spectacle of two young women

giving breast to their babies made her blush and turn away her face.

She had never seen anything so indecent in her life. And what made it

worse was that, instead of tactfully ignoring it, Bernard proceeded to

make open comments on this revoltingly viviparous scene. Ashamed,

now that the effects of the soma had worn off, of the weakness he had

displayed that morning in the hotel, he went out of his way to show

himself strong and unorthodox.

"What a wonderfully intimate relationship," he said, deliberately outra-

geous. "And what an intensity of feeling it must generate! I often think

one may have missed something in not having had a mother. And per-

haps you've missed something in not being a mother, Lenina. Imagine

yourself sitting there with a little baby of your own. ..."

"Bernard! How can you?" The passage of an old woman with oph-

thalmia and a disease of the skin distracted her from her indignation.

"Let's go away," she begged. "I don't like it."

But at this moment their guide came back and, beckoning them to fol-

low, led the way down the narrow street between the houses. They

rounded a corner. A dead dog was lying on a rubbish heap; a woman

with a goitre was looking for lice in the hair of a small girl. Their guide

halted at the foot of a ladder, raised his hand perpendicularly, then

darted it horizontally forward. They did what he mutely command-

ed-climbed the ladder and walked through the doorway, to which it

gave access, into a long narrow room, rather dark and smelling of

smoke and cooked grease and long-worn, long-unwashed clothes. At

the further end of the room was another doorway, through which came

a shaft of sunlight and the noise, very loud and close, of the drums.

They stepped across the threshold and found themselves on a wide

terrace. Below them, shut in by the tall houses, was the village square,

crowded with Indians. Bright blankets, and feathers in black hair, and

the glint of turquoise, and dark skins shining with heat. Lenina put her

handkerchief to her nose again. In the open space at the centre of the

square were two circular platforms of masonry and trampled clay-the

roofs, it was evident, of underground chambers; for in the centre of

each platform was an open hatchway, with a ladder emerging from the

lower darkness. A sound of subterranean flute playing came up and

was almost lost in the steady remorseless persistence of the drums.

Lenina liked the drums. Shutting her eyes she abandoned herself to

their soft repeated thunder, allowed it to invade her consciousness

more and more completely, till at last there was nothing left in the

world but that one deep pulse of sound. It reminded her reassuringly

of the synthetic noises made at Solidarity Services and Ford's Day

celebrations. "Orgy-porgy," she whispered to herself. These drums

beat out just the same rhythms.

There was a sudden startling burst of singing-hundreds of male voices

crying out fiercely in harsh metallic unison. A few long notes and si-

lence, the thunderous silence of the drums; then shrill, in a neighing

treble, the women's answer. Then again the drums; and once more the

men's deep savage affirmation of their manhood.

Queer-yes. The place was queer, so was the music, so were the

clothes and the goitres and the skin diseases and the old people. But

the performance itself-there seemed to be nothing specially queer

about that.

"It reminds me of a lower-caste Community Sing," she told Bernard.

But a little later it was reminding her a good deal less of that innocu-

ous function. For suddenly there had swarmed up from those round

chambers underground a ghastly troop of monsters. Hideously masked

or painted out of all semblance of humanity, they had tramped out a

strange limping dance round the square; round and again round, sing-

ing as they went, round and round-each time a little faster; and the

drums had changed and quickened their rhythm, so that it became like

the pulsing of fever in the ears; and the crowd had begun to sing with

the dancers, louder and louder; and first one woman had shrieked,

and then another and another, as though they were being killed; and

then suddenly the leader of the dancers broke out of the line, ran to a

big wooden chest which was standing at one end of the square, raised

the lid and pulled out a pair of black snakes. A great yell went up from

the crowd, and all the other dancers ran towards him with out-

stretched hands. He tossed the snakes to the first-comers, then dipped

back into the chest for more. More and more, black snakes and brown

and mottled-he flung them out. And then the dance began again on a

different rhythm. Round and round they went with their snakes, snak-

ily, with a soft undulating movement at the knees and hips. Round and

round. Then the leader gave a signal, and one after another, all the

snakes were flung down in the middle of the square; an old man came

up from underground and sprinkled them with corn meal, and from the

other hatchway came a woman and sprinkled them with water from a

black jar. Then the old man lifted his hand and, startlingly, terrifyingly,

there was absolute silence. The drums stopped beating, life seemed to

have come to an end. The old man pointed towards the two hatchways

that gave entrance to the lower world. And slowly, raised by invisible

hands from below, there emerged from the one a painted image of an

eagle, from the other that of a man, naked, and nailed to a cross.

They hung there, seemingly self-sustained, as though watching. The

old man clapped his hands. Naked but for a white cotton breech-cloth,

a boy of about eighteen stepped out of the crowd and stood before

him, his hands crossed over his chest, his head bowed. The old man

made the sign of the cross over him and turned away. Slowly, the boy

began to walk round the writhing heap of snakes. He had completed

the first circuit and was half-way through the second when, from

among the dancers, a tall man wearing the mask of a coyote and hold-

ing in his hand a whip of plaited leather, advanced towards him. The

boy moved on as though unaware of the other's existence. The coyote-

man raised his whip, there was a long moment of expectancy, then a

swift movement, the whistle of the lash and its loud flat-sounding im-

pact on the flesh. The boy's body quivered; but he made no sound, he

walked on at the same slow, steady pace. The coyote struck again,

again; and at every blow at first a gasp, and then a deep groan went

up from the crowd. The boy walked. Twice, thrice, four times round he

went. The blood was streaming. Five times round, six times round.

Suddenly Lenina covered her face shish her hands and began to sob.

"Oh, stop them, stop them!" she implored. But the whip fell and fell

inexorably. Seven times round. Then all at once the boy staggered

and, still without a sound, pitched forward on to his face. Bending over

him, the old man touched his back with a long white feather, held it up

for a moment, crimson, for the people to see then shook it thrice over

the snakes. A few drops fell, and suddenly the drums broke out again

into a panic of hurrying notes; there was a great shout. The dancers

rushed forward, picked up the snakes and ran out of the square. Men,

women, children, all the crowd ran after them. A minute later the

square was empty, only the boy remained, prone where he had fallen,

quite still. Three old women came out of one of the houses, and with

some difficulty lifted him and carried him in. The eagle and the man on

the cross kept guard for a little while over the empty pueblo; then, as

though they had seen enough, sank slowly down through their hatch-

ways, out of sight, into the nether world.

Lenina was still sobbing. "Too awful," she kept repeating, and all Ber-

nard's consolations were in vain. "Too awful! That blood!" She shud-

dered. "Oh, I wish I had my soma."

There was the sound of feet in the inner room.

Lenina did not move, but sat with her face in her hands, unseeing,

apart. Only Bernard turned round.

The dress of the young man who now stepped out on to the terrace

was Indian; but his plaited hair was straw-coloured, his eyes a pale

blue, and his skin a white skin, bronzed.

"Hullo. Good-morrow," said the stranger, in faultless but peculiar Eng-

lish. "You're civilized, aren't you? You come from the Other Place, out-

side the Reservation?"

"Who on earth ... ?" Bernard began in astonishment.

The young man sighed and shook his head. "A most unhappy gentle-

man." And, pointing to the bloodstains in the centre of the square, "Do

you see that damned spot?" he asked in a voice that trembled with

emotion.

"A gramme is better than a damn," said Lenina mechanically from be-

hind her hands. "I wish I had my soma\"

"I ought to have been there," the young man went on. "Why wouldn't

they let me be the sacrifice? I'd have gone round ten times-twelve, fif-

teen. Palowhtiwa only got as far as seven. They could have had twice

as much blood from me. The multitudinous seas incarnadine." He flung

out his arms in a lavish gesture; then, despairingly, let them fall again.

"But they wouldn't let me. They disliked me for my complexion. It's

always been like that. Always." Tears stood in the young man's eyes;

he was ashamed and turned away.

Astonishment made Lenina forget the deprivation of soma. She uncov-

ered her face and, for the first time, looked at the stranger. "Do you

mean to say that you wanted to be hit with that whip?"

Still averted from her, the young man made a sign of affirmation. "For

the sake of the pueblo-to make the rain come and the corn grow. And

to please Pookong and Jesus. And then to show that I can bear pain

without crying out. Yes," and his voice suddenly took on a new reso-

nance, he turned with a proud squaring of the shoulders, a proud, de-

fiant lifting of the chin "to show that I'm a man ... Oh!" He gave a gasp

and was silent, gaping. He had seen, for the first time in his life, the

face of a girl whose cheeks were not the colour of chocolate or dog-

skin, whose hair was auburn and permanently waved, and whose ex-

pression (amazing novelty!) was one of benevolent interest. Lenina

was smiling at him; such a nice-looking boy, she was thinking, and a

really beautiful body. The blood rushed up into the young man's face;

he dropped his eyes, raised them again for a moment only to find her

still smiling at him, and was so much overcome that he had to turn

away and pretend to be looking very hard at something on the other

side of the square.

Bernard's questions made a diversion. Who? How? When? From

where? Keeping his eyes fixed on Bernard's face (for so passionately

did he long to see Lenina smiling that he simply dared not look at her),

the young man tried to explain himself. Linda and he-Linda was his

mother (the word made Lenina look uncomfortable)-were strangers in

the Reservation. Linda had come from the Other Place long ago, before

he was born, with a man who was his father. (Bernard pricked up his

ears.) She had gone walking alone in those mountains over there to

the North, had fallen down a steep place and hurt her head. ("Go on,

go on," said Bernard excitedly.) Some hunters from Malpais had found

her and brought her to the pueblo. As for the man who was his father,

Linda had never seen him again. His name was Tomakin. (Yes, "Tho-

mas" was the D.H.C.'s first name.) He must have flown away, back to

the Other Place, away without her-a bad, unkind, unnatural man.

"And so I was born in Malpais," he concluded. "In Malpais." And he

shook his head.

The squalor of that little house on the outskirts of the pueblo!

A space of dust and rubbish separated it from the village. Two famine-

stricken dogs were nosing obscenely in the garbage at its door. Inside,

when they entered, the twilight stank and was loud with flies.

"Linda!" the young man called.

From the inner room a rather hoarse female voice said, "Coming."

They waited. In bowls on the floor were the remains of a meal, per-

haps of several meals.

The door opened. A very stout blonde squaw stepped across the

threshold and stood looking at the strangers staring incredulously, her

mouth open. Lenina noticed with disgust that two of the front teeth

were missing. And the colour of the ones that remained ... She shud-

dered. It was worse than the old man. So fat. And all the lines in her

face, the flabbiness, the wrinkles. And the sagging cheeks, with those

purplish blotches. And the red veins on her nose, the bloodshot eyes.

And that neck-that neck; and the blanket she wore over her head-

ragged and filthy. And under the brown sack-shaped tunic those enor-

mous breasts, the bulge of the stomach, the hips. Oh, much worse

than the old man, much worse! And suddenly the creature burst out in

a torrent of speech, rushed at her with outstretched arms and-Ford!

Ford! it was too revolting, in another moment she'd be sick-pressed

her against the bulge, the bosom, and began to kiss her. Ford! to kiss,

slobberingly, and smelt too horrible, obviously never had a bath, and

simply reeked of that beastly stuff that was put into Delta and Epsilon

bottles (no, it wasn't true about Bernard), positively stank of alcohol.

She broke away as quickly as she could.

A blubbered and distorted face confronted her; the creature was cry-

ing.

"Oh, my dear, my dear." The torrent of words flowed sobbingly. "If you

knew how glad-after all these years! A civilized face. Yes, and civilized

clothes. Because I thought I should never see a piece of real acetate

silk again." She fingered the sleeve of Lenina's shirt. The nails were

black. "And those adorable viscose velveteen shorts! Do you know,

dear, I've still got my old clothes, the ones I came in, put away in a

box. I'll show them you afterwards. Though, of course, the acetate has

all gone into holes. But such a lovely white bandolier-though I must

say your green morocco is even lovelier. Not that it did me much good,

that bandolier." Her tears began to flow again. "I suppose John told

you. What I had to suffer-and not a gramme of soma to be had. Only

a drink of mescal every now and then, when Pope used to bring it.

Pope is a boy I used to know. But it makes you feel so bad afterwards,

the mescal does, and you're sick with the peyotl; besides it always

made that awful feeling of being ashamed much worse the next day.

And I was so ashamed. Just think of it: me, a Beta-having a baby: put

yourself in my place." (The mere suggestion made Lenina shudder.)

"Though it wasn't my fault, I swear; because I still don't know how it

happened, seeing that I did all the Malthusian Drill-you know, by

numbers, One, two, three, four, always, I swear it; but all the same it

happened, and of course there wasn't anything like an Abortion Centre

here. Is it still down in Chelsea, by the way?" she asked. Lenina nod-

ded. "And still floodlighted on Tuesdays and Fridays?" Lenina nodded

again. "That lovely pink glass tower!" Poor Linda lifted her face and

with closed eyes ecstatically contemplated the bright remembered im-

age. "And the river at night," she whispered. Great tears oozed slowly

out from behind her tight-shut eyelids. "And flying back in the evening

from Stoke Poges. And then a hot bath and vibro-vacuum massage ...

But there." She drew a deep breath, shook her head, opened her eyes

again, sniffed once or twice, then blew her nose on her fingers and

wiped them on the skirt of her tunic. "Oh, I'm so sorry," she said in re-

sponse to Lenina's involuntary grimace of disgust. "I oughtn't to have

done that. I'm sorry. But what are you to do when there aren't any

handkerchiefs? I remember how it used to upset me, all that dirt, and

nothing being aseptic. I had an awful cut on my head when they first

brought me here. You can't imagine what they used to put on it. Filth,

just filth. 'Civilization is Sterilization,' I used to say t them. And

'Streptocock-Gee to Banbury-T, to see a fine bathroom and W.C.' as

though they were children. But of course they didn't understand. How

should they? And in the end I suppose I got used to it. And anyhow,

how can you keep things clean when there isn't hot water laid on? And

look at these clothes. This beastly wool isn't like acetate. It lasts and

lasts. And you're supposed to mend it if it gets torn. But I'm a Beta; I

worked in the Fertilizing Room; nobody ever taught me to do anything

like that. It wasn't my business. Besides, it never used to be right to

mend clothes. Throw them away when they've got holes in them and

buy new. 'The more stitches, the less riches.' Isn't that right? Mend-

ing's anti-social. But it's all different here. It's like living with lunatics.

Everything they do is mad." She looked round; saw John and Bernard

had left them and were walking up and down in the dust and garbage

outside the house; but, none the less confidentially lowering her voice,

and leaning, while Lenina stiffened and shrank, so close that the blown

reek of embryo-poison stirred the hair on her cheek. "For instance,"

she hoarsely whispered, "take the way they have one another here.

Mad, I tell you, absolutely mad. Everybody belongs to every one el-

se-don't they? don't they?" she insisted, tugging at Lenina's sleeve.

Lenina nodded her averted head, let out the breath she had been hold-

ing and managed to draw another one, relatively untainted. "Well,

here," the other went on, "nobody's supposed to belong to more than

one person. And if you have people in the ordinary way, the others

think you're wicked and anti-social. They hate and despise you. Once a

lot of women came and made a scene because their men came to see

me. Well, why not? And then they rushed at me ... No, it was too aw-

ful. I can't tell you about it." Linda covered her face with her hands

and shuddered. "They're so hateful, the women here. Mad, mad and

cruel. And of course they don't know anything about Malthusian Drill,

or bottles, or decanting, or anything of that sort. So they're having

children all the time-like dogs. It's too revolting. And to think that I ...

