

The Mass Extinction of My Beloved

by Ian Watson and Roberto Quaglia

My Beloved was Brigitte Bardot — one of five hundred Brigitte Bardots, but very special to me.

Due to her iconic importance, firstly as a sex symbol, and secondly as a crusader for animal rights (including insect rights), the World Wildlife Fund sensibly cloned BB as their special agent and representative. That was with her permission, of course — she was eager to help. Obviously five hundred Brigitte Bardots could assist animals (and insects) more than one now-elderly Brigitte could.

To begin with, the clones were all twenty-five years old. Every country in the world received its own Brigitte. Big countries such as Brazil or Russia received four or five Brigittes. Their duties: to observe and protect and intervene in animal welfare. They were allowed to use violence if necessary, or seduction. They were licensed to kill, or to love.

Since I lived in San Marino, the local Brigitte hadn't a great deal of work to do in the way of averting extinctions, once she had saved the Titanic Spotted Toad (which was in fact tiny, and difficult to spot). For sixteen centuries this extremely small republic of 20,000 people in north-east Italy had preserved its independence. San Marino consisted of Mount Titan, which was big and awkward, some wheatfield and vineyards, a grand prix circuit which was actually in Italy, and thousands of duty-free tourist shops. In fact most of the inhabitants owned tourist shops, even the thousand men who formed the army of San Marino.

Another important activity was designing postage stamps for obsessive collectors. I, Count Giuseppe Machiavelli, was the Minister of Philately, and a direct genetic descendant of Niccoló Machiavelli. I was also in charge of supplying honours, such as the Knighthood of the Titan, to rich benefactors of our micro-country by mail-order through the internet.

One day Brigitte came to see me in my tourist shop, which specialises in postage stamps, and I was enamoured. This was either her intention, or an automatic consequence of her being Bardot. Even so, the depth of my desire was remarkable. I was astonished. I determined to do *anything* to be able to possess her and keep her. So I invited her into a back room, to talk more privately.

"Count Machiavelli," she said as I set a cappuccino before her, and one for me too, with a lot of chocolate sprinkled on because chocolate is an aphrodisiac.

"Giuseppe, to you, my dear!"

"Bien, Giuseppe, well I wondered if the Republic of San Marino could issue *only* stamps of endangered species from now on?"

"Hmm," I said, controlling my excitement. "That might be difficult. What, forget about Space-Flight and Vintage Cars and Famous Volcanos and Torments of the Inquisition? Are there enough endangered species?"

"Millions. More are found every day. It's a race to find them before they vanish. The previous director of the WWF had a nervous breakdown worrying about species that he doesn't know exist — they might stop existing without anybody knowing."

"I would need persuading."

"I *shall* persuade you!" she promised.

Soon, upstairs, she proceeded to do so, but being a gentleman of honour I shall only say that her techniques were very persuasive.

After I had been persuaded, she looked sad.

"What do I do *now*, Giuseppe?"

"Maybe we could try that second position again?" Though truly I was a bit exhausted.

"No, I mean what can I do about endangered species here in a country of only sixty square kilometers? I've saved the Titanic Spotted Toad and arranged about stamps. What next? My clone-sisters in enormous Brazil are so lucky!"

I panicked that Brigitte might never return to my bed, unless of course I ceased commissioning stamps of obscure moths and monkeys — but that would be ungentlemanly. I needed to hook Brigitte and keep her hooked. So I called upon the spirit of my illustrious ancestor, Nicolló Machiavelli, who knew how to manipulate men (and how to feminipulate women), and I experienced an epiphany, a sudden revelation.

"I have an idea," I said. "But it needs clarifying. Will you come back the day after tomorrow?"

"I can hardly wait!" she said.

"You must wait," I told her, and felt pleased by my self-control even in the midst of sexual obsession.

Two days later I said to the gorgeous Brigitte, "Animal rights are being violated in many virtual reality computer games, such as *Safari* and *AlligatorSlaughter* and the Spanish game *¡Toro Toro Toro!* — to name but three."

"But we had to allow virtual bullfighting in exchange for the closing of the bull rings."

"Nevertheless, virtual bullfighting is a violation of bestial rights. In fact bestial rights are violated in many games. Dogs get run over in *Grand Chase Auto Armageddon*. The WWF needs *virtual* Brigittes to detect infringements of animal rights in games. Alternatively, the WWF could *licence* software creators to *include* animal deaths in games. A werewolf killing game could be WWF-approved. The WWF needs all the money it can get, doesn't it?"

"Of course. We need to catalogue unknown species that are going extinct. That's costly because we don't know where they are. So we have to send out expeditions all the time, while being careful not to violate any remaining wildernesses. The biological protection suits our explorers wear are very expensive. You're a genius, Giuseppe. I'm so glad I met you."

At that moment another epiphany came to me, courtesy of the spirit of my ancestor Niccoló, I truly believe. But I did not come prematurely as regards this next idea.

Two days later I said to Brigitte, "In fact, if an extinction is inevitable, the doomed species ought to be honoured and celebrated. The best way for human beings to celebrate is to *participate* in the extinction, to make sure it happens dramatically rather than in a feeble way, out of sight. There should be extinction parties. Rich people will pay a lot to take part. This will raise more funds."

"Yes, yes!" she exclaimed.