Oh, Ford, Ford, Ford! And yet John was a great comfort to me. I don't

know what I should have done without him. Even though he did get so

upset whenever a man ... Quite as a tiny boy, even. Once (but that was

when he was bigger) he tried to kill poor Waihusiwa-or was it Pope?-

just because I used to have them sometimes. Because I never could

make him understand that that was what civilized people ought to do.

Being mad's infectious I believe. Anyhow, John seems to have caught

it from the Indians. Because, of course, he was with them a lot. Even

though they always were so beastly to him and wouldn't let him do all

the things the other boys did. Which was a good thing in a way, be-

cause it made it easier for me to condition him a little. Though you've

no idea how difficult that is. There's so much one doesn't know; it

wasn't my business to know. I mean, when a child asks you how a

helicopter works or who made the world-well, what are you to answer

if you're a Beta and have always worked in the Fertilizing Room? What

are you to answer?"

Chapter Eight

OUTSIDE, in the dust and among the garbage (there were four dogs

now), Bernard and John were walking slowly up and down.

"So hard for me to realize," Bernard was saying, "to reconstruct. As

though we were living on different planets, in different centuries. A

mother, and all this dirt, and gods, and old age, and disease ..." He

shook his head. "It's almost inconceivable. I shall never understand,

unless you explain."

"Explain what?"

"This." He indicated the pueblo. "That." And it was the little house out-

side the village. "Everything. All your life."

"But what is there to say?"

"From the beginning. As far back as you can remember."

"As far back as I can remember." John frowned. There was a long si-

lence.

It was very hot. They had eaten a lot of tortillas and sweet corn. Linda

said, "Come and lie down, Baby." They lay down together in the big

bed. "Sing," and Linda sang. Sang "Streptocock-Gee to Banbury-T" and

"Bye Baby Banting, soon you'll need decanting." Her voice got fainter

and fainter ...

There was a loud noise, and he woke with a start. A man was saying

something to Linda, and Linda was laughing. She had pulled the blan-

ket up to her chin, but the man pulled it down again. His hair was like

two black ropes, and round his arm was a lovely silver bracelet with

blue stones in it. He liked the bracelet; but all the same, he was fright-

ened; he hid his face against Linda's body. Linda put her hand on him

and he felt safer. In those other words he did not understand so well,

she said to the man, "Not with John here." The man looked at him,

then again at Linda, and said a few words in a soft voice. Linda said,

"No." But the man bent over the bed towards him and his face was

huge, terrible; the black ropes of hair touched the blanket. "No," Linda

said again, and he felt her hand squeezing him more tightly. "No, no!"

But the man took hold of one of his arms, and it hurt. He screamed.

The man put up his other hand and lifted him up. Linda was still hold-

ing him, still saying, "No, no." The man said something short and an-

gry, and suddenly her hands were gone. "Linda, Linda." He kicked and

wriggled; but the man carried him across to the door, opened it, put

him down on the floor in the middle of the other room, and went away,

shutting the door behind him. He got up, he ran to the door. Standing

on tiptoe he could just reach the big wooden latch. He lifted it and

pushed; but the door wouldn't open. "Linda," he shouted. She didn't

answer.

He remembered a huge room, rather dark; and there were big wooden

things with strings fastened to them, and lots of women standing

round them-making blankets, Linda said. Linda told him to sit in the

corner with the other children, while she went and helped the women.

He played with the little boys for a long time. Suddenly people started

talking very loud, and there were the women pushing Linda away, and

Linda was crying. She went to the door and he ran after her. He asked

her why they were angry. "Because I broke something," she said. And

then she got angry too. "How should I know how to do their beastly

weaving?" she said. "Beastly savages." He asked her what savages

were. When they got back to their house, Pope was waiting at the

door, and he came in with them. He had a big gourd full of stuff that

looked like water; only it wasn't water, but something with a bad smell

that burnt your mouth and made you cough. Linda drank some and

Pope drank some, and then Linda laughed a lot and talked very loud;

and then she and Pope went into the other room. When Pope went

away, he went into the room. Linda was in bed and so fast asleep that

he couldn't wake her.

Pope used to come often. He said the stuff in the gourd was called

mescal; but Linda said it ought to be called soma; only it made you

feel ill afterwards. He hated Pope. He hated them all-all the men who

came to see Linda. One afternoon, when he had been playing with the

other children-it was cold, he remembered, and there was snow on

the mountains-he came back to the house and heard angry voices in

the bedroom. They were women's voices, and they said words he

didn't understand, but he knew they were dreadful words. Then sud-

denly, crash! something was upset; he heard people moving about

quickly, and there was another crash and then a noise like hitting a

mule, only not so bony; then Linda screamed. "Oh, don't, don't,

don't!" she said. He ran in. There were three women in dark blankets.

Linda was on the bed. One of the women was holding her wrists. An-

other was lying across her legs, so that she couldn't kick. The third

was hitting her with a whip. Once, twice, three times; and each time

Linda screamed. Crying, he tugged at the fringe of the woman's blan-

ket. "Please, please." With her free hand she held him away. The whip

came down again, and again Linda screamed. He caught hold of the

woman's enormous brown hand between his own and bit it with all his

might. She cried out, wrenched her hand free, and gave him such a

push that he fell down. While he was lying on the ground she hit him

three times with the whip. It hurt more than anything he had ever

felt-like fire. The whip whistled again, fell. But this time it was Linda

who screamed.

"But why did they want to hurt you, Linda?" he asked that night. He

was crying, because the red marks of the whip on his back still hurt so

terribly. But he was also crying because people were so beastly and

unfair, and because he was only a little boy and couldn't do anything

against them. Linda was crying too. She was grown up, but she wasn't

big enough to fight against three of them. It wasn't fair for her either.

"Why did they want to hurt you, Linda?"

"I don't know. How should I know?" It was difficult to hear what she

said, because she was lying on her stomach and her face was in the

pillow. "They say those men are their men," she went on; and she did

not seem to be talking to him at all; she seemed to be talking with

some one inside herself. A long talk which she didn't understand; and

in the end she started crying louder than ever.

"Oh, don't cry, Linda. Don't cry."

He pressed himself against her. He put his arm round her neck. Linda

cried out. "Oh, be careful. My shoulder! Oh!" and she pushed him

away, hard. His head banged against the wall. "Little idiot!" she

shouted; and then, suddenly, she began to slap him. Slap, slap ...

"Linda," he cried out. "Oh, mother, don't!"

"I'm not your mother. I won't be your mother."

"But, Linda ... Oh!" She slapped him on the cheek.

"Turned into a savage," she shouted. "Having young ones like an ani-

mal ... If it hadn't been for you, I might have gone to the Inspector, I

might have got away. But not with a baby. That would have been too

shameful."

He saw that she was going to hit him again, and lifted his arm to guard

his face. "Oh, don't, Linda, please don't."

"Little beast!" She pulled down his arm; his face was uncovered.

"Don't, Linda." He shut his eyes, expecting the blow.

But she didn't hit him. After a little time, he opened his eyes again and

saw that she was looking at him. He tried to smile at her. Suddenly she

put her arms round him and kissed him again and again.

Sometimes, for several days, Linda didn't get up at all. She lay in bed

and was sad. Or else she drank the stuff that Pope brought and

laughed a great deal and went to sleep. Sometimes she was sick. Of-

ten she forgot to wash him, and there was nothing to eat except cold

tortillas. He remembered the first time she found those little animals in

his hair, how she screamed and screamed.

The happiest times were when she told him about the Other Place.

"And you really can go flying, whenever you like?"

"Whenever you like." And she would tell him about the lovely music

that came out of a box, and all the nice games you could play, and the

delicious things to eat and drink, and the light that came when you

pressed a little thing in the wall, and the pictures that you could hear

and feel and smell, as well as see, and another box for making nice

smells, and the pink and green and blue and silver houses as high as

mountains, and everybody happy and no one ever sad or angry, and

every one belonging to every one else, and the boxes where you could

see and hear what was happening at the other side of the world, and

babies in lovely clean bottles-everything so clean, and no nasty

smells, no dirt at all-and people never lonely, but living together and

being so jolly and happy, like the summer dances here in Malpais, but

much happier, and the happiness being there every day, every day. ...

He listened by the hour. And sometimes, when he and the other chil-

dren were tired with too much playing, one of the old men of the

pueblo would talk to them, in those other words, of the great Trans-

former of the World, and of the long fight between Right Hand and Left

Hand, between Wet and Dry; of Awonawilona, who made a great fog

by thinking in the night, and then made the whole world out of the

fog; of Earth Mother and Sky Father; of Ahaiyuta and Marsailema, the

twins of War and Chance; of Jesus and Pookong; of Mary and Etsanat-

lehi, the woman who makes herself young again; of the Black Stone at

Laguna and the Great Eagle and Our Lady of Acoma. Strange stories,

all the more wonderful to him for being told in the other words and so

not fully understood. Lying in bed, he would think of Heaven and Lon-

don and Our Lady of Acoma and the rows and rows of babies in clean

bottles and Jesus flying up and Linda flying up and the great Director

of World Hatcheries and Awonawilona.

Lots of men came to see Linda. The boys began to point their fingers

at him. In the strange other words they said that Linda was bad; they

called her names he did not understand, but that he knew were bad

names. One day they sang a song about her, again and again. He

threw stones at them. They threw back; a sharp stone cut his cheek.

The blood wouldn't stop; he was covered with blood.

Linda taught him to read. With a piece of charcoal she drew pictures

on the wall-an animal sitting down, a baby inside a bottle; then she

wrote letters. THE CAT IS ON THE MAT THE TOT IS IN THE POT He

learned quickly and easily. When he knew how to read all the words

she wrote on the wall, Linda opened her big wooden box and pulled

out from under those funny little red trousers she never wore a thin lit-

tle book. He had often seen it before. "When you're bigger," she had

said, "you can read it." Well, now he was big enough. He was proud.

"I'm afraid you won't find it very exciting," she said. "But it's the only

thing I have." She sighed. "If only you could see the lovely reading

machines we used to have in London!" He began reading. The Chemi-

cal and Bacteriological Conditioning of the Embryo. Practical Instruc-

tions for Beta Embryo-Store Workers. It took him a quarter of an hour

to read the title alone. He threw the book on the floor. "Beastly,

beastly book!" he said, and began to cry.

The boys still sang their horrible song about Linda. Sometimes, too,

they laughed at him for being so ragged. When he tore his clothes,

Linda did not know how to mend them. In the Other Place, she told

him, people threw away clothes with holes in them and got new ones.

"Rags, rags!" the boys used to shout at him. "But I can read," he said

to himself, "and they can't. They don't even know what reading is." It

was fairly easy, if he thought hard enough about the reading, to pre-

tend that he didn't mind when they made fun of him. He asked Linda

to give him the book again.

The more the boys pointed and sang, the harder he read. Soon he

could read all the words quite well. Even the longest. But what did

they mean? He asked Linda; but even when she could answer it didn't

seem to make it very clear, And generally she couldn't answer at all.

"What are chemicals?" he would ask.

"Oh, stuff like magnesium salts, and alcohol for keeping the Deltas and

Epsilons small and backward, and calcium carbonate for bones, and all

that sort of thing."

"But how do you make chemicals, Linda? Where do they come from?"

"Well, I don't know. You get them out of bottles. And when the bottles

are empty, you send up to the Chemical Store for more. It's the

Chemical Store people who make them, I suppose. Or else they send

to the factory for them. I don't know. I never did any chemistry. My

job was always with the embryos. It was the same with everything

else he asked about. Linda never seemed to know. The old men of the

pueblo had much more definite answers.

"The seed of men and all creatures, the seed of the sun and the seed

of earth and the seed of the sky-Awonawilona made them all out of

the Fog of Increase. Now the world has four wombs; and he laid the

seeds in the lowest of the four wombs. And gradually the seeds began

to grow ..."

One day (John calculated later that it must have been soon after his

twelfth birthday) he came home and found a book that he had never

seen before lying on the floor in the bedroom. It was a thick book and

looked very old. The binding had been eaten by mice; some of its

pages were loose and crumpled. He picked it up, looked at the title-

page: the book was called The Complete Works of William Shake-

speare.

Linda was lying on the bed, sipping that horrible stinking mescal out of

a cup. "Pope brought it," she said. Her voice was thick and hoarse like

somebody else's voice. "It was lying in one of the chests of the Ante-

lope Kiva. It's supposed to have been there for hundreds of years. I

expect it's true, because I looked at it, and it seemed to be full of non-

sense. Uncivilized. Still, it'll be good enough for you to practice your

reading on." She took a last sip, set the cup down on the floor beside

the bed, turned over on her side, hiccoughed once or twice and went

to sleep.

He opened the book at random.

Nay, but to live

In the rank sweat of an enseamed bed,

Stew'd in corruption, honeying and making love

Over the nasty sty ...

The strange words rolled through his mind; rumbled, like talking thun-

der; like the drums at the summer dances, if the drums could have

spoken; like the men singing the Corn Song, beautiful, beautiful, so

that you cried; like old Mitsima saying magic over his feathers and his

carved sticks and his bits of bone and stone-kiathla tsilu silokwe si-

lokwe silokwe. Kiai silu silu, tsithl-but better than Mitsima's magic, be-

cause it meant more, because it talked to him, talked wonderfully and

only half-understandably, a terrible beautiful magic, about Linda;

about Linda lying there snoring, with the empty cup on the floor beside

the bed; about Linda and Pope, Linda and Pope.

He hated Pope more and more. A man can smile and smile and be a

villain. Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain. What did

the words exactly mean? He only half knew. But their magic was

strong and went on rumbling in his head, and somehow it was as

though he had never really hated Pope before; never really hated him

because he had never been able to say how much he hated him. But

now he had these words, these words like drums and singing and

magic. These words and the strange, strange story out of which they

were taken (he couldn't make head or tail of it, but it was wonderful,

wonderful all the same)-they gave him a reason for hating Pope; and

they made his hatred more real; they even made Pope himself more

real.

One day, when he came in from playing, the door of the inner room

was open, and he saw them lying together on the bed, asleep-white

Linda and Pope almost black beside her, with one arm under her

shoulders and the other dark hand on her breast, and one of the plaits

of his long hair lying across her throat, like a black snake trying to

strangle her. Pope's gourd and a cup were standing on the floor near

the bed. Linda was snoring.

His heart seemed to have disappeared and left a hole. He was empty.

Empty, and cold, and rather sick, and giddy. He leaned against the wall

to steady himself. Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous ... Like drums,

like the men singing for the corn, like magic, the words repeated and

repeated themselves in his head. From being cold he was suddenly

hot. His cheeks burnt with the rush of blood, the room swam and

darkened before his eyes. He ground his teeth. "I'll kill him, I'll kill

him, I'll kill him," he kept saying. And suddenly there were more

words.

When he is drunk asleep, or in his rage

Or in the incestuous pleasure of his bed ...

The magic was on his side, the magic explained and gave orders. He

stepped back in the outer room. "When he is drunk asleep ..." The

knife for the meat was lying on the floor near the fireplace. He picked

it up and tiptoed to the door again. "When he is drunk asleep, drunk

asleep ..." He ran across the room and stabbed-oh, the bloodl-stabbed

again, as Pope heaved out of his sleep, lifted his hand to stab once

more, but found his wrist caught, held and-oh, oh!-twisted. He

couldn't move, he was trapped, and there were Pope's small black

eyes, very close, staring into his own. He looked away. There were two

cuts on Pope's left shoulder. "Oh, look at the blood!" Linda was crying.

"Look at the blood!" She had never been able to bear the sight of

blood. Pope lifted his other hand-to strike him, he thought. He stiff-

ened to receive the blow. But the hand only took him under the chin

and turned his face, so that he had to look again into Pope's eyes. For

a long time, for hours and hours. And suddenly-he couldn't help it-he

began to cry. Pope burst out laughing. "Go," he said, in the other In-

dian words. "Go, my brave Ahaiyuta." He ran out into the other room

to hide his tears.

"You are fifteen," said old Mitsima, in the Indian words. "Now I may

teach you to work the clay."

Squatting by the river, they worked together.

"First of all," said Mitsima, taking a lump of the wetted clay between

his hands, "we make a little moon." The old man squeezed the lump

into a disk, then bent up the edges, the moon became a shallow cup.

Slowly and unskilfully he imitated the old man's delicate gestures.

"A moon, a cup, and now a snake." Mitsima rolled out another piece of

clay into a long flexible cylinder, trooped it into a circle and pressed it

on to the rim of the cup. "Then another snake. And another. And an-

other." Round by round, Mitsima built up the sides of the pot; it was

narrow, it bulged, it narrowed again towards the neck. Mitsima

squeezed and patted, stroked and scraped; and there at last it stood,

in shape the familiar water pot of Malpais, but creamy white instead of

black, and still soft to the touch. The crooked parody of Mitsima's, his

own stood beside it. Looking at the two pots, he had to laugh.

"But the next one will be better," he said, and began to moisten an-

other piece of clay.

To fashion, to give form, to feel his fingers gaining in skill and pow-

er-this gave him an extraordinary pleasure. "A, B, C, Vitamin D," he

sang to himself as he worked. "The fat's in the liver, the cod's in the

sea." And Mitsima also sang-a song about killing a bear. They worked

all day, and all day he was filled with an intense, absorbing happiness.

"Next winter," said old Mitsima, "I will teach you to make the bow."

He stood for a long time outside the house, and at last the ceremonies

within were finished. The door opened; they came out. Kothlu came

first, his right hand out-stretched and tightly closed, as though over

some precious jewel. Her clenched hand similarly outstretched,

Kiakime followed. They walked in silence, and in silence, behind them,

came the brothers and sisters and cousins and all the troop of old peo-

ple.

They walked out of the pueblo, across the mesa. At the edge of the

cliff they halted, facing the early morning sun. Kothlu opened his hand.

A pinch of corn meal lay white on the palm; he breathed on it, mur-

mured a few words, then threw it, a handful of white dust, towards the

sun. Kiakime did the same. Then Khakime's father stepped forward,

and holding up a feathered prayer stick, made a long prayer, then

threw the stick after the corn meal.

"It is finished," said old Mitsima in a loud voice. "They are married."

"Well," said Linda, as they turned away, "all I can say is, it does seem

a lot of fuss to make about so little. In civilized countries, when a boy

wants to have a girl, he just ... But where are you going, John?"

He paid no attention to her calling, but ran on, away, away, anywhere

to be by himself.

It is finished Old Mitsima's words repeated themselves in his mind.

Finished, finished ... In silence and from a long way off, but violently,

desperately, hopelessly, he had loved Kiakime. And now it was fin-

ished. He was sixteen.

At the full moon, in the Antelope Kiva, secrets would be told, secrets

would be done and borne. They would go down, boys, into the kiva

and come out again, men. The boys were all afraid and at the same

time impatient. And at last it was the day. The sun went down, the

moon rose. He went with the others. Men were standing, dark, at the

entrance to the kiva; the ladder went down into the red lighted depths.

Already the leading boys had begun to climb down. Suddenly, one of

the men stepped forward, caught him by the arm, and pulled him out

of the ranks. He broke free and dodged back into his place among the

others. This time the man struck him, pulled his hair. "Not for you,

white-hair!" "Not for the son of the she-dog," said one of the other

men. The boys laughed. "Go!" And as he still hovered on the fringes of

the group, "Go!" the men shouted again. One of them bent down, took

a stone, threw it. "Go, go, go!" There was a shower of stones. Bleed-

ing, he ran away into the darkness. From the red-lit kiva came the

noise of singing. The last of the boys had climbed down the ladder. He

was all alone.

All alone, outside the pueblo, on the bare plain of the mesa. The rock

was like bleached bones in the moonlight. Down in the valley, the

coyotes were howling at the moon. The bruises hurt him, the cuts

were still bleeding; but it was not for pain that he sobbed; it was be-

cause he was all alone, because he had been driven out, alone, into

this skeleton world of rocks and moonlight. At the edge of the preci-

pice he sat down. The moon was behind him; he looked down into the

black shadow of the mesa, into the black shadow of death. He had

only to take one step, one little jump. ... He held out his right hand in

the moonlight. From the cut on his wrist the blood was still oozing.

Every few seconds a drop fell, dark, almost colourless in the dead

light. Drop, drop, drop. To-morrow and to-morrow and to-morrow ...

He had discovered Time and Death and God.

"Alone, always alone," the young man was saying.

The words awoke a plaintive echo in Bernard's mind. Alone, alone ...

"So am I," he said, on a gush of confidingness. "Terribly alone."

"Are you?" John looked surprised. "I thought that in the Other Place ...

I mean, Linda always said that nobody was ever alone there."

Bernard blushed uncomfortably. "You see," he said, mumbling and with

averted eyes, "I'm rather different from most people, I suppose. If one

happens to be decanted different ..."

"Yes, that's just it." The young man nodded. "If one's different, one's

bound to be lonely. They're beastly to one. Do you know, they shut me

out of absolutely everything? When the other boys were sent out to

spend the night on the mountains-you know, when you have to dream

which your sacred animal is-they wouldn't let me go with the others;

they wouldn't tell me any of the secrets. I did it by myself, though," he

added. "Didn't eat anything for five days and then went out one night

alone into those mountains there." He pointed.

Patronizingly, Bernard smiled. "And did you dream of anything?" he

asked.

The other nodded. "But I mustn't tell you what." He was silent for a lit-

tle; then, in a low voice, "Once," he went on, "I did something that

none of the others did: I stood against a rock in the middle of the day,

in summer, with my arms out, like Jesus on the Cross."

"What on earth for?"

"I wanted to know what it was like being crucified. Hanging there in

the sun ..."

"But why?"

"Why? Well ..." He hesitated. "Because I felt I ought to. If Jesus could

stand it. And then, if one has done something wrong ... Besides, I was

unhappy; that was another reason."

"It seems a funny way of curing your unhappiness," said Bernard. But

on second thoughts he decided that there was, after all, some sense in

it. Better than taking soma ...

"I fainted after a time," said the young man. "Fell down on my face.

Do you see the mark where I cut myself?" He lifted the thick yellow

hair from his forehead. The scar showed, pale and puckered, on his

right temple.

Bernard looked, and then quickly, with a little shudder, averted his

eyes. His conditioning had made him not so much pitiful as profoundly

squeamish. The mere suggestion of illness or wounds was to him not

only horrifying, but even repulsive and rather disgusting. Like dirt, or

deformity, or old age. Hastily he changed the subject.

"I wonder if you'd like to come back to London with us?" he asked,

making the first move in a campaign whose strategy he had been se-

cretly elaborating ever since, in the little house, he had realized who

the "father" of this young savage must be. "Would you like that?"

The young man's face lit up. "Do you really mean it?"

"Of course; if I can get permission, that is."

"Linda too?"

"Well ..." He hesitated doubtfully. That revolting creature! No, it was

impossible. Unless, unless ... It suddenly occurred to Bernard that her

very revoltingness might prove an enormous asset. "But of course!" he

cried, making up for his first hesitations with an excess of noisy cor-

diality.

The young man drew a deep breath. "To think it should be coming

true-what I've dreamt of all my life. Do you remember what Miranda

says?"

"Who's Miranda?"

But the young man had evidently not heard the question. "O wonder!"

he was saying; and his eyes shone, his face was brightly flushed. "How

many goodly creatures are there here! How beauteous mankind is!"

The flush suddenly deepened; he was thinking of Lenina, of an angel in

bottle-green viscose, lustrous with youth and skin food, plump, be-

nevolently smiling. His voice faltered. "O brave new world," he began,

then-suddenly interrupted himself; the blood had left his cheeks; he

was as pale as paper.

"Are you married to her?" he asked.

"Am I what?"

"Married. You know-for ever. They say 'for ever' in the Indian words; it

can't be broken."

"Ford, no!" Bernard couldn't help laughing.

John also laughed, but for another reason-laughed for pure joy.

"O brave new world," he repeated. "O brave new world that has such

people in it. Let's start at once."

"You have a most peculiar way of talking sometimes," said Bernard,

staring at the young man in perplexed astonishment. "And, anyhow,

hadn't you better wait till you actually see the new world?"

Chapter Nine

LENINA felt herself entitled, after this day of queerness and horror, to

a complete and absolute holiday. As soon as they got back to the rest-

house, she swallowed six half-gramme tablets of soma, lay down on

her bed, and within ten minutes had embarked for lunar eternity. It

would be eighteen hours at the least before she was in time again.

Bernard meanwhile lay pensive and wide-eyed in the dark. It was long

after midnight before he fell asleep. Long after midnight; but his in-

somnia had not been fruitless; he had a plan.

Punctually, on the following morning, at ten o'clock, the green-

uniformed octoroon stepped out of his helicopter. Bernard was waiting

for him among the agaves.

"Miss Crowne's gone on soma-holiday," he explained. "Can hardly be

back before five. Which leaves us seven hours."

He could fly to Santa Fe, do all the business he had to do, and be in

Malpais again long before she woke up.

"She'll be quite safe here by herself?"

"Safe as helicopters," the octoroon assured him.

They climbed into the machine and started off at once. At ten thirty-

four they landed on the roof of the Santa Fe Post Office; at ten thirty-

seven Bernard had got through to the World Controller's Office in

Whitehall; at ten thirty-seven he was speaking to his fordship's fourth

personal secretary; at ten forty-four he was repeating his story to the

first secretary, and at ten forty-seven and a half it was the deep, reso-

nant voice of Mustapha Mond himself that sounded in his ears.

"I ventured to think," stammered Bernard, "that your fordship might

find the matter of sufficient scientific interest ..."

"Yes, I do find it of sufficient scientific interest," said the deep voice.

"Bring these two individuals back to London with you."

"Your fordship is aware that I shall need a special permit ..."

"The necessary orders," said Mustapha Mond, "are being sent to the

Warden of the Reservation at this moment. You will proceed at once to

the Warden's Office. Good-morning, Mr. Marx."

There was silence. Bernard hung up the receiver and hurried up to the

roof.

"Warden's Office," he said to the Gamma-green octoroon.

At ten fifty-four Bernard was shaking hands with the Warden.

"Delighted, Mr. Marx, delighted." His boom was deferential. "We have

just received special orders ..."

"I know," said Bernard, interrupting him. "I was talking to his fordship

on the phone a moment ago." His bored tone implied that he was in

the habit of talking to his fordship every day of the week. He dropped

into a chair. "If you'll kindly take all the necessary steps as soon as

possible. As soon as possible," he emphatically repeated. He was thor-

oughly enjoying himself.

At eleven three he had all the necessary papers in his pocket.

"So long," he said patronizingly to the Warden, who had accompanied

him as far as the lift gates. "So long."

He walked across to the hotel, had a bath, a vibro-vac massage, and

an electrolytic shave, listened in to the morning's news, looked in for

half an hour on the televisor, ate a leisured luncheon, and at half-past

two flew back with the octoroon to Malpais.

The young man stood outside the rest-house.

"Bernard," he called. "Bernard!" There was no answer.

Noiseless on his deerksin moccasins, he ran up the steps and tried the

door. The door was locked.

They were gone! Gone! It was the most terrible thing that had ever

happened to him. She had asked him to come and see them, and now

they were gone. He sat down on the steps and cried.

Half an hour later it occurred to him to look through the window. The

first thing he saw was a green suit-case, with the initials L.C. painted

on the lid. Joy flared up like fire within him. He picked up a stone. The

smashed glass tinkled on the floor. A moment later he was inside the

room. He opened the green suit-case; and all at once he was breathing

Lenina's perfume, filling his lungs with her essential being. His heart

beat wildly; for a moment he was almost faint. Then, bending over the

precious box, he touched, he lifted into the light, he examined. The

zippers on Lenina's spare pair of viscose velveteen shorts were at first

a puzzle, then solved, a delight. Zip, and then zip; zip, and then zip;

he was enchanted. Her green slippers were the most beautiful things

he had ever seen. He unfolded a pair of zippicamiknicks, blushed, put

them hastily away again; but kissed a perfumed acetate handkerchief

and wound a scarf round his neck. Opening a box, he spilt a cloud of

scented powder. His hands were floury with the stuff. He wiped them

on his chest, on his shoulders, on his bare arms. Delicious perfume! He

shut his eyes; he rubbed his cheek against his own powdered arm.

Touch of smooth skin against his face, scent in his nostrils of musky

dust-her real presence. "Lenina," he whispered. "Lenina!"

A noise made him start, made him guiltily turn. He crammed up his

thieveries into the suit-case and shut the lid; then listened again,

looked. Not a sign of life, not a sound. And yet he had certainly heard

something-something like a sigh, something like the creak of a board.

He tiptoed to the door and, cautiously opening it, found himself looking

on to a broad landing. On the opposite side of the landing was another

door, ajar. He stepped out, pushed, peeped.

There, on a low bed, the sheet flung back, dressed in a pair of pink

one-piece zippyjamas, lay Lenina, fast asleep and so beautiful in the

midst of her curls, so touchingly childish with her pink toes and her

grave sleeping face, so trustful in the helplessness of her limp hands

and melted limbs, that the tears came to his eyes.

With an infinity of quite unnecessary precautions-for nothing short of a

pistol shot could have called Lenina back from her soma-holiday before

the appointed time-he entered the room, he knelt on the floor beside

the bed. He gazed, he clasped his hands, his lips moved. "Her eyes,"

he murmured,

"Her eyes, her hair, her cheek, her gait, her voice;

Handiest in thy discourse O! that her hand,

In whose comparison all whites are ink

Writing their own reproach; to whose soft seizure

The cygnet's down is harsh ..."

A fly buzzed round her; he waved it away. "Flies," he remembered,

"On the white wonder of dear Juliet's hand, may seize

And steal immortal blessing from her lips,

Who, even in pure and vestal modesty,

Still blush, as thinking their own kisses sin. "

Very slowly, with the hesitating gesture of one who reaches forward to

stroke a shy and possibly rather dangerous bird, he put out his hand.

It hung there trembling, within an inch of those limp fingers, on the

verge of contact. Did he dare? Dare to profane with his unworthiest

hand that ... No, he didn't. The bird was too dangerous. His hand

dropped back. How beautiful she was! How beautiful!

Then suddenly he found himself reflecting that he had only to take

hold of the zipper at her neck and give one long, strong pull ... He shut

his eyes, he shook his head with the gesture of a dog shaking its ears

as it emerges from the water. Detestable thought! He was ashamed of

himself. Pure and vestal modesty ...

There was a humming in the air. Another fly trying to steal immortal

blessings? A wasp? He looked, saw nothing. The humming grew louder

and louder, localized itself as being outside the shuttered windows. The

plane! In a panic, he scrambled to his feet and ran into the other

room, vaulted through the open window, and hurrying along the path

between the tall agaves was in time to receive Bernard Marx as he

climbed out of the helicopter.