"It's very sad to be the last member of a species, or the last few members. So this would be *compassionate extermination*. In fact," I said, "the WWF could *forbid* species to go extinct — make it illegal. If a species persists in going extinct, it will be put on trial. If found guilty, there can be a hunt to execute the last members of the species for violating the law by carrying out unauthorized self-extinction."

"Oh yes!"

I was giving the Brigitte of San Marino a whole new inspiring vision, or series of visions, which was addicting her to me. At the same time I was very addicted to her. Like a drug addict I must pay more and more (by way of imagination) to keep my supply of ecstasy secure. But my imagination — or Niccoló's genetic contribution — did not fail me.

"It'll be a status symbol," I said, "to wear a mark of extinction, a special tie or bracelet. It says you have participated in, or attended, an extinction. But there's more. Extinctions can be *sponsored* by MacDonald's or Marlboro. Global mega-corporations will compete. That'll bring in a lot of money."

It was my turn to exclaim *yes* for a long while, such was Brigitte's gratitude to me.

I had thought that Brigitte was communicating all these new ideas to WWF headquarters in Geneva by e-mail. But no. The ideas were communicated to her clone-sisters by morphic resonance, which is the tendency of beings who are very similar to pick up and incorporate a powerful new concept which one of the beings has. A chimpanzee would discover how to unfasten a cage door, and suddenly chimpanzees everywhere were escaping.

Brigitte wasn't merely similar — she was identical to her sisters. So the other 499 Bardot clones were all on my Brigitte's wavelength, akin to telepathically. Soon they were taking action militantly, with all the power of the World Wildlife Fund. The Bardot based in Switzerland was particularly active in lobbying the World Court. Because of the iconic power and sexiness of a Brigitte Bardot, any paltry misgivings or doubts on the part of the current director of the WWF were swept aside. He resigned, and the Swiss Bardot became head of the WWF.

Sudden changes of faith — even mass conversions — are part of human nature if a Big New Idea arises. Look at Nazi Germany, a civilized nation one moment, historically speaking, and a fanatical exterminator of entire races the next moment. Look at China's Great Leap Backwards and its Anti-Cultural Revolution. Look at the fashion for hula-hoops.

My next inspiration — and therefore my Beloved's, and that of her 499 sisters — was to copyright the extinction of species, to control video rights.

What with extinction copyright and corporate sponsorship and high society extermination parties and hunts subsequent to criminal prosecutions, before long the WWF was vigorously spearheading the extermination of species. Loggers in Brazil and motorway builders and such were now sued for unlicensed exterminations.

My Brigitte was in communion with all of these developments by morphic resonance, and of course she was in frequent communion with me too. The endangered species stamps of San Marino had become like Wanted posters of criminals.

"Which are best to exterminate first?" Brigitte asked me as she lay naked in bed. "Soft fluffy animals —

or ugly nasty ones?"

"You mean Special Effects ones?"

"Yes, big teeth and claws."

"Let me think..."

Thinking helped me delay my orgasm. I thanked God that there were so many endangered species to contemplate. Then it occurred to me that unendangered species could be reclassified as endangered and put on the long Red List — because Darwin's doctrine of evolution declares that all species must inevitably become extinct in the fullness of time. So all species were guilty of extinctability, potentially. Except perhaps cockroaches. Maybe the WWF should organise an education and training programme for cockroaches.

Brigitte squealed and pulled a sheet up to cover our bodies. Someone was climbing loudly upstairs. A few moments later heavy knocks sounded on the bedroom door, as if produced by a small battering ram.

"Avanti," I shouted as my erection collapsed.

The Bishop of San Marino entered, in full robes and mitre, crozier in hand. He was one of my cousins, Alberto. Obviously he had dressed to impress me.

"Forgive me, My Lord," I said piously, "for I am sinning."

"Are you using birth control?" demanded Alberto.

"I'm a clone," piped up Brigitte, "so I can't become pregnant."

"That is *definitely* birth control of the most wicked kind," Alberto stated severely. "Be damned to birth control for the moment. I'm here with an important message from His Holiness..."

He who was formerly head of the Inquisition, I reminded myself with a shiver, having selected the art for Torments of the Inquisition but never issued the stamps in question, because of Brigitte.

"...about *death* control," added Alberto.

Brigitte sighed. "If only one could wear a condom to prevent death! We French call them *les préservatifs*. Yet what do they preserve?"

"You're *French*?" Alberto echoed. "Do clones have nationalities?"

"Since we use diplomatic passports to travel, we are all registered Swiss, but emotionally I am French. A Bardot may need to use a condom while seducing someone who's endangering a species because such men may have chlamydia or syphilis — usually it's such men who endanger species. Oh I have just thought! How about condoms for use by endangered species? Species-suicide condoms?"

Brigitte was trying to emulate my Machiavellian powers of imagination.

I did not wish to scorn her inspiration. Yet I felt bound to say, "Who would put the condoms on rhinos and crocodiles? Trained apes? And who would replace the condoms?"

"I'm thinking," said Brigitte, "of something like an automated milking parlour to which cows become accustomed to walk to be emptied. Millions of similar installations in the wild. Using animal porn videos as the bait."

"Species-extinction through automated masturbation? Would enough endangered animals be fooled?"

Alberto slammed his crozier on the floor. "I have a message from The Holy Father."

"What a paradox," Brigitte said naughtily and flirtatiously. "He is in fact the Anti-Father since he never fucks." She allowed the sheet to slide, to expose a beautiful breast familiar to millions of old movie addicts. "Though admittedly," she added, "he has filled the Vatican with cats, whom he loves."