Chapter Ten

THE HANDS of all the four thousand electric clocks in all the Blooms-

bury Centre's four thousand rooms marked twenty-seven minutes past

two. "This hive of industry," as the Director was fond of calling it, was

in the full buzz of work. Every one was busy, everything in ordered

motion. Under the microscopes, their long tails furiously lashing,

spermatozoa were burrowing head first into eggs; and, fertilized, the

eggs were expanding, dividing, or if bokanovskified, budding and

breaking up into whole populations of separate embryos. From the So-

cial Predestination Room the escalators went rumbling down into the

basement, and there, in the crimson darkness, stewingly warm on

their cushion of peritoneum and gorged with blood-surrogate and

hormones, the foetuses grew and grew or, poisoned, languished into a

stunted Epsilonhood. With a faint hum and rattle the moving racks

crawled imperceptibly through the weeks and the recapitulated aeons

to where, in the Decanting Room, the newly-unbottled babes uttered

their first yell of horror and amazement.

The dynamos purred in the sub-basement, the lifts rushed up and

down. On all the eleven floors of Nurseries it was feeding time. From

eighteen hundred bottles eighteen hundred carefully labelled infants

were simultaneously sucking down their pint of pasteurized external

secretion.

Above them, in ten successive layers of dormitory, the little boys and

girls who were still young enough to need an afternoon sleep were as

busy as every one else, though they did not know it, listening uncon-

sciously to hypnopaedic lessons in hygiene and sociability, in class-

consciousness and the toddler's love-life. Above these again were the

playrooms where, the weather having turned to rain, nine hundred

older children were amusing themselves with bricks and clay model-

ling, hunt-the-zipper, and erotic play.

Buzz, buzz! the hive was humming, busily, joyfully. Blithe was the

singing of the young girls over their test-tubes, the Predestinators

whistled as they worked, and in the Decanting Room what glorious

jokes were cracked above the empty bottles! But the Director's face,

as he entered the Fertilizing Room with Henry Foster, was grave,

wooden with severity.

"A public example," he was saying. "In this room, because it contains

more high-caste workers than any other in the Centre. I have told him

to meet me here at half-past two."

"He does his work very well," put in Henry, with hypocritical generos-

ity.

"I know. But that's all the more reason for severity. His intellectual

eminence carries with it corresponding moral responsibilities. The

greater a man's talents, the greater his power to lead astray. It is bet-

ter that one should suffer than that many should be corrupted. Con-

sider the matter dispassionately, Mr. Foster, and you will see that no

offence is so heinous as unorthodoxy of behaviour. Murder kills only

the individual-and, after all, what is an individual?" With a sweeping

gesture he indicated the rows of microscopes, the test-tubes, the incu-

bators. "We can make a new one with the greatest ease-as many as

we like. Unorthodoxy threatens more than the life of a mere individual;

it strikes at Society itself. Yes, at Society itself," he repeated. "Ah, but

here he comes."

Bernard had entered the room and was advancing between the rows of

fertilizers towards them. A veneer of jaunty self-confidence thinly con-

cealed his nervousness. The voice in which he said, "Good-morning,

Director," was absurdly too loud; that in which, correcting his mistake,

he said, "You asked me to come and speak to you here," ridiculously

soft, a squeak.

"Yes, Mr. Marx," said the Director portentously. "I did ask you to come

to me here. You returned from your holiday last night, I understand."

"Yes," Bernard answered.

"Yes-s," repeated the Director, lingering, a serpent, on the "s." Then,

suddenly raising his voice, "Ladies and gentlemen," he trumpeted, "la-

dies and gentlemen."

The singing of the girls over their test-tubes, the preoccupied whistling

of the Microscopists, suddenly ceased. There was a profound silence;

every one looked round.

"Ladies and gentlemen," the Director repeated once more, "excuse me

for thus interrupting your labours. A painful duty constrains me. The

security and stability of Society are in danger. Yes, in danger, ladies

and gentlemen. This man," he pointed accusingly at Bernard, "this

man who stands before you here, this Alpha-Plus to whom so much

has been given, and from whom, in consequence, so much must be

expected, this colleague of yours-or should I anticipate and say this

ex-colleague?-has grossly betrayed the trust imposed in him. By his

heretical views on sport and soma, by the scandalous unorthodoxy of

his sex-life, by his refusal to obey the teachings of Our Ford and be-

have out of office hours, 'even as a little infant,'" (here the Director

made the sign of the T), "he has proved himself an enemy of Society,

a subverter, ladies and gentlemen, of all Order and Stability, a con-

spirator against Civilization itself. For this reason I propose to dismiss

him, to dismiss him with ignominy from the post he has held in this

Centre; I propose forthwith to apply for his transference to a Subcen-

tre of the lowest order and, that his punishment may serve the best

interest of Society, as far as possible removed from any important

Centre of population. In Iceland he will have small opportunity to lead

others astray by his unfordly example." The Director paused; then,

folding his arms, he turned impressively to Bernard. "Marx," he said,

"can you show any reason why I should not now execute the judgment

passed upon you?"

"Yes, I can," Bernard answered in a very loud voice.

Somewhat taken aback, but still majestically, "Then show it," said the

Director.

"Certainly. But it's in the passage. One moment." Bernard hurried to

the door and threw it open. "Come in," he commanded, and the reason

came in and showed itself.

There was a gasp, a murmur of astonishment and horror; a young girl

screamed; standing on a chair to get a better view some one upset

two test-tubes full of spermatozoa. Bloated, sagging, and among those

firm youthful bodies, those undistorted faces, a strange and terrifying

monster of middle-agedness, Linda advanced into the room, coquet-

tishly smiling her broken and discoloured smile, and rolling as she

walked, with what was meant to be a voluptuous undulation, her

enormous haunches. Bernard walked beside her.

"There he is," he said, pointing at the Director.

"Did you think I didn't recognize him?" Linda asked indignantly; then,

turning to the Director, "Of course I knew you; Tomakin, I should have

known you anywhere, among a thousand. But perhaps you've forgot-

ten me. Don't you remember? Don't you remember, Tomakin? Your

Linda." She stood looking at him, her head on one side, still smiling,

but with a smile that became progressively, in face of the Director's

expression of petrified disgust, less and less self-confident, that wa-

vered and finally went out. "Don't you remember, Tomakin?" she re-

peated in a voice that trembled. Her eyes were anxious, agonized. The

blotched and sagging face twisted grotesquely into the grimace of ex-

treme grief. "Tomakin!" She held out her arms. Some one began to tit-

ter.

"What's the meaning," began the Director, "of this monstrous ..."

"Tomakin!" She ran forward, her blanket trailing behind her, threw her

arms round his neck, hid her face on his chest.

A howl of laughter went up irrepressibly.

"... this monstrous practical joke," the Director shouted.

Red in the face, he tried to disengage himself from her embrace. Des-

perately she clung. "But I'm Linda, I'm Linda.'" The laughter drowned

her voice. "You made me have a baby," she screamed above the up-

roar. There was a sudden and appalling hush; eyes floated uncom-

fortably, not knowing where to look. The Director went suddenly pale,

stopped struggling and stood, his hands on her wrists, staring down at

her, horrified. "Yes, a baby-and I was its mother." She flung the ob-

scenity like a challenge into the outraged silence; then, suddenly

breaking away from him, ashamed, ashamed, covered her face with

her hands, sobbing. "It wasn't my fault, Tomakin. Because I always did

my drill, didn't I? Didn't I? Always ... I don't know how ... If you knew

how awful, Tomakin ... But he was a comfort to me, all the same."

Turning towards the door, "John!" she called. "John!"

He came in at once, paused for a moment just inside the door, looked

round, then soft on his moccasined feet strode quickly across the

room, fell on his knees in front of the Director, and said in a clear

voice: "My father!"

The word (for "father" was not so much obscene as-with its connota-

tion of something at one remove from the loathsomeness and moral

obliquity of child-bearing-merely gross, a scatological rather than a

pornographic impropriety); the comically smutty word relieved what

had become a quite intolerable tension. Laughter broke out, enor-

mous, almost hysterical, peal after peal, as though it would never

stop. My father-and it was the Director! My father! Oh Ford, oh Ford!

That was really too good. The whooping and the roaring renewed

themselves, faces seemed on the point of disintegration, tears were

streaming. Six more test-tubes of spermatozoa were upset. My father!

Pale, wild-eyed, the Director glared about him in an agony of bewil-

dered humiliation.

My father! The laughter, which had shown signs of dying away, broke

out again more loudly than ever. He put his hands over his ears and

rushed out of the room.

Chapter Fifteen

THE menial staff of the Park Lane Hospital for the Dying consisted of

one hundred and sixty-two Deltas divided into two Bokanovsky Groups

of eighty-four red headed female and seventy-eight dark dolycho-

cephalic male twins, respectively. At six, when their working day was

over, the two Groups assembled in the vestibule of the Hospital and

were served by the Deputy Sub-Bursar with their soma ration.

From the lift the Savage stepped out into the midst of them. But his

mind was elsewhere-with death, with his grief, and his remorse; me-

chanicaly, without consciousness of what he was doing, he began to

shoulder his way through the crowd.

"Who are you pushing? Where do you think you're going?"

High, low, from a multitude of separate throats, only two voices

squeaked or growled. Repeated indefinitely, as though by a train of

mirrors, two faces, one a hairless and freckled moon haloed in orange,

the other a thin, beaked bird-mask, stubbly with two days' beard,

turned angrily towards him. Their words and, in his ribs, the sharp

nudging of elbows, broke through his unawareness. He woke once

more to external reality, looked round him, knew what he saw-knew

it, with a sinking sense of horror and disgust, for the recurrent delir-

ium of his days and nights, the nightmare of swarming indistinguish-

able sameness. Twins, twins. ... Like maggots they had swarmed defil-

ingly over the mystery of Linda's death. Maggots again, but larger, full

grown, they now crawled across his grief and his repentance. He

halted and, with bewildered and horrified eyes, stared round him at

the khaki mob, in the midst of which, overtopping it by a full head, he

stood. "How many goodly creatures are there here!" The singing words

mocked him derisively. "How beauteous mankind is! O brave new

world ..."

"Soma distribution!" shouted a loud voice. "In good order, please.

Hurry up there."

A door had been opened, a table and chair carried into the vestibule.

The voice was that of a jaunty young Alpha, who had entered carrying

a black iron cash-box. A murmur of satisfaction went up from the ex-

pectant twins. They forgot all about the Savage. Their attention was

now focused on the black cash-box, which the young man had placed

on the table, and was now in process of unlocking. The lid was lifted.

"Oo-oh!" said all the hundred and sixty-two simultaneously, as though

they were looking at fireworks.

The young man took out a handful of tiny pill-boxes. "Now," he said

peremptorily, "step forward, please. One at a time, and no shoving."

One at a time, with no shoving, the twins stepped forward. First two

males, then a female, then another male, then three females, then ...

The Savage stood looking on. "O brave new world, O brave new world

..." In his mind the singing words seemed to change their tone. They

had mocked him through his misery and remorse, mocked him with

how hideous a note of cynical derision! Fiendishly laughing, they had

insisted on the low squalor, the nauseous ugliness of the nightmare.

Now, suddenly, they trumpeted a call to arms. "O brave new world!"

Miranda was proclaiming the possibility of loveliness, the possibility of

transforming even the nightmare into something fine and noble. "O

brave new world!" It was a challenge, a command.

"No shoving there now!" shouted the Deputy Sub-Bursar in a fury. He

slammed down he lid of his cash-box. "I shall stop the distribution un-

less I have good behaviour."

The Deltas muttered, jostled one another a little, and then were still.

The threat had been effective. Deprivation of soma-appalling thought!

"That's better," said the young man, and reopened his cash-box.

Linda had been a slave, Linda had died; others should live in freedom,

and the world be made beautiful. A reparation, a duty. And suddenly it

was luminously clear to the Savage what he must do; it was as though

a shutter had been opened, a curtain drawn back.

"Now," said the Deputy Sub-Bursar.

Another khaki female stepped forward.

"Stop!" called the Savage in a loud and ringing voice. "Stop!"

He pushed his way to the table; the Deltas stared at him with aston-

ishment.

"Ford!" said the Deputy Sub-Bursar, below his breath. "It's the Sav-

age." He felt scared.

"Listen, I beg of you," cried the Savage earnestly. "Lend me your ears

..." He had never spoken in public before, and found it very difficult to

express what he wanted to say. "Don't take that horrible stuff. It's poi-

son, it's poison."

"I say, Mr. Savage," said the Deputy Sub-Bursar, smiling propitiatingly.

"Would you mind letting me ..."

"Poison to soul as well as body."

"Yes, but let me get on with my distribution, won't you? There's a good

fellow." With the cautious tenderness of one who strokes a notoriously

vicious animal, he patted the Savage's arm. "Just let me ..."

"Never!" cried the Savage.

"But look here, old man ..."

"Throw it all away, that horrible poison."

The words "Throw it all away" pierced through the enfolding layers of

incomprehension to the quick of the Delta's consciousness. An angry

murmur went up from the crowd.

"I come to bring you freedom," said the Savage, turning back towards

the twins. "I come ..."

The Deputy Sub-Bursar heard no more; he had slipped out of the ves-

tibule and was looking up a number in the telephone book.

"Not in his own rooms," Bernard summed up. "Not in mine, not in

yours. Not at the Aphroditaum; not at the Centre or the College.

Where can he have got to?"

Helmholtz shrugged his shoulders. They had come back from their

work expecting to find the Savage waiting for them at one or other of

the usual meeting-places, and there was no sign of the fellow. Which

was annoying, as they had meant to nip across to Biarritz in Helm-

holtz's four-seater sporticopter. They'd be late for dinner if he didn't

come soon.

"We'll give him five more minutes," said Helmholtz. "If he doesn't turn

up by then, we'll ..."

The ringing of the telephone bell interrupted him. He picked up the re-

ceiver. "Hullo. Speaking." Then, after a long interval of listening, "Ford

in Flivver!" he swore. "I'll come at once."

"What is it?" Bernard asked.

"A fellow I know at the Park Lane Hospital," said Helmholtz. "The Sav-

age is there. Seems to have gone mad. Anyhow, it's urgent. Will you

come with me?"

Together they hurried along the corridor to the lifts.

"But do you like being slaves?" the Savage was saying as they entered

the Hospital. His face was flushed, his eyes bright with ardour and in-

dignation. "Do you like being babies? Yes, babies. Mewling and puk-

ing," he added, exasperated by their bestial stupidity into throwing in-

suits at those he had come to save. The insults bounced off their cara-

pace of thick stupidity; they stared at him with a blank expression of

dull and sullen resentment in their eyes. "Yes, puking!" he fairly

shouted. Grief and remorse, compassion and duty-all were forgotten

now and, as it were, absorbed into an intense overpowering hatred of

these less than human monsters. "Don't you want to be free and men?

Don't you even understand what manhood and freedom are?" Rage

was making him fluent; the words came easily, in a rush. "Don't you?"

he repeated, but got no answer to his question. "Very well then," he

went on grimly. "I'll teach you; I'll make you be free whether you want

to or not." And pushing open a window that looked on to the inner

court of the Hospital, he began to throw the little pill-boxes of soma

tablets in handfuls out into the area.

For a moment the khaki mob was silent, petrified, at the spectacle of

this wanton sacrilege, with amazement and horror.

"He's mad," whispered Bernard, staring with wide open eyes. "They'll

kill him. They'll ..." A great shout suddenly went up from the mob; a

wave of movement drove it menacingly towards the Savage. "Ford

help him!" said Bernard, and averted his eyes.

"Ford helps those who help themselves." And with a laugh, actually a

laugh of exultation, Helmholtz Watson pushed his way through the

crowd.

"Free, free!" the Savage shouted, and with one hand continued to

throw the soma into the area while, with the other, he punched the in-

distinguishable faces of his assailants. "Free!" And suddenly there was

Helmholtz at his side-"Good old Helmholtz!"-also punching-"Men at

last!"-and in the interval also throwing the poison out by handfuls

through the open window. "Yes, men! men!" and there was no more

poison left. He picked up the cash-box and showed them its black

emptiness. "You're free!"

Howling, the Deltas charged with a redoubled fury.

Hesitant on the fringes of the battle. "They're done for," said Bernard

and, urged by a sudden impulse, ran forward to help them; then

thought better of it and halted; then, ashamed, stepped forward

again; then again thought better of it, and was standing in an agony of

humiliated indecision-thinking that they might be killed if he didn't

help them, and that he might be killed if he did-when (Ford be

praised!), goggle-eyed and swine-snouted in their gas-masks, in ran

the police.

Bernard dashed to meet them. He waved his arms; and it was action,

he was doing something. He shouted "Help!" several times, more and

more loudly so as to give himself the illusion of helping. "Help! Help!

HELP!"

The policemen pushed him out of the way and got on with their work.

Three men with spraying machines buckled to their shoulders pumped

thick clouds of soma vapour into the air. Two more were busy round

the portable Synthetic Music Box. Carrying water pistols charged with

a powerful anaesthetic, four others had pushed their way into the

crowd and were methodically laying out, squirt by squirt, the more fe-

rocious of the fighters.

"Quick, quick!" yelled Bernard. "They'll be killed if you don't hurry.

They'll ... Oh!" Annoyed by his chatter, one of the policemen had given

him a shot from his water pistol. Bernard stood for a second or two

wambling unsteadily on legs that seemed to have lost their bones,

their tendons, their muscles, to have become mere sticks of jelly, and

at last not even jelly-water: he tumbled in a heap on the floor.

Suddenly, from out of the Synthetic Music Box a Voice began to speak.

The Voice of Reason, the Voice of Good Feeling. The sound-track roll

was unwinding itself in Synthetic Anti-Riot Speech Number Two (Me-

dium Strength). Straight from the depths of a non-existent heart, "My

friends, my friends!" said the Voice so pathetically, with a note of such

infinitely tender reproach that, behind their gas masks, even the po-

licemen's eyes were momentarily dimmed with tears, "what is the

meaning of this? Why aren't you all being happy and good together?

Happy and good," the Voice repeated. "At peace, at peace." It trem-

bled, sank into a whisper and momentarily expired. "Oh, I do want you

to be happy," it began, with a yearning earnestness. "I do so want you

to be good! Please, please be good and ..."

Two minutes later the Voice and the soma vapour had produced their

effect. In tears, the Deltas were kissing and hugging one another-half

a dozen twins at a time in a comprehensive embrace. Even Helmholtz

and the Savage were almost crying. A fresh supply of pill-boxes was

brought in from the Bursary; a new distribution was hastily made and,

to the sound of the Voice's richly affectionate, baritone valedictions,

the twins dispersed, blubbering as though their hearts would break.

"Good-bye, my dearest, dearest friends, Ford keep you! Good-bye, my

dearest, dearest friends, Ford keep you. Good-bye my dearest, dearest

When the last of the Deltas had gone the policeman switched off the

current. The angelic Voice fell silent.

"Will you come quietly?" asked the Sergeant, "or must we anaesthe-

tize?" He pointed his water pistol menacingly.

"Oh, we'll come quietly," the Savage answered, dabbing alternately a

cut lip, a scratched neck, and a bitten left hand.

Still keeping his handkerchief to his bleeding nose Helmholtz nodded in

confirmation.

Awake and having recovered the use of his legs, Bernard had chosen

this moment to move as inconspicuously as he could towards the door.

"Hi, you there," called the Sergeant, and a swine-masked policeman

hurried across the room and laid a hand on the young man's shoulder.

Bernard turned with an expression of indignant innocence. Escaping?

He hadn't dreamed of such a thing. "Though what on earth you want

me for," he said to the Sergeant, "I really can't imagine."

"You're a friend of the prisoner's, aren't you?"

"Well ..." said Bernard, and hesitated. No, he really couldn't deny it.

"Why shouldn't I be?" he asked.

"Come on then," said the Sergeant, and led the way towards the door

and the waiting police car.

Chapter Sixteen

THE ROOM into which the three were ushered was the Controller's

study.

"His fordship will be down in a moment." The Gamma butler left them

to themselves.

Helmholtz laughed aloud.

"It's more like a caffeine-solution party than a trial," he said, and let

himself fall into the most luxurious of the pneumatic arm-chairs.

"Cheer up, Bernard," he added, catching sight of his friend's green un-

happy face. But Bernard would not be cheered; without answering,

without even looking at Helmholtz, he went and sat down on the most

uncomfortable chair in the room, carefully chosen in the obscure hope

of somehow deprecating the wrath of the higher powers.

The Savage meanwhile wandered restlessly round the room, peering

with a vague superficial inquisitiveness at the books in the shelves, at

the sound-track rolls and reading machine bobbins in their numbered

pigeon-holes. On the table under the window lay a massive volume

bound in limp black leather-surrogate, and stamped with large golden

T's. He picked it up and opened it. MY LIFE AND WORK, BY OUR FORD.

The book had been published at Detroit by the Society for the Propa-

gation of Fordian Knowledge. Idly he turned the pages, read a sen-

tence here, a paragraph there, and had just come to the conclusion

that the book didn't interest him, when the door opened, and the Resi-

dent World Controller for Western Europe walked briskly into the room.

Mustapha Mond shook hands with all three of them; but it was to the

Savage that he addressed himself. "So you don't much like civilization,

Mr. Savage," he said.

The Savage looked at him. He had been prepared to lie, to bluster, to

remain sullenly unresponsive; but, reassured by the good-humoured

intelligence of the Controller's face, he decided to tell the truth,

straightforwardly. "No." He shook his head.

Bernard started and looked horrified. What would the Controller think?

To be labelled as the friend of a man who said that he didn't like civili-

zation-said it openly and, of all people, to the Controller-it was terri-

ble. "But, John," he began. A look from Mustapha Mond reduced him

to an abject silence.

"Of course," the Savage went on to admit, "there are some very nice

things. All that music in the air, for instance ..."

"Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments will hum about my ears

and sometimes voices."

The Savage's face lit up with a sudden pleasure. "Have you read it

too?" he asked. "I thought nobody knew about that book here, in Eng-

land."

"Almost nobody. I'm one of the very few. It's prohibited, you see. But

as I make the laws here, I can also break them. With impunity, Mr.

Marx," he added, turning to Bernard. "Which I'm afraid you can't do."

Bernard sank into a yet more hopeless misery.

"But why is it prohibited?" asked the Savage. In the excitement of

meeting a man who had read Shakespeare he had momentarily forgot-

ten everything else.

The Controller shrugged his shoulders. "Because it's old; that's the

chief reason. We haven't any use for old things here."

"Even when they're beautiful?"

"Particularly when they're beautiful. Beauty's attractive, and we don't

want people to be attracted by old things. We want them to like the

new ones."

"But the new ones are so stupid and horrible. Those plays, where

there's nothing but helicopters flying about and you feel the people

kissing." He made a grimace. "Goats and monkeys!" Only in Othello's

word could he find an adequate vehicle for his contempt and hatred.

"Nice tame animals, anyhow," the Controller murmured parentheti-

cally.

"Why don't you let them see Othello instead?"

"I've told you; it's old. Besides, they couldn't understand it."

Yes, that was true. He remembered how Helmholtz had laughed at

Romeo and Juliet. "Well then," he said, after a pause, "something new

that's like Othello, and that they could understand."

"That's what we've all been wanting to write," said Helmholtz, breaking

a long silence.

"And it's what you never will write," said the Controller. "Because, if it

were really like Othello nobody could understand it, however new it

might be. And if were new, it couldn't possibly be like Othello."

"Why not?"

"Yes, why not?" Helmholtz repeated. He too was forgetting the un-

pleasant realities of the situation. Green with anxiety and apprehen-

sion, only Bernard remembered them; the others ignored him. "Why

not?"

"Because our world is not the same as Othello's world. You can't make

flivvers without steel-and you can't make tragedies without social in-

stability. The world's stable now. People are happy; they get what they

want, and they never want what they can't get. They're well off;

they're safe; they're never ill; they're not afraid of death; they're bliss-

fully ignorant of passion and old age; they're plagued with no mothers

or fathers; they've got no wives, or children, or lovers to feel strongly

about; they're so conditioned that they practically can't help behaving

as they ought to behave. And if anything should go wrong, there's

soma. Which you go and chuck out of the window in the name of lib-

erty, Mr. Savage. Liberty!" He laughed. "Expecting Deltas to know what

liberty is! And now expecting them to understand Othello! My good

boy!"

The Savage was silent for a little. "All the same," he insisted obsti-

nately, "Othello's good, Othello's better than those feelies."

"Of course it is," the Controller agreed. "But that's the price we have

to pay for stability. You've got to choose between happiness and what

people used to call high art. We've sacrificed the high art. We have the

feelies and the scent organ instead."

"But they don't mean anything."

"They mean themselves; they mean a lot of agreeable sensations to

the audience."

"But they're ... they're told by an idiot."

The Controller laughed. "You're not being very polite to your friend, Mr.

Watson. One of our most distinguished Emotional Engineers ..."

"But he's right," said Helmholtz gloomily. "Because it is idiotic. Writing

when there's nothing to say ..."

"Precisely. But that requires the most enormous ingenuity. You're mak-

ing flivvers out of the absolute minimum of steel-works of art out of

practically nothing but pure sensation."

The Savage shook his head. "It all seems to me quite horrible."

"Of course it does. Actual happiness always looks pretty squalid in

comparison with the over-compensations for misery. And, of course,

stability isn't nearly so spectacular as instability. And being contented

has none of the glamour of a good fight against misfortune, none of

the picturesqueness of a struggle with temptation, or a fatal overthrow

by passion or doubt. Happiness is never grand."

"I suppose not," said the Savage after a silence. "But need it be quite

so bad as those twins?" He passed his hand over his eyes as though he

were trying to wipe away the remembered image of those long rows of

identical midgets at the assembling tables, those queued-up twin-

herds at the entrance to the Brentford monorail station, those human

maggots swarming round Linda's bed of death, the endlessly repeated

face of his assailants. He looked at his bandaged left hand and shud-

dered. "Horrible!"

"But how useful! I see you don't like our Bokanovsky Groups; but, I

assure you, they're the foundation on which everything else is built.

They're the gyroscope that stabilizes the rocket plane of state on its

unswerving course." The deep voice thrillingly vibrated; the gesticulat-

ing hand implied all space and the onrush of the irresistible machine.

Mustapha Mond's oratory was almost up to synthetic standards.

"I was wondering," said the Savage, "why you had them at all-seeing

that you can get whatever you want out of those bottles. Why don't

you make everybody an Alpha Double Plus while you're about it?"

Mustapha Mond laughed. "Because we have no wish to have our

throats cut," he answered. "We believe in happiness and stability. A

society of Alphas couldn't fail to be unstable and miserable. Imagine a

factory staffed by Alphas-that is to say by separate and unrelated in-

dividuals of good heredity and conditioned so as to be capable (within

limits) of making a free choice and assuming responsibilities. Imagine

it!" he repeated.

The Savage tried to imagine it, not very successfully.

"It's an absurdity. An Alpha-decanted, Alpha-conditioned man would

go mad if he had to do Epsilon Semi-Moron work-go mad, or start

smashing things up. Alphas can be completely socialized-but only on

condition that you make them do Alpha work. Only an Epsilon can be

expected to make Epsilon sacrifices, for the good reason that for him

they aren't sacrifices; they're the line of least resistance. His condition-

ing has laid down rails along which he's got to run. He can't help him-

self; he's foredoomed. Even after decanting, he's still inside a bot-

tle-an invisible bottle of infantile and embryonic fixations. Each one of

us, of course," the Controller meditatively continued, "goes through

life inside a bottle. But if we happen to be Alphas, our bottles are, rela-

tively speaking, enormous. We should suffer acutely if we were con-

fined in a narrower space. You cannot pour upper-caste champagne-

surrogate into lower-caste bottles. It's obvious theoretically. But it has

also been proved in actual practice. The result of the Cyprus experi-

ment was convincing."

"What was that?" asked the Savage.

Mustapha Mond smiled. "Well, you can call it an experiment in rebot-

tling if you like. It began in A.F. 473. The Controllers had the island of

Cyprus cleared of all its existing inhabitants and re-colonized with a

specially prepared batch of twenty-two thousand Alphas. All agricul-

tural and industrial equipment was handed over to them and they were

left to manage their own affairs. The result exactly fulfilled all the

theoretical predictions. The land wasn't properly worked; there were

strikes in all the factories; the laws were set at naught, orders dis-

obeyed; all the people detailed for a spell of low-grade work were per-

petually intriguing for high-grade jobs, and all the people with high-

grade jobs were counter-intriguing at all costs to stay where they

were. Within six years they were having a first-class civil war. When

nineteen out of the twenty-two thousand had been killed, the survivors

unanimously petitioned the World Controllers to resume the govern-

ment of the island. Which they did. And that was the end of the only

society of Alphas that the world has ever seen."

The Savage sighed, profoundly.

"The optimum population," said Mustapha Mond, "is modelled on the

iceberg-eight-ninths below the water line, one-ninth above."

"And they're happy below the water line?"

"Happier than above it. Happier than your friend here, for example."

He pointed.

"In spite of that awful work?"

"Awful? They don't find it so. On the contrary, they like it. It's light, it's

childishly simple. No strain on the mind or the muscles. Seven and a

half hours of mild, unexhausting labour, and then the soma ration and

games and unrestricted copulation and the feelies. What more can

they ask for? True," he added, "they might ask for shorter hours. And

of course we could give them shorter hours. Technically, it would be

perfectly simple to reduce all lower-caste working hours to three or

four a day. But would they be any the happier for that? No, they

wouldn't. The experiment was tried, more than a century and a half

ago. The whole of Ireland was put on to the four-hour day. What was

the result? Unrest and a large increase in the consumption of soma;

that was all. Those three and a half hours of extra leisure were so far

from being a source of happiness, that people felt constrained to take

a holiday from them. The Inventions Office is stuffed with plans for

labour-saving processes. Thousands of them." Mustapha Mond made a

lavish gesture. "And why don't we put them into execution? For the

sake of the labourers; it would be sheer cruelty to afflict them with ex-

cessive leisure. It's the same with agriculture. We could synthesize

every morsel of food, if we wanted to. But we don't. We prefer to keep

a third of the population on the land. For their own sakes-because it

takes longer to get food out of the land than out of a factory. Besides,

we have our stability to think of. We don't want to change. Every

change is a menace to stability. That's another reason why we're so

chary of applying new inventions. Every discovery in pure science is

potentially subversive; even science must sometimes be treated as a

possible enemy. Yes, even science."