I felt jealous. However, Alberto did not seem aroused. Or, at least, only aroused to wrath.

"Whore of Paris!" he thundered. "The Holy Father has become aware that species extinction is inspired from right here in San Marino. A Bardot in Portugal was seriously injured falling out of a train carriage, and she confessed to a priest on the platform."

"Oh, Giuseppe, that is the sudden pain I had yesterday. I told you it felt like a miscarriage."

"You never had a miscarriage. You cannot."

"I can imagine one."

Alberto continued: "In the Bible, God gave human beings dominion over the beasts. This is our sacred duty. We cannot exercise dominion if there are no beasts to dominate! The Holy Father is issuing a papal Bull against extinctions, *Dominatio Animalorum*." My cousin gazed at me. "You'll be excommunicated if you persist in causing these, out of lust." How well my cousin knew me.

"Ooh la la," said Brigitte, wide-eyed. "And do clones have souls to excommunicate? Maybe I share one soul with all my sisters! In which case I myself only have one five-hundredth of a soul, so I can only be one five-hundredth excommunicated. That shouldn't hurt too much. More like burning your finger on a cigarette instead of being burned at the stake."

"I am addressing the Human Being in that bed. *You*, Young Madam, are a blasphemy, Clone-Whore of Paris."

To my amazement my Beloved began to talk theology to Alberto.

"Ah, what is blasphemy? That depends on what is sacred. However, what is sacred should be an invisible and ineffable mystery, as in the heart of the Temple of Solomon, which was empty, containing nothing. The sacred shouldn't be something visible, for then it is vulgarised and sold as souvenirs. Consequently what is recognized as sacred isn't sacred any more — it's banal. And banality is blasphemous, for it denies the ideal beauty that is beyond this world, the domain where the perfect archetypes of all animals exist, and to which they ought to return — "

How I admired and lusted for her, and wished to burrow under the sheet to explore the mystery of hidden lips that never speak yet are so expressive.

"Be quiet!" thundered Alberto. "*Retro me, Bardot*. The churches will pray against extinction, which is Darwinian and denies the hand of God."

"Oh, the *controlling* hand. But God doesn't control anything in the cybernetic homeostatic sense, to maintain life! It is Mankind which tries to control everything, a crazy ambition continually denied by hurricanes and earthquakes and diseases. God's is the hand of destruction. So now I'm performing God's work." God, I admired her even more at this moment.

"You are Eve with the poisonous apple!" Alberto brandished his crozier, but then perhaps he thought of

possible paparazzi at the window — paparazzi get everywhere. A photograph of a half-exposed Bardot and a bishop in full regalia might be misinterpreted.

"*Dieu créa la femme*," said Brigitte, alluding to one of her films.

And I reflected on how much I, Giuseppe Machiavelli, had transformed my Brigitte — recreating her as an agent of extinction, so that she would continue to be my Beloved — so that I was also a bit Godlike. Being in bed with a beautiful woman and causing her to exclaim *Yes* often has this effect on a full-blooded man.

"Giuseppe," my cousin Alberto said, "this madness must stop! Free your life from this bitch, for the sake of your soul! Be aware that the Holy Father has already undertaken timely action to free the world as soon as possible from the diabolical activity of this army of clones of evil!" So saying, he departed.

I was worried. If the Catholic Church had taken this matter so badly, the future existence of the Brigitte Bardots was at risk. Stalin once mocked the Vatican with the famous question, "How many divisions does the Pope have?" But Stalin and Communism had disappeared from the world and the Catholic Church was stronger than ever. If the Vatican bigwigs set out to free the world from the Brigitte Bardots, for sure they would succeed. And I would lose my sweet little blonde toy, the most wonderful female human creature that nature ever produced, whom my skills were able to magnetize into my bed, and likewise in the bathroom, on the stairs, in the garden, in the swimming pool, in the sauna and once even in a church, in a confessional. By now I couldn't exist without her. This mustn't happen! Oh, spirit and DNA of my great Machiavellian ancestor, come to my aid!

"My dearest, the Church doesn't understand our sacred mission, of charitable acceleration of inevitable extinction." My face must have exhibited the pain of rectitude.

"The Church isn't about understanding," Brigitte replied, "but about the management of mysteries. So why be surprised?"

"I'm not, I'm worried. For them you're a demon, and they'll destroy you."

"Not good," she agreed. "Without me and my sisters, who will save endangered species from a slow inglorious extinction?"

I pursued a sudden intuition. "The main problem with the Catholic Church is the total obsessive sexual repression of their functionaries. Lack of physical love distances them from God and goodness. Have you seen the horrible signs of sexual abstinence printed on the face of Alberto? Absence of pleasure imprints gruff inhuman wrinkles. If only they could know the joy of sex, probably they'd see the world with our eyes, humane eyes, of beings made of flesh, and they wouldn't be so alien to us, and we to them."

"I'll take care of Alberto!" Promptly Brigitte took a lipstick from the handbag and started making her perfect lips even more attractive, if such a thing was possible.

"No!" I exclaimed impetuously. I didn't want my Brigitte to screw around with my asshole of a cousin. Jealousy may be a weakness, but in the case of my personal exclusive Brigitte, long live jealousy!

Quickly I reasoned, "Decades of sexual repression need massive repeated treatment. You can't waste so much of your precious time — and my sexually incompetent cousin wouldn't give you any satisfaction." I began to undo my trousers. Oh the lipstick on that divine mouth.