Science? The Savage frowned. He knew the word. But what it exactly

signified he could not say. Shakespeare and the old men of the pueblo

had never mentioned science, and from Linda he had only gathered

the vaguest hints: science was something you made helicopters with,

some thing that caused you to laugh at the Corn Dances, something

that prevented you from being wrinkled and losing your teeth. He

made a desperate effort to take the Controller's meaning.

"Yes," Mustapha Mond was saying, "that's another item in the cost of

stability. It isn't only art that's incompatible with happiness; it's also

science. Science is dangerous; we have to keep it most carefully

chained and muzzled."

"What?" said Helmholtz, in astonishment. "But we're always saying

that science is everything. It's a hypnopaedic platitude."

"Three times a week between thirteen and seventeen," put in Bernard.

"And all the science propaganda we do at the College ..."

"Yes; but what sort of science?" asked Mustapha Mond sarcastically.

"You've had no scientific training, so you can't judge. I was a pretty

good physicist in my time. Too good-good enough to realize that all

our science is just a cookery book, with an orthodox theory of cooking

that nobody's allowed to question, and a list of recipes that mustn't be

added to except by special permission from the head cook. I'm the

head cook now. But I was an inquisitive young scullion once. I started

doing a bit of cooking on my own. Unorthodox cooking, illicit cooking.

A bit of real science, in fact." He was silent.

"What happened?" asked Helmholtz Watson.

The Controller sighed. "Very nearly what's going to happen to you

young men. I was on the point of being sent to an island."

The words galvanized Bernard into violent and unseemly activity.

"Send me to an island?" He jumped up, ran across the room, and

stood gesticulating in front of the Controller. "You can't send me. I

haven't done anything. It was the others. I swear it was the others."

He pointed accusingly to Helmholtz and the Savage. "Oh, please don't

send me to Iceland. I promise I'll do what I ought to do. Give me an-

other chance. Please give me another chance." The tears began to

flow. "I tell you, it's their fault," he sobbed. "And not to Iceland. Oh

please, your fordship, please ..." And in a paroxysm of abjection he

threw himself on his knees before the Controller. Mustapha Mond tried

to make him get up; but Bernard persisted in his grovelling; the

stream of words poured out inexhaustibly. In the end the Controller

had to ring for his fourth secretary.

"Bring three men," he ordered, "and take Mr. Marx into a bedroom.

Give him a good soma vaporization and then put him to bed and leave

him."

The fourth secretary went out and returned with three green-

uniformed twin footmen. Still shouting and sobbing. Bernard was car-

ried out.

"One would think he was going to have his throat cut," said the Con-

troller, as the door closed. "Whereas, if he had the smallest sense, he'd

understand that his punishment is really a reward. He's being sent to

an island. That's to say, he's being sent to a place where he'll meet the

most interesting set of men and women to be found anywhere in the

world. All the people who, for one reason or another, have got too self-

consciously individual to fit into community-life. All the people who

aren't satisfied with orthodoxy, who've got independent ideas of their

own. Every one, in a word, who's any one. I almost envy you, Mr. Wat-

son."

Helmholtz laughed. "Then why aren't you on an island yourself?"

"Because, finally, I preferred this," the Controller answered. "I was

given the choice: to be sent to an island, where I could have got on

with my pure science, or to be taken on to the Controllers' Council with

the prospect of succeeding in due course to an actual Controllership. I

chose this and let the science go." After a little silence, "Sometimes,"

he added, "I rather regret the science. Happiness is a hard mas-

ter-particularly other people's happiness. A much harder master, if one

isn't conditioned to accept it unquestioningly, than truth." He sighed,

fell silent again, then continued in a brisker tone, "Well, duty's duty.

One can't consult one's own preference. I'm interested in truth, I like

science. But truth's a menace, science is a public danger. As dangerous

as it's been beneficent. It has given us the stablest equilibrium in his-

tory. China's was hopelessly insecure by comparison; even the primi-

tive matriarchies weren't steadier than we are. Thanks, I repeat, to

science. But we can't allow science to undo its own good work. That's

why we so carefully limit the scope of its researches-that's why I al-

most got sent to an island. We don't allow it to deal with any but the

most immediate problems of the moment. All other enquiries are most

sedulously discouraged. It's curious," he went on after a little pause,

"to read what people in the time of Our Ford used to write about scien-

tific progress. They seemed to have imagined that it could be allowed

to go on indefinitely, regardless of everything else. Knowledge was the

highest good, truth the supreme value; all the rest was secondary and

subordinate. True, ideas were beginning to change even then. Our Ford

himself did a great deal to shift the emphasis from truth and beauty to

comfort and happiness. Mass production demanded the shift. Universal

happiness keeps the wheels steadily turning; truth and beauty can't.

And, of course, whenever the masses seized political power, then it

was happiness rather than truth and beauty that mattered. Still, in

spite of everytung, unrestricted scientific research was still permitted.

People still went on talking about truth and beauty as though they

were the sovereign goods. Right up to the time of the Nine Years' War.

That made them change their tune all right. What's the point of truth

or beauty or knowledge when the anthrax bombs are popping all

around you? That was when science first began to be controlled-after

the Nine Years' War. People were ready to have even their appetites

controlled then. Anything for a quiet life. We've gone on controlling

ever since. It hasn't been very good for truth, of course. But it's been

very good for happiness. One can't have something for nothing. Hap-

piness has got to be paid for. You're paying for it, Mr. Watson-paying

because you happen to be too much interested in beauty. I was too

much interested in truth; I paid too."

"But you didn't go to an island," said the Savage, breaking a long si-

lence.

The Controller smiled. "That's how I paid. By choosing to serve happi-

ness. Other people's-not mine. It's lucky," he added, after a pause,

"that there are such a lot of islands in the world. I don't know what we

should do without them. Put you all in the lethal chamber, I suppose.

By the way, Mr. Watson, would you like a tropical climate? The Mar-

quesas, for example; or Samoa? Or something rather more bracing?"

Helmholtz rose from his pneumatic chair. "I should like a thoroughly

bad climate," he answered. "I believe one would write better if the cli-

mate were bad. If there were a lot of wind and storms, for example ..."

The Controller nodded his approbation. "I like your spirit, Mr. Watson. I

like it very much indeed. As much as I officially disapprove of it." He

smiled. "What about the Falkland Islands?"

"Yes, I think that will do," Helmholtz answered. "And now, if you don't

mind, I'll go and see how poor Bernard's getting on."

Chapter Seventeen

ART, SCIENCE-you seem to have paid a fairly high price for your hap-

piness," said the Savage, when they were alone. "Anything else?"

"Well, religion, of course," replied the Controller. "There used to be

something called God-before the Nine Years' War. But I was forgetting;

you know all about God, I suppose."

"Well ..." The Savage hesitated. He would have liked to say something

about solitude, about night, about the mesa lying pale under the

moon, about the precipice, the plunge into shadowy darkness, about

death. He would have liked to speak; but there were no words. Not

even in Shakespeare.

The Controller, meanwhile, had crossed to the other side of the room

and was unlocking a large safe set into the wall between the book-

shelves. The heavy door swung open. Rummaging in the darkness

within, "It's a subject," he said, "that has always had a great interest

for me." He pulled out a thick black volume. "You've never read this,

for example."

The Savage took it. "The Holy Bible, containing the Old and New Tes-

taments/' he read aloud from the title-page.

"Nor this." It was a small book and had lost its cover.

"The Imitation of Christ "

"Nor this." He handed out another volume.

"The Varieties of Religious Experience. By William James."

"And I've got plenty more," Mustapha Mond continued, resuming his

seat. "A whole collection of pornographic old books. God in the safe

and Ford on the shelves." He pointed with a laugh to his avowed li-

brary-to the shelves of books, the rack full of reading-machine bob-

bins and sound-track rolls.

"But if you know about God, why don't you tell them?" asked the Sav-

age indignantly. "Why don't you give them these books about God?"

"For the same reason as we don't give them Othello: they're old;

they're about God hundreds of years ago. Not about God now."

"But God doesn't change."

"Men do, though."

"What difference does that make?"

"All the difference in the world," said Mustapha Mond. He got up again

and walked to the safe. "There was a man called Cardinal Newman,"

he said. "A cardinal," he exclaimed parenthetically, "was a kind of

Arch-Community-Songster."

'"I Pandulph, of fair Milan, cardinal.' I've read about them in Shake-

speare."

"Of course you have. Well, as I was saying, there was a man called

Cardinal Newman. Ah, here's the book." He pulled it out. "And while

I'm about it I'll take this one too. It's by a man called Maine de Biran.

He was a philosopher, if you know what that was."

"A man who dreams of fewer things than there are in heaven and

earth," said the Savage promptly.

"Quite so. I'll read you one of the things he did dream of in a moment.

Meanwhile, listen to what this old Arch-Community-Songster said." He

opened the book at the place marked by a slip of paper and began to

read. '"We are not our own any more than what we possess is our

own. We did not make ourselves, we cannot be supreme over our-

selves. We are not our own masters. We are God's property. Is it not

our happiness thus to view the matter? Is it any happiness or any

comfort, to consider that we are our own? It may be thought so by the

young and prosperous. These may think it a great thing to have every-

thing, as they suppose, their own way-to depend on no one-to have

to think of nothing out of sight, to be without the irksomeness of con-

tinual acknowledgment, continual prayer, continual reference of what

they do to the will of another. But as time goes on, they, as all men,

will find that independence was not made for man-that it is an unnatu-

ral state-will do for a while, but will not carry us on safely to the end

...'" Mustapha Mond paused, put down the first book and, picking up

the other, turned over the pages. "Take this, for example," he said,

and in his deep voice once more began to read: "'A man grows old; he

feels in himself that radical sense of weakness, of listlessness, of dis-

comfort, which accompanies the advance of age; and, feeling thus,

imagines himself merely sick, lulling his fears with the notion that this

distressing condition is due to some particular cause, from which, as

from an illness, he hopes to recover. Vain imaginings! That sickness is

old age; and a horrible disease it is. They say that it is the fear of

death and of what comes after death that makes men turn to religion

as they advance in years. But my own experience has given me the

conviction that, quite apart from any such terrors or imaginings, the

religious sentiment tends to develop as we grow older; to develop be-

cause, as the passions grow calm, as the fancy and sensibilities are

less excited and less excitable, our reason becomes less troubled in its

working, less obscured by the images, desires and distractions, in

which it used to be absorbed; whereupon God emerges as from behind

a cloud; our soul feels, sees, turns towards the source of all light;

turns naturally and inevitably; for now that all that gave to the world

of sensations its life and charms has begun to leak away from us, now

that phenomenal existence is no more bolstered up by impressions

from within or from without, we feel the need to lean on something

that abides, something that will never play us false-a reality, an abso-

lute and everlasting truth. Yes, we inevitably turn to God; for this re-

ligious sentiment is of its nature so pure, so delightful to the soul that

experiences it, that it makes up to us for all our other losses.'" Musta-

pha Mond shut the book and leaned back in his chair. "One of the nu-

merous things in heaven and earth that these philosophers didn't

dream about was this" (he waved his hand), "us, the modern world.

'You can only be independent of God while you've got youth and pros-

perity; independence won't take you safely to the end.' Well, we've

now got youth and prosperity right up to the end. What follows? Evi-

dently, that we can be independent of God. 'The religious sentiment

will compensate us for all our losses.' But there aren't any losses for us

to compensate; religious sentiment is superfluous. And why should we

go hunting for a substitute for youthful desires, when youthful desires

never fail? A substitute for distractions, when we go on enjoying all the

old fooleries to the very last? What need have we of repose when our

minds and bodies continue to delight in activity? of consolation, when

we have soma? of something immovable, when there is the social or-

der?"

"Then you think there is no God?"

"No, I think there quite probably is one."

"Then why? ..."

Mustapha Mond checked him. "But he manifests himself in different

ways to different men. In premodern times he manifested himself as

the being that's described in these books. Now ..."

"How does he manifest himself now?" asked the Savage.

"Well, he manifests himself as an absence; as though he weren't there

at all."

"That's your fault."

"Call it the fault of civilization. God isn't compatible with machinery

and scientific medicine and universal happiness. You must make your

choice. Our civilization has chosen machinery and medicine and happi-

ness. That's why I have to keep these books locked up in the safe.

They're smut. People would be shocked it ..."

The Savage interrupted him. "But isn't it natural to feel there's a God?"

"You might as well ask if it's natural to do up one's trousers with zip-

pers," said the Controller sarcastically. "You remind me of another of

those old fellows called Bradley. He defined philosophy as the finding

of bad reason for what one believes by instinct. As if one believed any-

thing by instinct! One believes things because one has been condi-

tioned to believe them. Finding bad reasons for what one believes for

other bad reasons-that's philosophy. People believe in God because

they've been conditioned to.

"But all the same," insisted the Savage, "it is natural to believe in God

when you're alone-quite alone, in the night, thinking about death ..."

"But people never are alone now," said Mustapha Mond. "We make

them hate solitude; and we arrange their lives so that it's almost im-

possible for them ever to have it."

The Savage nodded gloomily. At Malpais he had suffered because they

had shut him out from the communal activities of the pueblo, in civi-

lized London he was suffering because he could never escape from

those communal activities, never be quietly alone.

"Do you remember that bit in King Lear?" said the Savage at last.

'"The gods are just and of our pleasant vices make instruments to

plague us; the dark and vicious place where thee he got cost him his

eyes,' and Edmund answers-you remember, he's wounded, he's dy-

ing-'Thou hast spoken right; 'tis true. The wheel has come full circle; I

am here.' What about that now? Doesn't there seem to be a God man-

aging things, punishing, rewarding?"

"Well, does there?" questioned the Controller in his turn. "You can in-

dulge in any number of pleasant vices with a freemartin and run no

risks of having your eyes put out by your son's mistress. 'The wheel

has come full circle; I am here.' But where would Edmund be nowa-

days? Sitting in a pneumatic chair, with his arm round a girl's waist,

sucking away at his sex-hormone chewing-gum and looking at the

feelies. The gods are just. No doubt. But their code of law is dictated,

in the last resort, by the people who organize society; Providence

takes its cue from men."

"Are you sure?" asked the Savage. "Are you quite sure that the Ed-

mund in that pneumatic chair hasn't been just as heavily punished as

the Edmund who's wounded and bleeding to death? The gods are just.

Haven't they used his pleasant vices as an instrument to degrade

him?"

"Degrade him from what position? As a happy, hard-working, goods-

consuming citizen he's perfect. Of course, if you choose some other

standard than ours, then perhaps you might say he was degraded. But

you've got to stick to one set of postulates. You can't play Electro-

magnetic Golf according to the rules of Centrifugal Bumble-puppy."

"But value dwells not in particular will," said the Savage. "It holds his

estimate and dignity as well wherein 'tis precious of itself as in the

prizer."

"Come, come," protested Mustapha Mond, "that's going rather far, isn't

it?"

"If you allowed yourselves to think of God, you wouldn't allow your-

selves to be degraded by pleasant vices. You'd have a reason for bear-

ing things patiently, for doing things with courage. I've seen it with the

Indians."

"I'm sure you have," said Mustapha Mond. "But then we aren't Indians.

There isn't any need for a civilized man to bear anything that's seri-

ously unpleasant. And as for doing things-Ford forbid that he should

get the idea into his head. It would upset the whole social order if men

started doing things on their own."

"What about self-denial, then? If you had a God, you'd have a reason

for self-denial."

"But industrial civilization is only possible when there's no self-denial.

Self-indulgence up to the very limits imposed by hygiene and econom-

ics. Otherwise the wheels stop turning."

"You'd have a reason for chastity!" said the Savage, blushing a little as

he spoke the words.