"What do you suggest?"

"To suck, I mean pack your things and confer with your sisters in person at a big conference in Geneva

about increasing the Brigitte Bardot population. My cousin isn't the only Catholic priest in the world. Apart from priests there are all the bishops and cardinals. That's a lot of people. What do you say?"

"Mmhpf, mmhpf!" Brigitte replied, and then, "You're a genius! Along with my sisters, in effect I'm a species myself, so I must avoid becoming endangered — otherwise, by myself, I'd need to exterminate myself. If I increase my numbers I can avoid becoming endangered and convert all the Catholic clergy to the authentic pleasures of life. Ooh la la! Ahhh! Oui! Ouiii!"

She spun around and touched her toes, presenting her gorgeous rump to me, something I couldn't resist. The devil take my cousin! For a while yet he'd need to continue with his career as a blessed masturbator no doubt contemplating naked witches being tormented by the Inquisition.

Speed-cloning allowed the growth of an entire Brigitte Bardot body within a couple of weeks, followed by another week of mind-configuration — which was accomplished the more easily by morphic resonance with the 500 clone-sisters who all remained temporarily in Switzerland, since this was an emergency. I'd exhorted my own Brigitte not to skimp on the number of new clones. So she and her sisters decreed 500,000 copies of themselves. That should be sufficient for every priest in the world to have his own dedicated suckubus/fuckubus, and enough left over for other religions if their personnel complained of favouritism.

Half a million Bardots was a tall order for all of the Swiss and German and Czech and Hungarian cloning establishments combined. What with a premium price for priority, the total cost was a major slice of the annual budget of the WWF. I'd suggested to my Brigitte that she and her sisters to take full control of the WWF, since only having the presidency wasn't safe enough. Very soon 100 per cent of WWF functionaries were Brigitte Bardots.

The conquest of the Catholic Church was quite fast, though not as simple as I had believed. Many Catholic priests are paedophiles or homosexual or both, and the marvellous womanly body of Brigitte Bardot left them cold. Consequently special brigades of juvenile Brigitte Bardots were created, as well as male brigades. This wasn't too difficult for clever cloners. To me the idea of a male Bardot seemed paradoxical until I saw the final result and was almost tempted into homosexuality myself! So this deviation didn't delay by too much our final victory.

By now my own Brigitte had returned from Switzerland and my sexual dependence upon her became almost a torment. I needed to fuck her several times every day, yet the pleasure I was getting diminished because of habituation. This was intolerable. Since there were now Brigitte Bardots in abundance, I implored my own Brigitte to summon two or three more of them to San Marino.

"Why do you want more of us? Aren't I enough for you any longer?"

"That isn't the point," I told her as I started undressing her. "I need to be in constant and instant contact with Brigitte Bardots. What would happen if you caught flu or meningitis? To whom would I then rapidly communicate my useful tips? Tips may be needed *suddenly*. The bigger an empire is, the easier it can collapse. We must never let our guard down!"

"Oh, that's a really big tip!"

On that day for some reason it was bigger than usual.

Quickly I turned her around.

"Ah! Ohh... Ahhh! Yess! How did you know I wanted you to stick it there today?"

"The God of Improvisation always helps those who dare."

"Ohhh... OHHHH!"

I wasn't a glutton, so initially I was happy with just one more Bardot in my bed. Stereo sex satisfied me fully for a week. But then to maintain the same coefficient of satisfaction I needed to raise to three the number of simultaneous Bardots.

In the meantime, a major media spectacle sponsored by Pizza Hut and Exxon Mobil was getting the world excited. All the world's remaining elephants destined for extinction were assembled in two big concentration camps, in Uganda and India respectively. Square kilometers of pizza were served to them for their last supper. Then immediately after sundown the American air force dropped an incredible *son et lumière* of phosphorous bombs and napalm, just like the famous apocalypse in Vietnam, cooking all the jumbos — a truly giant Texan-style barbecue with lots of hot pepper sauce.

National Geographic made a memorable documentary of the event in super high definition, two hours of extraordinary slow motion images of the holocaust of the elephants, blood, tomato, pizza, and trumpeting, that should move mankind for centuries. UNESCO swiftly declared the film a heritage treasure, and it went on to win Oscars for best direction, best photography, and best soundtrack.

To have saved the elephants from an inglorious end by making their extinction unforgettable, sublime and tragic, filled my Brigittes and me with such joy, and how we celebrated in our widened bed! After several orgasms calmed our passion, we respected a minute's silence in the memory of elephants, now absent from the world. Finally on special edition ivory plates bearing the crest of the WWF we served ourselves *Crêpes suzettes flambées* and *banana flambés* in abundance to restore our depleted energy.

"We're in trouble," my three Brigittes told me one day.

"Did you get pregnant?" I asked without thinking.

"We can't, not unless we deliberately take hormones to start ovulation. We're clones."

"Sorry. Automatic thinking from the old times."

"All Brigitte Bardots are in trouble. Now that we've dealt with the Church, many of us are lovers of powerful politicians, and we've discovered an international plot to exterminate us."

"The bastards!" I exclaimed.

"We can't understand why they want to exterminate us — did we ever do anything bad?"

I had to think quickly. If the Bardots ever decided that I'd advised them wrongly, I'd lose them forever. *Niccolò, my dear ancestor, please help me right now...!*

"This must be due to jealousy," I improvised. Women intrinsically believe that jealousy is an important cause of events. "Jealousy from wives of male politicians whose lives you're making more enjoyable, and jealousy from male politicians who don't yet enjoy such delights."