"But chastity means passion, chastity means neurasthenia. And pas-

sion and neurasthenia mean instability. And instability means the end

of civilization. You can't have a lasting civilization without plenty of

pleasant vices."

"But God's the reason for everything noble and fine and heroic. If you

had a God ..."

"My dear young friend," said Mustapha Mond, "civilization has abso-

lutely no need of nobility or heroism. These things are symptoms of

political inefficiency. In a properly organized society like ours, nobody

has any opportunities for being noble or heroic. Conditions have got to

be thoroughly unstable before the occasion can arise. Where there are

wars, where there are divided allegiances, where there are tempta-

tions to be resisted, objects of love to be fought for or defended-there,

obviously, nobility and heroism have some sense. But there aren't any

wars nowadays. The greatest care is taken to prevent you from loving

any one too much. There's no such thing as a divided allegiance;

you're so conditioned that you can't help doing what you ought to do.

And what you ought to do is on the whole so pleasant, so many of the

natural impulses are allowed free play, that there really aren't any

temptations to resist. And if ever, by some unlucky chance, anything

unpleasant should somehow happen, why, there's always soma to give

you a holiday from the facts. And there's always soma to calm your

anger, to reconcile you to your enemies, to make you patient and long-

suffering. In the past you could only accomplish these things by mak-

ing a great effort and after years of hard moral training. Now, you

swallow two or three half-gramme tablets, and there you are. Anybody

can be virtuous now. You can carry at least half your mortality about in

a bottle. Christianity without tears-that's what soma is."

"But the tears are necessary. Don't you remember what Othello said?

'If after every tempest came such calms, may the winds blow till they

have wakened death.' There's a story one of the old Indians used to

tell us, about the Girl of Mataski. The young men who wanted to marry

her had to do a morning's hoeing in her garden. It seemed easy; but

there were flies and mosquitoes, magic ones. Most of the young men

simply couldn't stand the biting and stinging. But the one that could-

he got the girl."

"Charming! But in civilized countries," said the Controller, "you can

have girls without hoeing for them, and there aren't any flies or mos-

quitoes to sting you. We got rid of them all centuries ago."

The Savage nodded, frowning. "You got rid of them. Yes, that's just

like you. Getting rid of everything unpleasant instead of learning to put

up with it. Whether 'tis better in the mind to suffer the slings and ar-

rows of outrageous fortune, or to take arms against a sea of troubles

and by opposing end them ... But you don't do either. Neither suffer

nor oppose. You just abolish the slings and arrows. It's too easy."

He was suddenly silent, thinking of his mother. In her room on the

thirty-seventh floor, Linda had floated in a sea of singing lights and

perfumed caresses-floated away, out of space, out of time, out of the

prison of her memories, her habits, her aged and bloated body. And

Tomakin, ex-Director of Hatcheries and Conditioning, Tomakin was still

on holiday-on holiday from humiliation and pain, in a world where he

could not hear those words, that derisive laughter, could not see that

hideous face, feel those moist and flabby arms round his neck, in a

beautiful world ...

"What you need," the Savage went on, "is something with tears for a

change. Nothing costs enough here."

("Twelve and a half million dollars," Henry Foster had protested when

the Savage told him that. "Twelve and a half million-that's what the

new Conditioning Centre cost. Not a cent less.")

"Exposing what is mortal and unsure to all that fortune, death and

danger dare, even for an eggshell. Isn't there something in that?" he

asked, looking up at Mustapha Mond. "Quite apart from God-though of

course God would be a reason for it. Isn't there something in living

dangerously?"

"There's a great deal in it," the Controller replied. "Men and women

must have their adrenals stimulated from time to time."

"What?" questioned the Savage, uncomprehending.

"It's one of the conditions of perfect health. That's why we've made

the V.P.S. treatments compulsory."

"V.P.S.?"

"Violent Passion Surrogate. Regularly once a month. We flood the

whole system with adrenin. It's the complete physiological equivalent

of fear and rage. All the tonic effects of murdering Desdemona and be-

ing murdered by Othello, without any of the inconveniences."

"But I like the inconveniences."

"We don't," said the Controller. "We prefer to do things comfortably."

"But I don't want comfort. I want God, I want poetry, I want real dan-

ger, I want freedom, I want goodness. I want sin."

"In fact," said Mustapha Mond, "you're claiming the right to be un-

happy."

"All right then," said the Savage defiantly, "I'm claiming the right to be

unhappy."

"Not to mention the right to grow old and ugly and impotent; the right

to have syphilis and cancer; the right to have too little to eat; the right

to be lousy; the right to live in constant apprehension of what may

happen to-morrow; the right to catch typhoid; the right to be tortured

by unspeakable pains of every kind." There was a long silence.

"I claim them all," said the Savage at last.

Mustapha Mond shrugged his shoulders. "You're welcome," he said.

Chapter Eighteen

THE DOOR was ajar; they entered.

"John!"

From the bathroom came an unpleasant and characteristic sound.

"Is there anything the matter?" Helmholtz called.

There was no answer. The unpleasant sound was repeated, twice;

there was silence. Then, with a click the bathroom door opened and,

very pale, the Savage emerged.

"I say," Helmholtz exclaimed solicitously, "you do look ill, John!"

"Did you eat something that didn't agree with you?" asked Bernard.

The Savage nodded. "I ate civilization."

"What?"

"It poisoned me; I was defiled. And then," he added, in a lower tone,

"I ate my own wickedness."

"Yes, but what exactly? ... I mean, just now you were ..."

"Now I am purified," said the Savage. "I drank some mustard and

warm water."

The others stared at him in astonishment. "Do you mean to say that

you were doing it on purpose?" asked Bernard.

"That's how the Indians always purify themselves." He sat down and,

sighing, passed his hand across his forehead. "I shall rest for a few

minutes," he said. "I'm rather tired."

"Well, I'm not surprised," said Helmholtz. After a silence, "We've come

to say good-bye," he went on in another tone. "We're off to-morrow

morning."

"Yes, we're off to-morrow," said Bernard on whose face the Savage

remarked a new expression of determined resignation. "And by the

way, John," he continued, leaning forward in his chair and laying a

hand on the Savage's knee, "I want to say how sorry I am about eve-

rything that happened yesterday." He blushed. "How ashamed," he

went on, in spite of the unsteadiness of his voice, "how really ..."

The Savage cut him short and, taking his hand, affectionately pressed

it.

"Helmholtz was wonderful to me," Bernard resumed, after a little

pause. "If it hadn't been for him, I should ..."

"Now, now," Helmholtz protested.

There was a silence. In spite of their sadness-because of it, even; for

their sadness was the symptom of their love for one another-the three

young men were happy.

"I went to see the Controller this morning," said the Savage at last.

"What for?"

"To ask if I mightn't go to the islands with you."

"And what did he say?" asked Helmholtz eagerly.

The Savage shook his head. "He wouldn't let me."

"Why not?"

"He said he wanted to go on with the experiment. But I'm damned,"

the Savage added, with sudden fury, "I'm damned if I'll go on being

experimented with. Not for all the Controllers in the world. I shall go

away to-morrow too."

"But where?" the others asked in unison.

The Savage shrugged his shoulders. "Anywhere. I don't care. So long

as I can be alone."

From Guildford the down-line followed the Wey valley to Godalming,

then, over Milford and Witley, proceeded to Haslemere and on through

Petersfield towards Portsmouth. Roughly parallel to it, the upline

passed over Worplesden, Tongham, Puttenham, Elstead and Grayshott.

Between the Hog's Back and Hindhead there were points where the

two lines were not more than six or seven kilometres apart. The dis-

tance was too small for careless flyers-particularly at night and when

they had taken half a gramme too much. There had been accidents.

Serious ones. It had been decided to deflect the upline a few kilome-

tres to the west. Between Grayshott and Tongham four abandoned air-

lighthouses marked the course of the old Portsmouth-to-London road.

The skies above them were silent and deserted. It was over Selborne,

Bordon and Farnham that the helicopters now ceaselessly hummed

and roared.

The Savage had chosen as his hermitage the old light-house which

stood on the crest of the hill between Puttenham and Elstead. The

building was of ferro-concrete and in excellent condition-almost too

comfortable the Savage had thought when he first explored the place,

almost too civilizedly luxurious. He pacified his conscience by promis-

ing himself a compensatingly harder self-discipline, purifications the

more complete and thorough. His first night in the hermitage was, de-

liberately, a sleepless one. He spent the hours on his knees praying,

now to that Heaven from which the guilty Claudius had begged for-

giveness, now in Zuni to Awonawilona, now to Jesus and Pookong, now

to his own guardian animal, the eagle. From time to time he stretched

out his arms as though he were on the Cross, and held them thus

through long minutes of an ache that gradually increased till it became

a tremulous and excruciating agony; held them, in voluntary crucifix-

ion, while he repeated, through clenched teeth (the sweat, meanwhile,

pouring down his face), "Oh, forgive me! Oh, make me pure! Oh, help

me to be good!" again and again, till he was on the point of fainting

from the pain.

When morning came, he felt he had earned the right to inhabit the

lighthouse; yet, even though there still was glass in most of the win-

dows, even though the view from the platform was so fine. For the

very reason why he had chosen the lighthouse had become almost in-

stantly a reason for going somewhere else. He had decided to live

there because the view was so beautiful, because, from his vantage

point, he seemed to be looking out on to the incarnation of a divine

being. But who was he to be pampered with the daily and hourly sight

of loveliness? Who was he to be living in the visible presence of God?

All he deserved to live in was some filthy sty, some blind hole in the

ground. Stiff and still aching after his long night of pain, but for that

very reason inwardly reassured, he climbed up to the platform of his

tower, he looked out over the bright sunrise world which he had re-

gained the right to inhabit. On the north the view was bounded by the

long chalk ridge of the Hog's Back, from behind whose eastern extrem-

ity rose the towers of the seven skyscrapers which constituted Guild-

ford. Seeing them, the Savage made a grimace; but he was to become

reconciled to them in course of time; for at night they twinkled gaily

with geometrical constellations, or else, flood-lighted, pointed their

luminous fingers (with a gesture whose significance nobody in England

but the Savage now understood) solemnly towards the plumbless mys-

teries of heaven.

In the valley which separated the Hog's Back from the sandy hill on

which the lighthouse stood, Puttenham was a modest little village nine

stories high, with silos, a poultry farm, and a small vitamin-D factory.

On the other side of the lighthouse, towards the South, the ground fell

away in long slopes of heather to a chain of ponds.

Beyond them, above the intervening woods, rose the fourteen-story

tower of Elstead. Dim in the hazy English air, Hindhead and Selborne

invited the eye into a blue romantic distance. But it was not alone the

distance that had attracted the Savage to his lighthouse; the near was

as seductive as the far. The woods, the open stretches of heather and

yellow gorse, the clumps of Scotch firs, the shining ponds with their

overhanging birch trees, their water lilies, their beds of rushes-these

were beautiful and, to an eye accustomed to the aridities of the Ameri-

can desert, astonishing. And then the solitude! Whole days passed

during which he never saw a human being. The lighthouse was only a

quarter of an hour's flight from the Charing-T Tower; but the hills of

Malpais were hardly more deserted than this Surrey heath. The crowds

that daily left London, left it only to play Electro-magnetic Golf or Ten-

nis. Puttenham possessed no links; the nearest Riemann-surfaces

were at Guildford. Flowers and a landscape were the only attractions

here. And so, as there was no good reason for coming, nobody came.

During the first days the Savage lived alone and undisturbed.

Of the money which, on his first arrival, John had received for his per-

sonal expenses, most had been spent on his equipment. Before leaving

London he had bought four viscose-woollen blankets, rope and string,

nails, glue, a few tools, matches (though he intended in due course to

make a fire drill), some pots and pans, two dozen packets of seeds,

and ten kilogrammes of wheat flour. "No, not synthetic starch and

cotton-waste flour-substitute," he had insisted. "Even though it is

more nourishing." But when it came to pan-glandular biscuits and vi-

taminized beef-surrogate, he had not been able to resist the shop-

man's persuasion. Looking at the tins now, he bitterly reproached him-

self for his weakness. Loathesome civilized stuff! He had made up his

mind that he would never eat it, even if he were starving. "That'll

teach them," he thought vindictively. It would also teach him.

He counted his money. The little that remained would be enough, he

hoped, to tide him over the winter. By next spring, his garden would

be producing enough to make him independent of the outside world.

Meanwhile, there would always be game. He had seen plenty of rab-

bits, and there were waterfowl on the ponds. He set to work at once to

make a bow and arrows.

There were ash trees near the lighthouse and, for arrow shafts, a

whole copse full of beautifully straight hazel saplings. He began by fell-

ing a young ash, cut out six feet of unbranched stem, stripped off the

bark and, paring by paring, shaved away the white wood, as old Mit-

sima had taught him, until he had a stave of his own height, stiff at

the thickened centre, lively and quick at the slender tips. The work

gave him an intense pleasure. After those weeks of idleness in London,

with nothing to do, whenever he wanted anything, but to press a

switch or turn a handle, it was pure delight to be doing something that

demanded skill and patience.

He had almost finished whittling the stave into shape, when he real-

ized with a start that he was singing-s/ng/'ng/ It was as though, stum-

bling upon himself from the outside, he had suddenly caught himself

out, taken himself flagrantly at fault. Guiltily he blushed. After all, it

was not to sing and enjoy himself that he had come here. It was to es-

cape further contamination by the filth of civilized life; it was to be pu-

rified and made good; it was actively to make amends. He realized to

his dismay that, absorbed in the whittling of his bow, he had forgotten

what he had sworn to himself he would constantly remember-poor

Linda, and his own murderous unkindness to her, and those loathsome

twins, swarming like lice across the mystery of her death, insulting,

with their presence, not merely his own grief and repentance, but the

very gods themselves. He had sworn to remember, he had sworn un-

ceasingly to make amends. And there was he, sitting happily over his

bow-stave, singing, actually singing. ...

He went indoors, opened the box of mustard, and put some water to

boil on the fire.

Half an hour later, three Delta-Minus landworkers from one of the Put-

tenham Bokanovsky Groups happened to be driving to Elstead and, at

the top of the hill, were astonished to see a young man standing Out-

side the abandoned lighthouse stripped to the waist and hitting himself

with a whip of knotted cords. His back was horizontally streaked with

crimson, and from weal to weal ran thin trickles of blood. The driver of

the lorry pulled up at the side of the road and, with his two compan-

ions, stared open-mouthed at the extraordinary spectacle. One, two

three-they counted the strokes. After the eighth, the young man inter-

rupted his self-punishment to run to the wood's edge and there be vio-

lently sick. When he had finished, he picked up the whip and began

hitting himself again. Nine, ten, eleven, twelve ...

"Ford!" whispered the driver. And his twins were of the same opinion.

"Fordey!" they said.

Three days later, like turkey buzzards settling on a corpse, the report-

ers came.

Dried and hardened over a slow fire of green wood, the bow was

ready. The Savage was busy on his arrows. Thirty hazel sticks had

been whittled and dried, tipped with sharp nails, carefully nocked. He

had made a raid one night on the Puttenham poultry farm, and now

had feathers enough to equip a whole armoury. It was at work upon

the feathering of his shafts that the first of the reporters found him.

Noiseless on his pneumatic shoes, the man came up behind him.

"Good-morning, Mr. Savage," he said. "I am the representative of The

Hourly Radio."

Startled as though by the bite of a snake, the Savage sprang to his

feet, scattering arrows, feathers, glue-pot and brush in all directions.

"I beg your pardon," said the reporter, with genuine compunction. "I

had no intention ..." He touched his hat-the aluminum stove-pipe hat

in which he carried his wireless receiver and transmitter. "Excuse my

not taking it off," he said. "It's a bit heavy. Well, as I was saying, I am

the representative of The Hourly ..."

"What do you want?" asked the Savage, scowling. The reporter re-

turned his most ingratiating smile.

"Well, of course, our readers would be profoundly interested ..." He put

his head on one side, his smile became almost coquettish. "Just a few

words from you, Mr. Savage." And rapidly, with a series of ritual ges-

tures, he uncoiled two wires connected to the portable battery buckled

round his waist; plugged them simultaneously into the sides of his

aluminum hat; touched a spring on the crown-and antennae shot up

into the air; touched another spring on the peak of the brim-and, like

a jack-in-the-box, out jumped a microphone and hung there, quiver-

ing, six inches in front of his nose; pulled down a pair of receivers over

his ears; pressed a switch on the left side of the hat-and from within

came a faint waspy buzzing; turned a knob on the right-and the buzz-

ing was interrupted by a stethoscopic wheeze and cackle, by hiccoughs

and sudden squeaks. "Hullo," he said to the microphone, "hullo, hullo

..." A bell suddenly rang inside his hat. "Is that you, Edzel? Primo Mel-

lon speaking. Yes, I've got hold of him. Mr. Savage will now take the

microphone and say a few words. Won't you, Mr. Savage?" He looked

up at the Savage with another of those winning smiles of his. "Just tell

our readers why you came here. What made you leave London (hold

on, Edzel!) so very suddenly. And, of course, that whip." (The Savage

started. How did they know about the whip?) "We're all crazy to know

about the whip. And then something about Civilization. You know the

sort of stuff. 'What I think of the Civilized Girl.' Just a few words, a

very few ..."

The Savage obeyed with a disconcerting literalness. Five words he ut-

tered and no more-five words, the same as those he had said to Ber-

nard about the Arch-Community-Songster of Canterbury. "Hani! Sons

eso tse-na!" And seizing the reporter by the shoulder, he spun him

round (the young man revealed himself invitingly well-covered), aimed

and, with all the force and accuracy of a champion foot-and-mouth-

baller, delivered a most prodigious kick.

Eight minutes later, a new edition of The Hourly Radio was on sale in

the streets of London. "HOURLY RADIO REPORTER HAS COCCYX

KICKED BY MYSTERY SAVAGE," ran the headlines on the front page.

"SENSATION IN SURREY."

"Sensation even in London," thought the reporter when, on his return,

he read the words. And a very painful sensation, what was more. He

sat down gingerly to his luncheon.

Undeterred by that cautionary bruise on their colleague's coccyx, four

other reporters, representing the New York Times, the Frankfurt Four-

Dimensional Continuum, The Fordian Science Monitor, and The Delta

Mirror, called that afternoon at the lighthouse and met with receptions

of progressively increasing violence.

From a safe distance and still rubbing his buttocks, "Benighted fool!"

shouted the man from The Fordian Science Monitor, "why don't you

take soma?"

"Get away!" The Savage shook his fist.

The other retreated a few steps then turned round again. "Evil's an un-

reality if you take a couple of grammes."

"Kohakwa iyathtokyai!"The tone was menacingly derisive.

"Pain's a delusion."

"Oh, is it?" said the Savage and, picking up a thick hazel switch, strode

forward.

The man from The Fordian Science Monitor made a dash for his heli-

copter.

After that the Savage was left for a time in peace. A few helicopters

came and hovered inquisitively round the tower. He shot an arrow into

the importunately nearest of them. It pierced the aluminum floor of

the cabin; there was a shrill yell, and the machine went rocketing up

into the air with all the acceleration that its super-charger could give

it. The others, in future, kept their distance respectfully. Ignoring their

tiresome humming (he likened himself in his imagination to one of the

suitors of the Maiden of Matsaki, unmoved and persistent among the

winged vermin), the Savage dug at what was to be his garden. After a

time the vermin evidently became bored and flew away; for hours at a

stretch the sky above his head was empty and, but for the larks, si-

lent.

The weather was breathlessly hot, there was thunder in the air. He had

dug all the morning and was resting, stretched out along the floor. And

suddenly the thought of Lenina was a real presence, naked and tangi-

ble, saying "Sweet!" and "Put your arms round me!"-in shoes and

socks, perfumed. Impudent strumpet! But oh, oh, her arms round his

neck, the lifting of her breasts, her mouth! Eternity was in our lips and

eyes. Lenina ... No, no, no, no! He sprang to his feet and, half naked as

he was, ran out of the house. At the edge of the heath stood a clump

of hoary juniper bushes. He flung himself against them, he embraced,

not the smooth body of his desires, but an armful of green spikes.

Sharp, with a thousand points, they pricked him. He tried to think of

poor Linda, breathless and dumb, with her clutching hands and the

unutterable terror in her eyes. Poor Linda whom he had sworn to re-

member. But it was still the presence of Lenina that haunted him. Len-

ina whom he had promised to forget. Even through the stab and sting

of the juniper needles, his wincing flesh was aware of her, unescapably

real. "Sweet, sweet ... And if you wanted me too, why didn't you ..."

The whip was hanging on a nail by the door, ready to hand against the

arrival of reporters. In a frenzy the Savage ran back to the house,

seized it, whirled it. The knotted cords bit into his flesh.

"Strumpet! Strumpet!" he shouted at every blow as though it were

Lenina (and how frantically, without knowing it, he wished it were),

white, warm, scented, infamous Lenina that he was dogging thus.

"Strumpet!" And then, in a voice of despair, "Oh, Linda, forgive me.

Forgive me, God. I'm bad. I'm wicked. I'm ... No, no, you strumpet,

you strumpet!"

From his carefully constructed hide in the wood three hundred metres

away, Darwin Bonaparte, the Feely Corporation's most expert big

game photographer had watched the whole proceedings. Patience and

skill had been rewarded. He had spent three days sitting inside the

bole of an artificial oak tree, three nights crawling on his belly through

the heather, hiding microphones in gorse bushes, burying wires in the

soft grey sand. Seventy-two hours of profound discomfort. But now me

great moment had come-the greatest, Darwin Bonaparte had time to

reflect, as he moved among his instruments, the greatest since his

taking of the famous all-howling stereoscopic feely of the gorillas'

wedding. "Splendid," he said to himself, as the Savage started his as-

tonishing performance. "Splendid!" He kept his telescopic cameras

carefully aimed-glued to their moving objective; clapped on a higher

power to get a close-up of the frantic and distorted face (admirable!);

switched over, for half a minute, to slow motion (an exquisitely comical

effect, he promised himself); listened in, meanwhile, to the blows, the

groans, the wild and raving words that were being recorded on the

sound-track at the edge of his film, tried the effect of a little amplifica-

tion (yes, that was decidedly better); was delighted to hear, in a mo-

mentary lull, the shrill singing of a lark; wished the Savage would turn

round so that he could get a good close-up of the blood on his back-

and almost instantly (what astonishing luck!) the accommodating fel-

low did turn round, and he was able to take a perfect close-up.

"Well, that was grand!" he said to himself when it was all over. "Really

grand!" He mopped his face. When they had put in the feely effects at

the studio, it would be a wonderful film. Almost as good, thought Dar-

win Bonaparte, as the Sperm Whale's Love-Life-and that, by Ford, was

saying a good deal!

Twelve days later The Savage of Surrey had been released and could

be seen, heard and felt in every first-class feely-palace in Western

Europe.

The effect of Darwin Bonaparte's film was immediate and enormous.

On the afternoon which followed the evening of its release John's rustic

solitude was suddenly broken by the arrival overhead of a great swarm

of helicopters.

He was digging in his garden-digging, too, in his own mind, laboriously

turning up the substance of his thought. Death-and he drove in his

spade once, and again, and yet again. And all our yesterdays have

lighted fools the way to dusty death. A convincing thunder rumbled

through the words. He lifted another spadeful of earth. Why had Linda

died? Why had she been allowed to become gradually less than human

and at last ... He shuddered. A good kissing carrion. He planted his foot

on his spade and stamped it fiercely into the tough ground. As flies to

wanton boys are we to the gods; they kill us for their sport. Thunder

again; words that proclaimed themselves true-truer somehow than

truth itself. And yet that same Gloucester had called them ever-gentle

gods. Besides, thy best of rest is sleep and that thou oft provok'st; yet

grossly fear'st thy death which is no more. No more than sleep. Sleep.

Perchance to dream. His spade struck against a stone; he stooped to

pick it up. For in that sleep of death, what dreams? ...

A humming overhead had become a roar; and suddenly he was in

shadow, there was something between the sun and him. He looked up,

startled, from his digging, from his thoughts; looked up in a dazzled

bewilderment, his mind still wandering in that other world of truer-

than-truth, still focused on the immensities of death and deity; looked

up and saw, close above him, the swarm of hovering machines. Like

locusts they came, hung poised, descended all around him on the

heather. And from out of the bellies of these giant grasshoppers

stepped men in white viscose-flannels, women (for the weather was

hot) in acetate-shantung pyjamas or velveteen shorts and sleeveless,

half-unzippered singlets-one couple from each. In a few minutes there

were dozens of them, standing in a wide circle round the lighthouse,

staring, laughing, clicking their cameras, throwing (as to an ape) pea-

nuts, packets of sex-hormone chewing-gum, pan-glandular petite

beurres. And every moment-for across the Hog's Back the stream of

traffic now flowed unceasingly-their numbers increased. As in a

nightmare, the dozens became scores, the scores hundreds.

The Savage had retreated towards cover, and now, in the posture of an

animal at bay, stood with his back to the wall of the lighthouse, staring

from face to face in speechless horror, like a man out of his senses.

From this stupor he was aroused to a more immediate sense of reality

by the impact on his cheek of a well-aimed packet of chewing-gum. A

shock of startling pain-and he was broad awake, awake and fiercely

angry.

"Go away!" he shouted.

The ape had spoken; there was a burst of laughter and hand-clapping.

"Good old Savage! Hurrah, hurrah!" And through the babel he heard

cries of: "Whip, whip, the whip!"

Acting on the word's suggestion, he seized the bunch of knotted cords

from its nail behind the door and shook it at his tormentors.

There was a yell of ironical applause.

Menacingly he advanced towards them. A woman cried out in fear. The

line wavered at its most immediately threatened point, then stiffened

again, stood firm. The consciousness of being in overwhelming force

had given these sightseers a courage which the Savage had not ex-

pected of them. Taken aback, he halted and looked round.

"Why don't you leave me alone?" There was an almost plaintive note in

his anger.

"Have a few magnesium-salted almonds!" said the man who, if the

Savage were to advance, would be the first to be attacked. He held out

a packet. "They're really very good, you know," he added, with a

rather nervous smile of propitiation. "And the magnesium salts will

help to keep you young."

The Savage ignored his offer. "What do you want with me?" he asked,

turning from one grinning face to another. "What do you want with

me?"

"The whip," answered a hundred voices confusedly. "Do the whipping

stunt. Let's see the whipping stunt."

Then, in unison and on a slow, heavy rhythm, "We-want-the whip,"

shouted a group at the end of the line. "We-want-the whip."

Others at once took up the cry, and the phrase was repeated, parrot-

fashion, again and again, with an ever-growing volume of sound, until,

by the seventh or eighth reiteration, no other word was being spoken.

"We-want-the whip."

They were all crying together; and, intoxicated by the noise, the una-

nimity, the sense of rhythmical atonement, they might, it seemed,

have gone on for hours-almost indefinitely. But at about the twenty-

fifth repetition the proceedings were startlingly interrupted. Yet an-

other helicopter had arrived from across the Hog's Back, hung poised

above the crowd, then dropped within a few yards of where the Sav-

age was standing, in the open space between the line of sightseers

and the lighthouse. The roar of the air screws momentarily drowned

the shouting; then, as the machine touched the ground and the en-

gines were turned off: "We-want-the whip; we-want-the whip," broke

out again in the same loud, insistent monotone.

The door of the helicopter opened, and out stepped, first a fair and

ruddy-faced young man, then, in green velveteen shorts, white shirt,

and jockey cap, a young woman.

At the sight of the young woman, the Savage started, recoiled, turned

pale.

The young woman stood, smiling at him-an uncertain, imploring, al-

most abject smile. The seconds passed. Her lips moved, she was say-

ing something; but the sound of her voice was covered by the loud re-

iterated refrain of the sightseers.

"We-want-the whip! We-want-the whip!"

The young woman pressed both hands to her left side, and on that

peach-bright, doll-beautiful face of hers appeared a strangely incon-

gruous expression of yearning distress. Her blue eyes seemed to grow

larger, brighter; and suddenly two tears rolled down her cheeks. Inau-

dibly, she spoke again; then, with a quick, impassioned gesture

stretched out her arms towards the Savage, stepped forward.

"We-want-the whip! We-want ..."

And all of a sudden they had what they wanted.

"Strumpet!" The Savage had rushed at her like a madman. "Fitchew!"

Like a madman, he was slashing at her with his whip of small cords.

Terrified, she had turned to flee, had tripped and fallen in the heather.

"Henry, Henry!" she shouted. But her ruddy-faced companion had

bolted out of harm's way behind the helicopter.

With a whoop of delighted excitement the line broke; there was a con-

vergent stampede towards that magnetic centre of attraction. Pain was

a fascinating horror.

"Fry, lechery, fry!" Frenzied, the Savage slashed again.

Hungrily they gathered round, pushing and scrambling like swine

about the trough.

"Oh, the flesh!" The Savage ground his teeth. This time it was on his

shoulders that the whip descended. "Kill it, kill it!"

Drawn by the fascination of the horror of pain and, from within, im-

pelled by that habit of cooperation, that desire for unanimity and

atonement, which their conditioning had so ineradicably implanted in

them, they began to mime the frenzy of his gestures, striking at one

another as the Savage struck at his own rebellious flesh, or at that

plump incarnation of turpitude writhing in the heather at his feet.

"Kill it, kill it, kill it ..." The Savage went on shouting.

Then suddenly somebody started singing "Orgy-porgy" and, in a mo-

ment, they had all caught up the refrain and, singing, had begun to

dance. Orgy-porgy, round and round and round, beating one another

in six-eight time. Orgy-porgy ...

It was after midnight when the last of the helicopters took its flight.

Stupefied by soma, and exhausted by a long-drawn frenzy of sensual-

ity, the Savage lay sleeping in the heather. The sun was already high

when he awoke. He lay for a moment, blinking in owlish incomprehen-

sion at the light; then suddenly remembered-everything.

"Oh, my God, my God!" He covered his eyes with his hand.

That evening the swarm of helicopters that came buzzing across the

Hog's Back was a dark cloud ten kilometres long. The description of

last night's orgy of atonement had been in all the papers.

"Savage!" called the first arrivals, as they alighted from their machine.

"Mr. Savage!"

There was no answer.

The door of the lighthouse was ajar. They pushed it open and walked

into a shuttered twilight. Through an archway on the further side of

the room they could see the bottom of the staircase that led up to the

higher floors. Just under the crown of the arch dangled a pair of feet.

"Mr. Savage!"

Slowly, very slowly, like two unhurried compass needles, the feet

turned towards the right; north, north-east, east, south-east, south,

south-south-west; then paused, and, after a few seconds, turned as

unhurriedly back towards the left. South-south-west, south, south-

east, east. ...