"Of course it must be!" the three Bardots chorused. God, how beautiful they were when they did things in unison — the most banal gestures would become a seductive ballet.

"There's only one thing to do — you'll have to increase even more in number and satisfy all the important men in the world." Holy Moses, at this rate I'd end up winning the Nobel Peace Prize!

"What about the jealous wives?"

"Damn it, how does this bra unfasten? Ah yes — the jealousy of wives can only be eradicated along with the wives."

"Along with the wives?"

"Nobody has yet invented a way to eradicate a wife's jealousy while keeping the wife. Come to think of it, if you increase enough in number to satisfy all men of any importance, wives will become an endangered species destined for extinction. Hmm, these teenage slips are very provocative."

"That will be a very demanding task," the Bardots said in chorus.

While my three Brigittes dressed again afterwards, I refreshed myself by pouring a stream of Andalusian wine into my mouth from a *porrón*.

I dismissed them with, "Go and reproduce yourselves."

However, extinguishing wives is easier said than done. Typically a wife has a husband, and no matter how enchanted he is by a Brigitte Bardot, the husband usually still feels emotional resistance and moral scruples about the euthanasia of his wife. Even husbands without such scruples would rarely have an unloved wife put down, for who would then wash their dirty underwear, iron their shirts, rear their children and keep the house clean? Not a Brigitte Bardot for sure! Wives are also necessary for arguments — many husbands can't exist without the quarrels they've got used during the course of married life.

Evidently the problem must be approached at its root by also eliminating husbands. However, a practical problem arose. Wives plus husbands made up the majority of human beings. How could a minority of Brigitte Bardots accomplish such a major extermination?

"With gene-specific bioweapons!" I explained to my three blond Valkyries as they knelt before me.

"Gene-specific bioweapons?" duetted the two Brigittes who weren't sucking me.

"Biological weapons of mass destruction selectively targeted at people who have specific genes. The American military have been working on this. Oh shit, be careful with those teeth!"

"*Sacré bleu, c'est horrible!* Why would anyone make such a vile WMD?"

"To target Arabs or Chinese or homosexuals, for instance. In my view a species which designs weapons of such a kind is working proactively for its own extinction, whereas other species go extinct from carelessness and laziness. Our intervention couldn't be more appropriate! Yes! Yeessss! Fuck fucking mankind! Ahh! AHHHHH...GHH!"

One fine day my Brigittes reported, "We seduced all the American bioweapons scientists, and North

Korean ones too. We now control all existing gene-specific bioweapons."

"Congratulations on the North Koreans. That must have been hard."

"They were. Years of ideological celibacy."

"And what of our adversaries' plans to exterminate all Brigitte Bardots?"

"Proceeding slower and slower," the Brigittes answered, "because almost every powerful man has a Brigitte at his side by now. She's an essential status symbol. However, there's also a snobbish new fashion trend of *not* having a Bardot — if this tendency grows, it'll be a problem."

Always problems! And my task, to find the solutions. What one put up with to get laid in the only way that remained satisfying!

"Increase the production of the Brigittes! The most powerful men need not one but a *harem* of Bardots. This won't cause devaluation of Bardots — because we'll diversify. We already did some male Bardots and kiddy Bardots for the priests. Now we'll do Black Bardots, Pygmy Bardots, Granny Bardots, hairy Bardots, bald Bardots, paraplegic Bardots. Trendy idiots will need to collect all the Bardots. How many are there in the world now?"

"Idiots?"

"No, Bardots."

"About ten million. We've opened a new production centre in China."

"Fine. Nowadays we all pretend to believe in democracy, even the North Koreans. In a democracy the majority is always right, which means that the majority is *good* by definition. So let's make sure we become the majority. Then justice and ethics will be on our side."

Now that I had time to think about it, controlling gene-specific bioweapons was only of defensive value, to stop their use against Brigittes with Bardot genes. As offensive weapons they were worthless because wives and husbands didn't have a genetic code different from unmarried people. Nor were we racists, unlike those who designed and made those weapons in the first place. We loved the peoples of each country indiscriminately. Their extermination must be accomplished fairly, respectful of their human rights.

And this was the nub of the matter! Mankind's extinction wasn't linked to the existence of too many wives and husbands, but to the existence of mankind itself. Within every wife and husband lurked a human being. *En masse* human beings were always causing trouble with their wars and territorialism and greed, almost as if programmed for self-annihilation yet unable to accomplish this. How wretched and incompetent was mankind compared with my beloved Brigitte Bardot. It was time for a big change which would make the world a safer, more comfortable place to live in. Essentially our mission was to make the inevitable *elegant*. In mathematics what is elegant is true. Likewise with extinction.

A world consisting only of Brigitte Bardots would be better, prettier, more just. It might seem a bit less varied, but anyway the world was already heading towards cultural homogeneity. Once there used to be genocides, and now there was culturicide, the confusingly varied cuisines of the world displaced by immutable, predictable MacDonalds.

Truly, this was the sunset of mankind as we knew it. Millions of hours of TV daily displayed to billions of human brains the Way Ahead into the darkness. Slaughter, explosions, homicides, mayhem as

entertainment. It was as though the sick soul of humanity was screaming to be extinguished and, by chance or by hereditary talent, I, Count Giuseppe Machiavelli, could hear that scream — rather as Edvard Munch saw it. If anything of mankind was to have any future, Brigitte Bardot was the only hope. Maybe the Earth's biosphere, the collective unconscious of the planet, obliged me to love Brigitte Bardot powerfully enough and effectively enough so that the planet in turn might be rescued. Strange as it may sound, my sexual obsession would save life on Earth.

"We will use the gene specific bioweapons *in reverse mode*," I told my three angels who were giving me a triple Thai massage, our custom now before breakfast. I spoke inspiredly, or randomly. To me these days this was much the same. I knew that I was keyed in to planetary destiny and whatever I said would probably be right.

"In reverse mode?" my three Brigittes chorused.

"Instead of using the bioweapons to target only people with a specific gene complex, we'll use them to *preserve* certain people. Well, two types of people. HmMMMMM..." Thai massage is a fundamental human right.

"The Brigittes," my angels said wisely "and you?"

God, how I loved reasonably intelligent women, especially when they were beautiful and naked and administering Thai massage!

"Ahhh, ohhh yes, yes!"

"Good," the Bardots said, "because it would be a real pity if you went extinct too. We Brigittes need you."

I'd been wondering if morphic resonance from the orgasms I caused my Brigitte affected the millions of other clones. Oh omnipotence delirium! Realistically, Bardots were often fucking men who weren't me, this being one of their diplomatic functions. I wasn't the only man on earth.

Not yet.

Okay, let's face it, the idea of ending up being the only man in a world of Brigitte Bardots was attractive. Maybe, when all other men were extinct, I *would* provoke orgasms in millions of Bardots all at the same time through morphic resonance. Might there be a delay in the sharing? A delay proportional to distance, so that the orgasm I provoked would propagate through the world of the Bardots like ripples produced by a stone thrown into a lake?

I envisaged a wave of pleasure and moans, generated from the epicenter of sexuality that was myself, progressively making a trip round the globe, widening as it travelled to become a circle equal in size to the Earth's diameter, then shrinking again until it became a single point at the antipodes of myself, inducing in the Brigitte closest to that point an orgasm second in intensity only to that of the Brigitte I had actually been screwing.

And what if not merely the orgasm itself, but each preceding pelvic thrust of mine and its consequences would propagate? The world would become a sexual paradise. Rather than time zones, the world would be divided into sexzones determined by the sexual Greenwich of wherever I happened to be. Maybe I could learn to modulate the sex waves in amplitude and frequency, causing differential effects upon the

millions of Brigittes whom I would lead to pleasure. Upon, or rather *with*, my organ I would improvise organic symphonies of global pleasure, original and unrepeatably in the Paganini way — supposing Paganini had been an organist.

The world of the Bardots as the sexual musical instrument of the last man and artist on earth!

Why stop there? If I could achieve immortality on Earth through my sexual music, or by some other means, and if the Bardots could colonise the stars, the entire universe would become my concert hall. Pleasure propagating from my virile member might take millions of years to reach the Bardots in other galaxies, and alien scientists would gain insights into the cosmos by measuring the red shift of the Bardots' orgasms! If God were a real man, he would have acted thus since the beginning of time.

The three Brigittes were giving of their best and the Thai massage had empowered me like a sperm whale about to blow. I too must give of my best. Genius is a powerful cocktail of inspired creativity and perfect timing, and into my mind came an awesome concept.

"The Last Judgement," I gasped. "Last Judgement of obsolete mankind... Judgement must be announced by Jesus!"

The reaction of the Brigittes was noisy, wet, and wordless, but I knew they were listening.

"We'll program the bioweapons to produce a pandemic of tumours in the shape of a crucifix with a Jesus-like figure on it. Those will be visible internally on scanners, and then they'll emerge and speak — or squeak like a rubber toy when you squeeze it. They'll squeak the Last Judgement: bye-bye people, time's up. Then they'll metastasise, but they'll produce opiates too so that it's a painless euthanasia."

One of the Brigittes detached herself to ask, "Why only Jesus tumours? Why not Mohammed tumours too? And Brahma and Buddha?"

Damn, I'd let my erstwhile Catholic upbringing blind me while improvising.

"Look," I continued to improvise, "the present global élite which is trying to stop us is probably mostly made up of Christians. We have to focus on them. We have to disarm them by an attack from within mounted by their most beloved symbol, turned miraculously into flesh in a way nobody would have wished for. *But* also the Christians will think this miracle is likely to convert Moslems and Buddhists and so on, because the other religions don't have any such miracle. So the Christians will be happy before going extinct, and probably there'll be mass conversions from other religions of people who want a miraculous tumour. Please don't stop now... Ahhh!"

"That's wonderful!" one of the Brigittes exclaimed. "So poetic! You express yourself so well!"

"Anyone in my place would have had the same idea." In my experience there's nothing like a bit of impudent false modesty to moisten a woman's admiration.

Brigittes exchanged places. "But won't it become banal?" asked another voice, which was of course the same voice. "A miracle is a mystery, isn't it? Something extraordinary. Won't millions of people developing a crucifix tumour make this ordinary? What if everyone had a Sistine Chapel roof at home? Uniqueness is what makes Art sublime. Suppose that talking crucifixes erupt from millions of bodies like slow motion *Alien*, the effect will be kitsch."

Damn it, she was right. Sometimes reasonably intelligent women can be too intelligent. To condemn mankind to a kitsch epilogue wasn't noble. Anything taken to extremes becomes its opposite. How to avoid this? Why not *profit* from it?

"Okay, we'll program the bioweapons so that females evolve tumours of a different sort. Both theologically and from a feminist point of view it's wrong to have the symbol of a patriarchal religion growing from them. Lots of women want bigger boobs. So let them develop huge beautiful tumour-boobs, making every woman more sexually appetizing, fulfilling their secret dreams — "

The Bardots interrupted in chorus, "Women already get breast tumours, and they usually hate it! We don't think it's a good idea."

"I'm not talking about traditional breast tumours, but state-of-the-art tumoral prostheses, perfect tits which will grow continuously and painlessly." I permitted myself a dramatic pause. "Then finally the women will grow a third *central* tit with the face of a crying Madonna."

"Oh, now that's a very sweet idea!" So saying, two of the Brigittes occupied their mouths as previously.

"It'll be seen as a miracle, and many women will love it! Men will love it too, since this will add a taste of sacred exoticism and transgression to their sexual lives."

"It's still kitsch," said one voice, "but it's touching on the sublime."

And now to put the icing on the cake. "What's more, we'll introduce a random variant so that a small percentage of people of both women and men develop instead a tumour in the shape of a pretzel."

"A *pretzel*?"

Despite my grin of mounting pleasure, I tried to assume a serious expression.

"The shape of the pretzel with its three holes is age-old symbolism and has occupied the human imagination time and again. It's religious, emblem of the trinity. It's sexual. It's the endless knot of eternity. According to legend a Swabian baker was sentenced to death because of social misdemeanors. The prince promised to pardon the baker if he could produce bread during the night *through which the sun will shine three times*. In his desperation the baker invented the twisted pretzel and saved his own life. Little did that baker know that in saving his own life he was dooming mankind, since now the pretzel will accompany mankind on his tree-lined avenue of sunset."

"What a lovely image. You've persuaded me."

And we stopped talking, for it was time once more to allow the senses to monopolise our lives.

And so commenced an amazing, unique and unrepeatable era, the Last Days of Mankind, a time of dramatic changes, epic sex, poetic madness. As always during periods of mass deaths such as bygone plagues or big wars, the perception of death changed radically. In the hope of keeping the population quiet, on TV governments promised life after death to everybody. But dying soon became very fashionable and erotic. The sense of impending death is a powerful aphrodisiac, because instinct tries to produce new life to replace what is lost. Orgiastic extinction parties became common everywhere. Thus religion and sex finally and unexpectedly married. Terminal males with crucifixes protruding from their insides were knotted together like pretzels with terminal females disappearing behind titanic tits. The crown of thorns worn by the squeaking figure on the crucifix sensually tickled tumoral nipples. Sometimes too spiky a thorn punctured an inflated breast and tumorous pulp would spray adjacent fornicating lovers like a Japanese bukkake sacrament.

The tumoral crucifixes and the tumoral weeping madonna breasts were objects of adoration, but some men and women at first wore shapeless robes, and to these roving priests would put the question

"Crucifix or Pretzel?" were it a man, or "Pretzel or Madonna?" were it a woman.

"Just Pretzel," some would whisper sadly, cursing the Swabian baker.

Then the priests would bless the Pretzel with its trinity of holes which God could penetrate three times simultaneously, and thereafter these men and women proudly displayed their pretzels invitingly at extinction orgies. Being useful, they would be used. I was happy that religion had a tangible purpose at last.

As the biomass of old mankind diminished rapidly, so the Brigitte Bardot biomass was rapidly increasing. When the BB biomass overtook the other people's biomass, we celebrated — now we were the absolute majority, and by definition what we would do would be democratic. In common with my illustrious ancestor I didn't hold democracy in much regard, but it's a nice ornament for the top of your strategic work of art.

With the increasing BB biomass, so did my love for BB increase. Was I not on target to achieve *absolute love*? If only I could transform the whole mass of the universe — included the mysterious dark matter which accounts for the majority of everything — into Brigitte Bardots, then my love would be Godly and divine. A task, at least for now, beyond my capabilities. How can you force a black hole or a naked singularity to transform itself into pure Brigitte Bardots?

Now that Brigitte Bardot was effectively immortal, I really should start to think of how to make at least my mind immortal, my mind already proven essential in the Brigitte Bardots' path towards evolutionary triumph. If I could upload my intellect into the world computer network which mankind by going extinct no longer needed, I could supervise the expansion of Brigitte Bardot throughout the Universe. Entire planets would be metamorphosed into meat to provide the raw material for production of trillions of BBs. Blood comets would interconnect all production centers. Finally, BB comets would carry her DNA everywhere to improve the beauty of the cosmos, fulfilling my passion.

As yet these were only romantic dreams! In the meantime, as extinction approached its finale, the World Wildlife Fund took charge. Thousands of jumbo jets piloted by Bardots flew the remaining world population to the island of Zanzibar, often used in the past as a measure of population size, supposing that people stood side by side. "The world population has risen to 1.2 Zanzibars," you'd hear. Bardots had by now taken over most important things, not merely the airlines.

This was to be the Mankind's End fireworks party. Some Bardots had suggested exploding the world's complete stock of nuclear weapons on Zanzibar — best to go out with a bang! Others objected, "Nuclear winter — there won't be enough fur coats!" In fact ten big nukes would be quite enough, because the population had fallen by now to 0.1 Zanzibars.

And so it came to pass, as climax to an orgy under the African sun, reminiscent of the demise of the elephants.

I was now only man on earth, except for the male Brigitte Bardots and some transsexual ones. My three favourite Bardots joined me in my castle to celebrate. Rivers of champagne and Brunello di Montalcino and Rex Paradox Cabernet ran. Joy and well-deserved pride and dizziness was ours.

"The world is a much safer place now," I slurred at one point.

"We wonder," the Bardots replied "why it took so many thousands years for mankind to grow up, and become us."

I hiccuped. "The world had never seen a Macchiavelli in love before!" Actually, because of all the wine, my penis was limp, and I experienced a curious sensation that I had lost track of my Bardots. Which was my number one Brigitte, who had come to my philandery, I mean philately shop? Surely this was her sitting beside me, on my right! Surely? A ghastly thought dawned: were this trio even the same trio as at other times? I had indeed drunk a lot. My vision drifted; there seemed to be six Bardots.

I slapped myself on the cheek. She on my right was my most beloved Bardot. Almost definitely.

"There's just one little detail," she said.

I didn't like the expression that all three of the BBs wore. As if they would be sorry for something. But for what?

"We don't need you any more, Giuseppe."

Even drunk, I knew that this was very bad news. You can't trust women! I should have known it. Give them the world and ten minutes later they've forgotten.

"How will you do without sex?" I asked.

"On your own you'd never be able to satisfy all of us — "

I thought, all too late, of my vision of morphic resonance orgasms to which I hadn't paid enough attention.

" — and alas, we aren't lesbians. So we started a production line of brainless male Bardots who'll serve the purpose. To reproduce ourselves we'll continue using clonation until we can colonise the rest of the galaxy — "

"Colonise the galaxy? I never told you about that!" I'd kept it to myself. Revelation had seemed premature. How could they have come up with the idea on their own? Shock sobered me.

"Ooh la la, we're simple girls, although quite intelligent, but since we're so many now and then by chance one of us gets a *brilliant* idea. Then instantly it's shared with all the others. Giuseppe, all together we are now a genius."

I should have thought of this possibility. Growing in number, they had reached a critical mass. It was perfectly plausible that they didn't need another genius any more.

"The universe is bound to be full of life forms destined to go extinct," the Bardots said. "For sure the Cosmos needs our help."

"I have no doubt of it."

The Bardots must have seen on my face my disheartened expression. By this point, I had almost lost all hope. Yet apparently things were not so bad. Life after all reserves some nice surprises now and then.

"Don't worry Giuseppe. We won't kill you. We still love you, even though we don't need you any more. You'll die a natural death when the time comes, as it must. We can wait."

"Well, it's *good* that you can wait..."

The Brigittes' eyes gleamed with a sinister light which for some reason evoked in me the notion of a

praying mantis.

"Let's make love, if you can," they suggested.

"Great idea!" I exclaimed, more from habit than conviction. Something failed to convince me, although I wasn't sure what.

The three Brigittes began to squander their attentions on me, and my fears faded. I started to experience some sexual excitement.

Then the door opened, and other Brigitte Bardots entered the dining hall of the castle — *many* others, until they filled the hall. All of them proceeded to undress. For a moment, only for a moment, the male in me exulted. Then terror rose inside me. I rushed to the window. What I saw outside the castle took my breath away.

As far as the horizon, millions of Brigitte Bardots were crowding and — I understood — waiting for their turn to enter the castle... and expecting me to enter them.

"Please, darling, take these pills." My very own Brigitte handed me blue pills and a glass of water.

"What are they?"

"Something far better than Viagra," the mantis replied. "Never again will you lose your erection."

But my erection will lose me, I thought in despair. Yet I could do nothing but swallow the pills for my coming ordeal.

Then the most beautiful of all imaginable agonies that a man could dream of began. I had no idea how long it went on. Occasionally I would fall asleep — for a few hours? for a full night? — who could tell! — but when I awoke a Brigitte would already be riding on me, taking advantage of my now inextinguishable erection. It was as if my penis had been plastinated and become a dildo which nevertheless was sucking out of me my *élan vital*.

Following a sudden creative intuition I began to kill every Brigitte I was fucking, by strangling her. To my surprise I discovered that this was very pleasing. Yet was this *sexually* pleasing, or was it something else? In these extreme circumstances in which I found myself, my desires — for which I had sacrificed the whole of the human race — became almost a religious ecstasy. Myself, I couldn't die the little death of actual orgasm, since I was empty of fluids. Vicariously, Bardots died.

Yes, strangling was pleasing — but tiring. Soon I had to give it up. Throttling the girls who were fucking me was more exhausting than simply letting them fuck me. However, since I'd shown that I liked Brigittes to be strangled during sex, another Brigitte would now strangle the Brigitte I was coupling with, so that my experience could be as complete as possible. How sweet of them that was. And how persistent. In my delirium I was a God being sacrificed to by Bardocidal priestesses.

What a long, beautiful, extreme delirium of joy and pleasure I endured — but finally the moment came in which I, Count Giuseppe Machiavelli, last true man on earth, direct genetic descendant of the great Niccoló Machiavelli, overwhelmed by a neverending tsunami of Bardots voraciously violating me with no moment of rest, each giving her life for my increased pleasure — at last I reached the limits that my body could stand, and for the first time in my life I had no remaining choice: I had to die.

And so, I am quite sorry to say, I did.

